



Derry City & Strabane
District Council

Comhairle
**Chathair Dhoire &
Cheantar an tSratha Báin**

Derry Cittie & Stràbane
Destrict Cooncil

Be Active

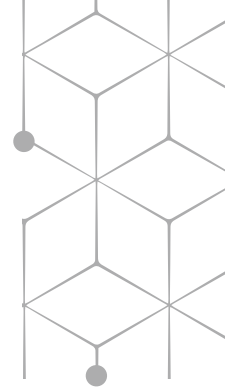
A Physical Activity, Wellbeing & Sport Strategy



2024 - 2028

www.derrystrabane.com/sportsdevelopment

Table Of Contents



SECTIONS	Page No
1 INTRODUCTION	02
2 SETTING THE SCENE	05
3 THE STARTING LINE	09
4 VISION, OBJECTIVES AND THEMES	22
5 NEXT STEPS	38
6 THE FINISH LINE	41



INTRODUCTION

Section 1

Introduction

Sport and being active is a big part of people's lives in Derry City and Strabane.

There are around 180 sports clubs in the district with in excess of 22,000 participants or about 15% of the entire population. Add to this the opportunities for sport and physical recreation in the Council's leisure and community centres alongside those offered by community groups and it's clear there is something for everyone who wants to be active.

Yet health inequalities are higher in Derry City and Strabane than for Northern Ireland as a whole, especially for people living in the most deprived areas, both urban and rural. The population is getting older; it's projected that by 2039 the Council area will have nearly 4,000 fewer children under the age of 16 and 14,000 more retired adults.

Through 2020 and 2021 the national lockdowns imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on everyone's ability to do sport and be active. This strategy will not only see more people returning to being active but also more people trying sport and physical activity for the first time and making it a lifestyle choice. Be Active is the result of extensive research that included surveys, consultations and focus groups.



180 SPORTS CLUBS



WITH OVER



22,000
PARTICIPANTS

OR ABOUT

15% of the entire population

15%



Strabane & District Special Olympics Club's Story

Formed some 20 years ago, more than 50 athletes meet weekly at venues in Sion Mills – the 'Bog Hall' – Letterkenny and Derry City to train in a range of sports including basketball, swimming, athletics, kayaking and football. The athletes – age range 14 years to 62 years – all get a chance to compete at area, regional, all-Ireland and world events. The club has a place for every special needs athlete, enabling them to exercise and train regularly in the sport(s) of their choice.

— “ —

Our athletes benefit both physically and socially by coming together to enjoy sport and physical activity. Without the club, some of our athletes would not be active. The benefit to their wellbeing is considerable.

Bill McIntyre - Club Head Coach



SETTING THE SCENE

Section 2

Setting the Scene

Be Active links into a range of national and local approaches. Here's how:-

PROGRAMME

Programme for Government. OFMDFM

The upcoming new Programme for Government will *'build on the outcomes-based approach that has defined strategic planning across the public sector since 2016.'* The approach encourages government departments and their agencies to work together to benefit everyone. The outcomes-based approach means *'departments think and work outside of their boundaries. They create, or co-design and co-produce strategies and plans that cut across departments and sectors to tackle societal problems and improve wellbeing for all.'*

STRATEGY

Active Living – Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for Northern Ireland. Department for Communities March 2022

This new strategy has as its vision, *'Lifelong involvement in sport and physical activity will deliver an active, healthy, resilient and inclusive society which recognises and values both participation and excellence.'* The strategy's intention is to contribute to an increase in the percentage of the Northern Ireland population participating in sport and physical activity. In so doing it looks to add to three Programme for Government outcomes:-

- ▶ **We enjoy long, healthy, active lives**
- ▶ **Our children and young people have the best start in life**
- ▶ **Everyone can achieve their potential**

Themes include



Recovering from the impact of the pandemic on sport and physical activity



Promoting participation, inclusion and community engagement



Promoting partnership and integration. The Active Living strategy aims to get **'More People, More Active, More of the Time'**

The Power of Sport – Corporate Plan 2021-2026. Sport NI

Sport NI's new Corporate Plan has as its mission statement, *'We are passionate about maximising the power of sport to change lives. By 2026 we want the power of sport to be recognised and valued by all.'* The plan highlights the need to increase participation in sport and physical activity for the entire population in the wake of the pandemic with a focus on parts of our society which are underrepresented.

The Power of Sport has two strategic outcomes:-

- 1. People adopting and sustaining participation in sport and physical activity.**
- 2. Our athletes among the best in the world.**

In achieving these outcomes Sport NI will be increasingly working in partnership with sports clubs, Councils and communities to encourage people to get active and help them to stay active throughout their lives. Sport NI recognises that how people participate in sport and physical activity is changing, often not within a sports club, so opportunities for getting and staying active must suit as many people as possible.

Strategic Growth Plan 2017-2032 – Our Community Plan. Derry City & Strabane District Council

'Our Community Plan' sets Derry City and the entire district on a journey towards; *'..... a thriving, prosperous and sustainable City and District with equality of opportunity for all.'* Led by the Council, the plan has been crafted in collaboration with a host of partner organisations, including all the government departments, Sport NI, health bodies, the education sector and local communities. The plan is a blueprint for how organisations and communities will work together to achieve equality of opportunity for all.

The plan's three broad outcomes – Economic Wellbeing, Environmental Wellbeing, Social Wellbeing – each have actions that will better enable people to get active and be active. However, it's within Social Wellbeing that Be Active will contribute the most.



Our Community Plan

Key actions in Our Community Plan that will enable people to be active include the development of facilities and the promotion of opportunities. Facilities development includes sport and leisure facilities whilst opportunities includes sports development programmes and building capacity in the district's sports clubs.

SOCIAL WELLBEING THEME

INDICATORS



HEALTH & WELLBEING

- We age actively and more independently.
- Health inequalities are reduced.
- We are more physically active.

OUTCOME

We live long, healthy and fulfilling lives.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- We are more actively engaged and can influence decisions which affect us.
- We have safer communities.
- We have access to quality facilities and services.
- Our community and voluntary sector is more resilient and sustainable.

OUTCOME

We live in a shared, equal and safe community.



CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

- Our children and young people are safer, healthier, more respected and included.
- Our children and young people are better able to realise their full potential and become active, responsible citizens.

OUTCOME

Our children and young people have the best start in life.



OLDER PEOPLE

- We address the health and social care needs of an ageing population, promoting positive attitudes to older people and tailoring support to enable them to participate fully in society.
- We enable everyone to live their life in a fulfilling way as valued members of an inclusive society.
- We provide access to the places, services, housing, information and support people, when needed.

OUTCOME

We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives.



THE STARTING LINE

Section 3

The Starting Line



The Council

The Council is the biggest single provider of facilities and programmes that enable people to be active and stay active, including:-



8 regional and local sports and leisure complexes offering a range of indoor and outdoor facilities for group and individual activities – [Foyle Arena](#), [Templemore Sports Complex](#), [Riversdale Leisure Centre](#), [Melvin Sports Complex](#), [Brooke Park Leisure Centre](#), [Derg Valley Leisure Centre](#), [City Baths](#), [Bishop's Field](#).

08



17 community centres throughout the district, providing for the social, recreational and sporting needs of the community through facility hire and activity programming. The Council's investment in community centres is part of their Strategic Inclusive Growth Plan, supporting localised provision.

17



Over 70 sports pitches for a wide range of sports, a mix of natural grass and artificial turf surfaces suitable for competition and/or training.

70+



A wide variety of programmed activities ranging from swimming lessons to climbing, from fitness classes to children's holiday schemes. There are in excess of 200 courses and classes for all ages, abilities and interests delivered in Council facilities across the district every week.

200+



A dedicated team delivers sports development services across the district. These include sporting events and courses, coach education, sports club development, grant aid/funding support and athlete support. The team manages a Physical Activity Referral Scheme (PARS) which works with individuals on a one-to-one basis to help address health conditions through exercise.

PARS

Sports development services also manages the [Cancer Support](#) programme, providing support that people living with cancer need to improve their fitness.



Claire's Story

Claire is a member of Lifford Strabane Athletic Club. She started off walking then jogging from lamp-post to lamp-post to get fit and healthy. She gradually built it up through time. People she met on the road encouraged her to join a club. Initially she wasn't interested but having joined the club she says it was the best decision she ever made. Meeting new people and the social aspect is part of what she enjoys. She started entering competitions and set goals and targets to better herself. Now Claire really enjoys her running and being part of the club.



**Lifford Strabane
Athletic Club**

“

**Joining the
club is the
best decision I
ever made**

Sports Clubs in the District



There are approximately 180 sports clubs across a wide range of different sports, from association football to goalball, from gaelic games to orienteering, from cricket to sailing. Just over half of these clubs either own or lease their facility base.



Approximately 22,000 people in the district are members of a sports club, or around 15% of the district's population. There are nearly twice as many males as female members in the sports clubs.



Well over 3,000 people help to run the district's sports clubs as volunteers. They want to give something back to the sport and also see it as an opportunity for socialising. The Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing message highlights the important role of volunteers in helping sports clubs and organisations with a sports focus to be sustainable.



There is an estimated 1,500 people who coach or teach sports in the clubs. The male/female ratio is nearly 3 to 1 – clubs find it difficult to recruit female coaches. About three quarters of the coaches are qualified. Just over a third of the clubs have a health & wellbeing policy.



Adults living in the most deprived areas in the district are much less likely to be a member of a sports club than those living in the least deprived areas.



Nearly a third of the district's sports clubs operate with running costs of less than £5,000 whilst a quarter operate with between £5,000 and £20,000 of running costs. The clubs describe their financial health as 'just about managing'. Finance is the single biggest challenge for the clubs, however, they are confident about the future, projecting a 16% increase in membership by 2025.



The district's sports clubs work in partnership with the Council, schools and community organisations. Many clubs rely on the Council for facilities and, along with their governing body, for financial support, training and advice.



The district's sports clubs see their focus as creating health and wellbeing opportunities for people of all abilities but also to develop all participants to their full potential.



Majella's Story

Majella is a member of Melvin Walk Jog Run. She enjoys meeting new people and has made new friends. She loves the running and how it reduces her stress after a hard day's work. Doing her first 5k was a major achievement for her then she moved up to 10k and half marathon events. One challenge is juggling time for work and running but the biggest challenge at the start was having the confidence to run. She says it is the best thing she ever did. Everyone was very encouraging and there's a real team spirit in the group.



**Melvin
Walk Jog Run**

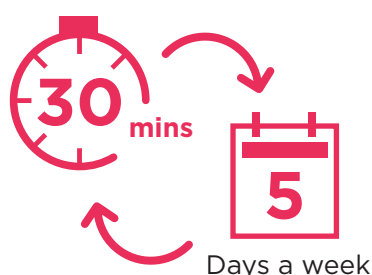
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**I might come home
tired but after it, I
feel full of energy.
Give it a go, you
won't regret it**

Physical Activity in the District

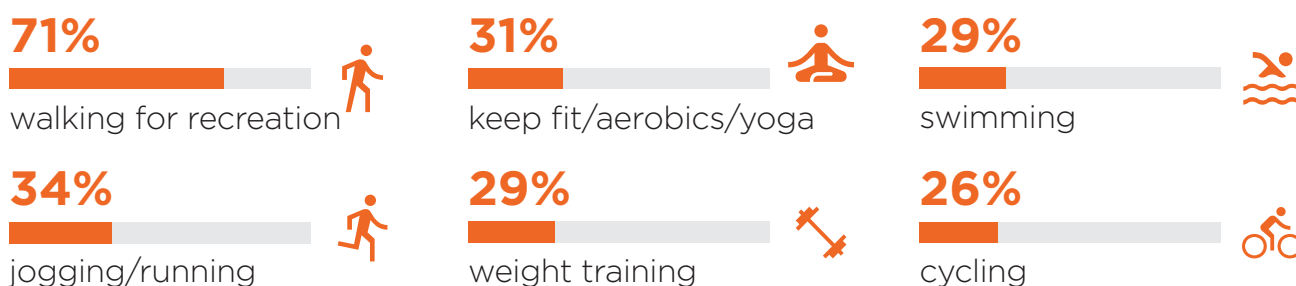
Community Survey

The Community Survey of the district's residents, conducted to help inform Be Active revealed a lot of information about how active people are and what activities they do.



The World Health Organisation recommends **30 minutes** of physical activity on **5 days** a week for a healthy lifestyle. The survey revealed only **29%** of respondents achieve this, whilst **19%** don't achieve this on any days or just on one day. All respondents agreed with the statement, **'Being physically active can benefit and improve my general health and wellbeing.'**

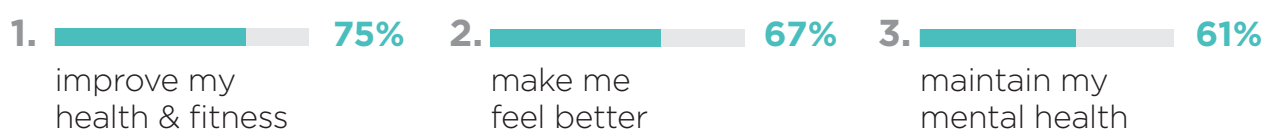
When asked **'what sports/physical activities have you participated in within the last year'** respondents selected:



These activities, mostly able to be undertaken on a casual basis, are more commonly pursued than structured activities that take place within a club environment or need specialist equipment. Walking for recreation tops the list by a considerable margin, perhaps because it is easily accessible and minimal cost.

Why do Derry City and Strabane residents undertake physical activity?

The top three responses are to do with health and wellbeing:



The top two rated reasons why people are not more physically active are:

- 1. I don't have time due to work and/or family commitments** (42%)
- 2. lack of facilities/activities in my area.**

Other lesser rated reasons reference poor weather, cost, being self-conscious, bored with what's on offer, disability and age (over 60s).



1% Only 1% of respondents said I'm just not interested in being more active so it's clear that more people would be active more often if barriers can be addressed.



Donna's Story

Donna has been into sport from an early age and grew up playing sport off and on. Playing badminton she was picked up by a club and started to play in leagues. Physical activity gives her a tremendous buzz. Sometimes the hardest thing for her is getting out the door.

“

It's raining and I can't be bothered but once I get out and get going it's brilliant. There's nothing else like it



Mia's Story

Mia plays gaelic football for Strabane Siggerson's GAC. She says sport gets her out of the house, improves her mood and helps with making friends. Her self-confidence has improved. She has learnt leadership skills through sport that she expects to take with her throughout her life.

“

Definitely good for my fitness - I've more breath in my lungs!

Education Survey

The Education Survey explored the potential for community use of education premises outside curriculum time as well as finding out about planned facility developments at education sites. The Education Authority is fully supportive of community use of schools and of working with local authorities in programming and facility developments.

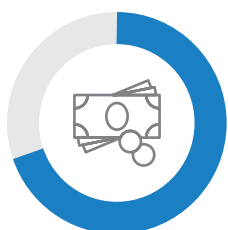
Here are the key findings:-



Most schools – **71%** - have delivered sports and physical activity sessions in partnership with the Council.



Nearly half of the schools have plans to develop or expand their sports facilities. Several education sites aspire to develop artificial turf pitches.



Whilst many education sites already make their premises available for community use, a high percentage of those that don't – **70%** - would consider it. The biggest barriers are insurance concerns and extra staffing costs.

There is a clear willingness to have more community use in those schools that have capacity, however, help to achieve this is needed. **Here's what some schools say:-**



'If (community use of schools) were rolled out across the Council area a network of multi-sports provision would be available to the community in the evening and at weekends.'



'A major campaign should be run to encourage physical activity with links to local schools. The use of voucher schemes for local sports facilities could be incorporated as an incentive for participation.'



'Council needs to offer more activity classes especially for young girls. In school, young females do not want to participate with boys in lessons.'



Judith & Chloe's Story



2022 Commonwealth Games

Judith and Chloe are top class athletes with a form of albinism that means their vision is severely restricted. They grew up with karate but now they compete in triathlon and karate. In the 2022 Commonwealth Games Chloe came second and Judith fourth in the women's para-triathlon visual impairment event. They also got into rowing and rugby because their older brothers did it and anything they can do!

“

It's good craic and you make friends. The enjoyment and the connection with other people is a really good thing. Thinking about how good you feel after sport encourages you to go on, even though it might be pouring

Activity Provider's Survey

A mix of sports clubs and community groups responded to the Activity Provider's Survey. Just over half – **53%** – of the provider organisations have delivered activities in partnership with the Council. This points to potential for the strategy to be delivered, in part at least, with and through the district's sports clubs and community groups.

Here are the key findings:-

Providers mostly deliver their activities at their facility base – community centres and sports clubs. However, outdoor locations such as green spaces, public parks, greenways and beaches also feature.



Thinking about the possibility of involving activity providers in helping to deliver the strategy, the response to do you have the capacity to involve more participants, facilities and/or volunteers or staff was an overwhelming yes – **78%**.



Activity providers feel they need more help to address a range of challenges. For example, one provider suggests:

“
We would need
qualified instructors to
deliver other activities
for people who have
a lesser degree of
movement in their limbs

Activity provider



Why Be Active?

Imagine you are part of a walking group and you've just reached the summit of a steep hill in the Sperrins ahead of the rest, or maybe you've walked to the top of Shipquay Street in Derry City. Now look behind you. It's easy to spot those who lead active lifestyles and those who don't. The active people are chatting to each other and enjoying the walk. The less active people are struggling! Every - Step - Is - Torture - Phew! So what's the difference? Mostly it's down to lifestyle choices. How well and how long you live depends a lot on your good habits around exercise and nutrition. Every little decision matters, and even more as you get older.

LIFESTYLE

Why Bother?



Life expectancy in Derry City and Strabane has improved in the 21st century but remains lower than the Northern Ireland average – women can expect to live around one year less and men around 8 months less. However, in the 20% most deprived areas life expectancy for men is nearly 6 years less than the district average and nearly 3 years less for women.



It is also the case that day to day activities are limited for a higher percentage of people in Derry City and Strabane than in Northern Ireland. Prescription rates for mood and anxiety disorders, obesity and cancer are 13% higher in Derry City and Strabane.



For children in School Year 8, being overweight or obese is significantly more prevalent in Derry City and Strabane. The Department of Health's 2022 report on health inequalities shows that health outcomes in Derry City and Strabane are worse than the Northern Ireland average in 26 of the 52 measures.

What are the Benefits?

The UK Government's Department for Culture, Media and Sport highlights the benefits of being active in Get Active: A Strategy for the Future of Sport and Physical Activity (August 2023). Here's what they say:-

'Active people live healthier, longer and happier lives, with physical activity reducing the risk of disease, helping to support individuals to maintain a healthier weight, and giving wide-ranging musculoskeletal health benefits. It also has a significant role to play in helping prevent and manage many long-term health conditions. Getting active at a young age also aids the healthy development and function of muscles, bones and the cardio-respiratory system.'

Reducing the number of inactive children and adults reduces the burden on the NHS. Every year, active lifestyles prevent 900,000 cases of diabetes and 93,000 cases of dementia (the leading cause of death in the UK). This delivers a combined saving of £7.1 billion to the UK economy.

The mental health of the nation is also crucial. Being active and playing sport can lead to greater self-esteem, reduced anxiety and increased confidence. Active lifestyles are associated with 30 million fewer GP visits and 375,000 fewer people being diagnosed with depression, which helps to reduce absenteeism and thus increase productivity at work.

Increasing levels of physical activity will also help to deliver on the important health, wellbeing and missions set out in the Levelling Up white paper, helping to bridge the gap in life expectancy across the country, as well as supporting an improvement in perceived wellbeing levels.'

Being active will add years to your life. Be Active is everyone's opportunity to improve their health outcomes. Here's why:



Even small changes, whatever your age or ability, will make you feel good, give you more energy and help you live longer and better as you age.



By being active you can reduce the risk of as many as 35 chronic diseases, including heart disease, some cancers, Type 2 diabetes, stroke and osteoporosis.



A Fitness habit can help with bone health, breathing difficulties and high blood pressure.



Getting and staying active will help make you feel happier by reducing feelings of stress, anxiety and depression. It will improve the quality of your sleep and boost your self-esteem.



Staying active as you age will help you stay mobile and independent. Maintaining healthy bones, muscles and joints will improve your balance and co-ordination. By the time you are about 60 years old, many of your health outcomes are determined by your lifestyle choices.



Families being active together helps reinforce family bonds, encourages a sense of wellbeing and makes children feel good about themselves.



Brian's Story



Macmillan
Move More group

Brian is a cancer survivor. In 2018 he was diagnosed with prostate cancer and went through radiotherapy successfully. Early on he joined the Macmillan Move More group at the Foyle Arena. He goes twice a week to the group activities and enjoys yoga, Pilates, cycling, climbing, walking football and the fitness studio. Through Macmillan Move More he is now a qualified walk leader and has been able to return to running in Rise Running Club.

“

Everyone is made very welcome. The group is a very important part of my life now, keeping me active and getting me out of the house. I really don't know what I'd do without it for my physical and mental wellbeing.



VISION, OBJECTIVES AND THEMES

Section 4

Vision, Objectives & Themes

Vision

The vision for Be Active is

**More People More Active More Often
in Derry City and Strabane District**

Objectives

These objectives help achieve the vision



Encourage everyone of all ages and abilities to get involved in the Council's programme of sporting and physical activity opportunities.



Continue to support the district's sports clubs and activity providers in engaging with local communities to promote their sport and physical activity opportunities.



Further develop partnership working in the promotion and delivery of sport and physical activity.

Themes

Four strategic themes have been created to reflect the priorities emerging from consultation



THEME 1

BE ACTIVE - SPORTS CLUBS

Working directly with the district's sports clubs and activity programmes aimed at the community beyond the club's membership.

OUTCOME

More people across the district feel they have opportunities to get involved in sport and/or be physically active.



THEME 2

BE ACTIVE - EVERYDAY

Promoting lifestyle habits in being active from an early age and through the stages of adulthood. Highlighting the health benefits – physical, mental and emotional – to individuals, family groups and the community.

OUTCOME

Barriers understood and solutions created. Greater awareness of opportunities for sport and physical activity and the benefits of being active.



THEME 3

BE ACTIVE - TOGETHER

Council continuing to work in partnership with key regional and local agencies, government departments and organisations, to complement and supplement similar sports and physical activity initiatives with Council-operated programmes.

OUTCOME

More achieved across society by working together.



THEME 4

BE ACTIVE - SPREADING THE WORD

Messaging the benefits of being active in sport and physical activity is a vitally important element of Be Active. The challenge is to present the opportunities and benefits in a way that jolts people into action and to keep at it, especially those who are inactive.

OUTCOME

The perception that sport and physical activity is 'not for me' is reduced.

Be Active – Sports Clubs

People sometimes think sports clubs are ‘not for me’, yet there are around 180 sports clubs in the district with thousands of people enjoying being active.

A wide range of different sports are on offer so there really is something for everyone regardless of age or ability. There are team sports and individual sports, outdoor sports and indoor sports, water-based sports and land-based sports. Some sports can be enjoyed with very little equipment, other sports need lots of equipment. Some sports are well known, others less so. Whatever the sport is, all sports clubs view themselves as *‘a community club looking to create health and wellbeing opportunities for people of all abilities.’*

Across the district more people have been joining sports clubs in recent years and the clubs reckon this trend is set to continue. People join sports clubs for lots of reasons. In Derry City and Strabane these reasons include ¹ :-

- ▶ **‘We are a welcoming, well run and recognised club.’**
- ▶ **‘People enjoy the sport and want to be more active.’**
- ▶ **‘It’s good for mental health and wellbeing.’**
- ▶ **‘People want to be part of a community and make new friends.’**
- ▶ **‘They want to train and compete.’**

The district’s sports clubs are indeed welcoming and want to attract new members as participants or coaches or administrators. Females are under-represented both as participants and volunteers and this is an area, amongst others, that clubs are keen to tackle.

The Council has, for many years, been pro-active in supporting the district’s sports clubs through the provision of facilities, grant schemes and activity programmes. It also encourages the sector through the annual Sports Awards, hosted jointly with the District Sports Forum to recognise individuals, teams and clubs.

¹ Sports Club Survey 2019; A Headline Report for Derry City & Strabane District Council. Sport NI

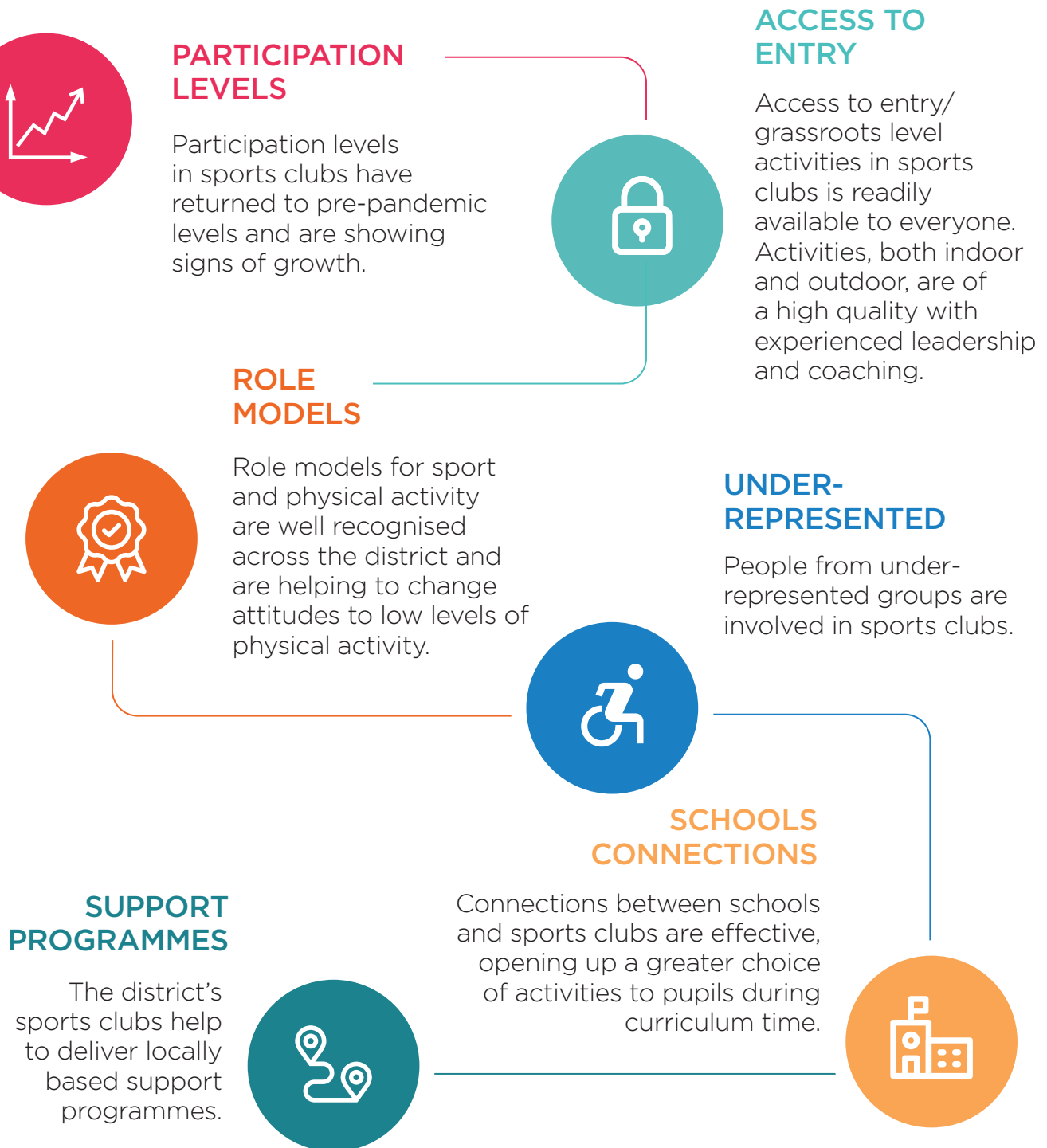


The actions here presented are intended to further help sports clubs address the challenges revealed through the extensive consultation process. The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on participation in sport and physical activity. Sports clubs were forced to either close completely or operate in a restricted way. Be Active can assist the district’s sports clubs as they return to normal operation and build back better than before.

No.	Actions
1	Assist the district's sports clubs to regain pre-pandemic levels of participation in sport and physical activity for players, coaches, administrators, volunteers and spectators. Some of the district's sports clubs were involved in Sport NI's 'Supporting Sport to Build Back Better' post-pandemic funding programme which demonstrated how sports clubs can come back stronger than before and make them more resilient to similar challenges in the future.
2	Through the district's sports clubs ensure that everyone has easy access to high quality infrastructure enabling enjoyable participation in sport and physical activity at an entry/grassroots level. It's recognised here that the Council's activity programmes, such as Walk Jog Run, provide essential stepping stones for newcomers to sport and physical activity for whom the next step is to join a sports club or group.
3	Ensure the district's residents have access locally to safe and sustainable sport and physical activity infrastructure operated by the Council and community organisations. In recent years opportunities to enjoy easily accessed outdoor facilities such as Greenways and outdoor fitness gyms have grown considerably. These opportunities reflect better use of existing spaces and the use of new ideas that are sustainable on a number of levels.
4	Maximise the opportunities to promote community pride in the district's sporting achievers through the District Sports Forum's annual Sports Awards and other initiatives. Role models in sport and physical activity can be influential in helping to change the attitudes of people who are adversely impacted by poor lifestyle choices.
5	Develop a dynamic sporting system that supports people from underrepresented groups including women, children & young people, older people, ethnic minorities, people living with disabilities and those living in the most deprived areas to take up sport and physical activity with clearly visible pathways into sports clubs. People in these groups who are unfamiliar with being active stand to benefit the most from healthy lifestyle changes, to both their physical and mental wellbeing.
6	Create easy and smooth transitions from sport and physical activity in schools into the district's sports clubs. It's recognised that the rate of drop-out from school-based sport and physical activity is considerable, especially amongst girls. This action seeks to address the disconnect between school-based sport and local sports clubs.
7	Develop support programmes for sports clubs to enhance club development, including financial sustainability, sports development and governance. Recognising that sports clubs are mostly run by volunteers, increasingly they must embrace business methods in order to deliver high quality and attractive services that contribute to their development and sustainability.

Is Anyone Better Off?

Be Active – Sports Clubs will look to achieve the following outcomes.



Be Active – Everyday

The best time to start being active is today – and everyday! Whilst healthy lifestyle habits are best started at an early age, it's never too late to get going.

Think of it as a body reboot – most people have the ability to change how their body works and ultimately how healthy they are and how long they may live. It's often said of people who have survived a horrific disease, accident or surgery that their pre-existing physical and mental strength fortified them and better equipped them to endure stresses. Scientists now suggest *'we can self-engineer genetic changes to help prevent disease and boost longevity. Each healthy act switches on youth-promoting genes and switches off ageing genes.'*² Every little decision to be active adds up and even more as we live longer. Positive attitudes to being active are part and parcel of everyday life.

It isn't easy to self-motivate for active lifestyle changes, however, one thing that really works is being active with other people, perhaps with family or a friend or a group of people all looking to get fitter. In this way being active goes along with being social, giving physical, mental and emotional health benefits.

One of the challenges for Be Active - Everyday is that people think of sport and physical activity as vigorous exercise (no pain, no gain), that it takes place at scheduled times of the day, that it mostly happens in dedicated spaces such as gyms and that it always costs money. Whilst this perception is changing, Be Active - Everyday will help people see that physical activity is a vital part of daily life for everyone, regardless of where they live or their socio-economic status.

² *The Great Age Reboot: Michael Roizen*



Sport NI, in their Corporate Plan 2021-2026 'The Power of Sport' identifies as a challenge,

'Societal and lifestyle changes have led to a growing trend in individual participation or, in other cases, to social isolation and inactivity.'



Being Active Everyday



Guidance for adults



Guidance for children

 **150 mins**

of moderate
intensity activity
weekly

OR

 **75 mins**

of vigorous
activity weekly

 **30 mins**

of activity on
most days

 **60 mins**

of moderate to
vigorous intensity
activities each day
across the week

Age: 5+

activities can be
spread throughout
the day



Adults should aim to be active everyday and accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity – slightly out of breath – activity weekly.



From age five and over, children need to do moderate to vigorous intensity activities for an average of at least 60 minutes each day across the week.



You can split this into 30 minutes of activity on most days. Or you can do 75 minutes of vigorous activity – working up a sweat – weekly.



They don't need to do one activity for an hour. They can spread their activity throughout the day.



Limit the time you spend sitting or lying down when not sleeping.



Sport NI advises that any amount of physical activity is better than none.

No.	Actions
1	Establish being active – sport and physical activity – as a lifestyle habit at all ages and across all abilities. Coming out of the pandemic there is a growing understanding across society of the need to embrace being active to contribute to good physical and mental health and ward off many diseases and ailments. The habit can be promoted at a basic everyday level right through to elite performance. Actions could include, for example, promoting walking and cycling connectivity, especially within urban areas, highlighting active and safe routes.
2	Understand the barriers to being active and involved in sport and physical activity for non-active people, especially in deprived areas. People living in deprived areas are likely to be the least active in the district's population. By understanding the barriers, actions to address them are likely to be more effective.
3	Develop initiatives across the district that support physical activity and sporting opportunity for people from underrepresented groups including women, children and young people, older people, ethnic minorities, people living with disabilities and those living in the most deprived areas.
4	Develop connections for people living in rural areas and deprived areas with opportunities for participating in sport and physical activity as individuals and in group situations. Whilst enjoying sport and physical activity as part of a group suits some people, other people prefer to engage in sport and physical activity as individuals. Showing how people can connect with opportunities in a way that suits them can be an important element in their decision-making to be active.
5	Look at resources that promote opportunities for participation, both Council and community based. This resource could be a one-stop shop, finding out about all structured sport and physical activity sessions and opportunities across the district outside sports clubs ³ . A well designed App could be the answer here.
6	Introduce cross-government and cross-section ambitions to increase activity rates for all in line with the Chief Medical Officer's guidelines for physical activity.
7	Develop opportunities for initiatives across the district that support intergenerational sporting and physical activity opportunities. Different generations can educate, influence and encourage each other in being active and this will provide a degree of complementarity between the Council's strategies and departmental plans. As people age, they need to be supported to either start or continue to be active.
8	Build into the district's sporting system opportunities for participation in emerging 'lifestyle sports' such as parkour, skateboarding, surfing, mountain biking. These and other similar sports and activities have an appeal beyond 'traditional' sports and are often enjoyed by people as individuals rather than in groups. They can attract people who would not otherwise be active.
9	Promote opportunities for active travel and more sustainable transport linked to climate change as part of being active every day. Going hand in hand with this is the need to develop physical activity and outdoor recreational opportunities by building capacity and maximising usage of green and blue spaces.

³ Sport Ireland is developing a new Digital Sport and Recreation Hub, enabling users to search for suitable opportunities to be active in Ireland. In the form of an interactive website it will also be accessible through a dedicated Mobile App.

Is Anyone Better Off?

Be Active – Everyday will look to achieve the following outcomes.



PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

Being active at a level that benefits physical and mental health and wellbeing is a lifestyle habit for people of all ages and abilities across the district.

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITIES



There is equality of opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity regardless of where people live.

SPORT OPPORTUNITIES

Finding out about opportunities for sport and physical activity is easy.



LIFESTYLE SPORTS

Opportunities for intergenerational and lifestyle sports and physical activity are available across the district.



Be Active – Together

Government and its agencies are increasingly working together to use sport and physical activity as a tool for societal change.

It's now accepted, through research, that being active contributes not only to physical wellbeing but also to mental wellbeing, individual development, economic development and community development. This is a huge step forward in understanding how investing in being active benefits every aspect of people's lives. The social value of sport and physical activity is measured through Social Return on Investment methodologies.

In 2020 Sport England reported that *'investing in community sport and physical activity plays an important role in boosting the economy and provides the opportunity to help level up inequalities within communities and build a healthier, happier and more prosperous society, generating £3.91 in value for every £1 spent. Its social value, including physical and mental health, wellbeing and community development, is provided via routes such as a healthier population, consumer expenditure, greater work productivity, improved educational attainment, reduced crime and strong communities.'*⁴

⁴ Social and economic value of community sport and physical activity in England; Sport England September 2020

Investing in community sport generates

£3.91

in value for every

£1 spent

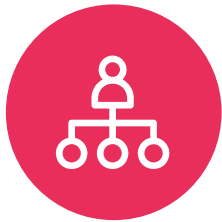


The rationale for Be Active – Together is very clear. The Council already works with a wide range of organisations which also promote sport and physical activity, including sports clubs, sports governing bodies, Sport NI, schools, the Public Health Agency, community groups, the Western Health and Social Care Trust and many more. The Be Active strategy presents opportunities to consolidate and strengthen existing partnerships and create new ones. As with the other strategic themes, the following actions are informed by consultation.

No.	Actions
1	<p>Build on existing partnerships and facilitate new partnerships with stakeholder groups and agencies to create a co-designed approach to the development of sports and physical activity programmes that achieves consistency in design and delivery for a range of target groups. Doing this will help to ensure a high quality in structured programmes regardless of who delivers them. It also facilitates shared learning between delivery agents to constantly improve what's on offer.</p>
2	<p>Work to increase community access to existing sports facilities – sports clubs, schools, community facilities. Many facilities specific to sport are not used to their full potential due to the operational and/or managerial arrangements of the owner. The Education Authority in particular is keen to see more community use of school sports facilities. Where it does exist this approach gives local groups local access. Rolled out across the district, an expanded network of sports facilities would be available to local communities in the evening, at weekends and outside school term whilst schools would continue to have access during curriculum time.</p>
3	<p>Consider how best to support interventions and activities led by new partners that target people who are inactive. Support could be by way of sourcing coaches or mentoring new delivery partners, such as local businesses, on how to set up and deliver activity programmes. It could also take the form of 'sign posting' new delivery partners to other agencies for resources and advice. In this regard the Council acts as a point of contact. Interventions in other environments and settings, such as care / residential homes, should be considered to facilitate ageing communities in being active.</p>
4	<p>With partner groups consider the potential for an all-partners sport and physical activity programme. With the Council leading, such a district-wide programme with a range of partners will greatly enhance the potential for everyone to be active and feel part of a major initiative. Partners to include sport, business, education, community, health.</p>
5	<p>Monitor and evaluate the outputs and outcomes of the Council working with partners to identify how successful each working relationship is and actions needed moving forward. As the lead agency in delivering Be Active with partner groups the Council needs to know the strengths and weaknesses of each arrangement to inform future decisions.</p>

Is Anyone Better Off?

Be Active – Together will look to achieve the following outcomes.



COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

There is a strong collaborative approach to delivering the strategy.



COMMUNITY ACCESS

Community access to existing sports facilities in all ownerships is maximised.



DELIVERY PARTNERS

New delivery partners for sport and physical activity initiatives are encouraged with support available to get them started. Partners contribute to the delivery of district-wide programmes that are universally popular.

STRATEGY DELIVERY

Partnership working is monitored and reviewed periodically to ensure effective delivery of the strategy.



Be Active – Spreading the Word

Perhaps the biggest challenge for Be Active is increasing awareness and understanding, particularly amongst sedentary individuals of the benefits of being active to the point where they decide to get moving and keep going.

For many years the focus of government and its agencies was just on sport, however, the message has shifted towards physical activity alongside sport. There is no shortage of opportunities in Derry City & Strabane to get active yet life expectancy in the district is lower than the Northern Ireland average and lower still in the district's 20% most deprived areas.

The benefits of being active are well documented and generally known yet many people who would benefit the most disregard the information, reckoning '*it's not for me*' or '*maybe sometime*'. So the message has to be constantly put in front of everyone, motivating people to be more active and stay active throughout their lives. Getting active can be looked on as the entry level into sport (see Claire's story) for many people and sports clubs are aware of their responsibility to promote the benefits of being active and increasingly offer opportunities for the non-sporty as well as the sporty. The challenge in Spreading the Word is to convince people of the need to take the first step.



The Department for Communities' 'Active Living' strategy states, 'By promoting the benefits of sport and physical activity we will help to address the inequalities that currently exist with regards to access for many and we will enhance awareness in access to sport and physical activity and enhance awareness of the value to the individual and society of more people being more active more of the time. Inactive or sedentary lifestyles can lead to physical and mental ill-health and to social isolation. Encouraging those who are inactive to take the first steps to engagement in sport and physical activity can be life changing. This is a key public health message, but getting the message across to inactive groups can be challenging.'

No.	Actions
1	<p>Consider messaging specific to the needs of target populations. For example, young people (and people of any age) feeling stressed, anxious or depressed are likely to reduce these feelings through getting and staying active. Older people engaging in physical activity will improve balance and co-ordination with healthier bones and muscles, so reducing the risk of injury through falls. Family bonds – grandparents, parents, children – are strengthened by enjoying physical activity and sport together. People with Type 2 diabetes can improve and even eliminate the condition by incorporating physical activity into their daily routine.</p>
2	<p>Incorporate messages about the wellbeing benefits of physical activity and sport into a broad range of Council activities, services and strategies. Social wellbeing is one of three themes in the Council's Community Plan, embracing 'we live long, healthy and fulfilling lives' as a key outcome. Much of the Council's work can help to promote the benefits of being active to community life and the lives of individuals.</p>
3	<p>Make effective use of social media platforms to inform and educate the district's residents about the benefits of being active. Here again messaging can be made specific to the needs of target populations. This action focuses on the benefits of being active, delivering the messaging created in Action 1 above.</p>
4	<p>Debunk the perception that sport and physical activity is only for 'sporty types' and that it only happens in groups of people in sports clubs or leisure centres. This is a significant psychological barrier for non-active people. For many people the word 'sport' conjures up team games and enjoying sport requires no more effort than sitting in front of a television or supporting their team. Messaging has to encourage non-active people to Be Active.</p>

Is Anyone Better Off?

Be Active – Spreading the Word will look to achieve the following outcomes.



HEALTH BENEFITS

The physical and mental health benefits of being active are widely understood by everyone of all ages and abilities.

PROMOTING THE BENEFITS

Messaging is taken up by a wide range of organisations in all walks of life, further promoting the benefits of being active.



CONSISTENT MESSAGING

Messaging is consistent across all organisations.





NEXT STEPS

Next Steps

This strategy sets out themes and high level actions that will contribute to the vision of More People More Active More Often in Derry City and Strabane District.

What's needed now is a structure that will deliver the strategy, monitor and periodically review progress to ensure the delivery structure stays on course to achieve the vision. The strategy's delivery structure will bring together the key agencies and organisations which have a stake in promoting Be Active, many of which contributed to the strategy's consultation process.

This inclusive approach ensures that delivery of the strategy has the best chance of successful outcomes through strong and effective partnership working. Whilst the delivery structure will mostly involve local partners working on the ground in the district, it will also engage with regional bodies for advice and support. The strategy's potential to impact on the lives of the district's residents is considerable and it is only through a strong partnership that the potential will be realised.



More **People**
More **Active**
More **Often**
in Derry City
and Strabane
District

Strategic Implementation

Be Active has two levels of implementation:

1. Strategy Implementation Group
2. Thematic Working Groups

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION GROUP

This group, facilitated by the Council will bring together a partnership of bodies working within the district in activities related to the strategy. Its objective is to facilitate and oversee delivery of the strategy. The Strategy Implementation Group is the driving force behind Be Active. Working collaboratively, the group will be responsible for the following :-

- Liaise with relevant government departments and agencies.
- Resourcing the strategy. This will be a key element of the group's work that will rely on the member organisations' experience to establish budgets and to secure funding from their own and other organisations.
- Ensure strategic alignment of actions with the district's Strategic Growth Plan 2017-2032 and other local and regional strategies.
- Provide governance for and oversight of the strategy's delivery.
- Evaluation and reporting on the strategy's impact against a range of key metrics relevant to the strategy's objectives.
- Ensure thematic action plans are aligned with area based community plans and with the district as a whole.
- Establish and govern the operation of four Thematic Working Groups, drawing them together on a periodic basis for review and reporting.

THEMATIC WORKING GROUPS

Four thematic working groups will be set up, one for each of the Be Active themes. The objective of these groups is to deliver the strategy. Those serving on each group will have experience and skills pertinent to the theme. Each thematic working group will be responsible for the following :-

- Devise a co-designed low-level action plan for the group's theme that contributes to the Be Active vision, prioritising actions over the strategy period.
- Deliver the action plan in collaboration with all member groups.
- Prepare a data collection system to monitor outputs and outcomes, following an Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) methodology. The OBA methodology asks
 - ▶ **What did we do?**
 - ▶ **How well did we do it?**
 - ▶ **Is anyone better off?**
- Report to the Strategy Implementation Group on an agreed basis.
- Financial control of budgets.



THE FINISH LINE

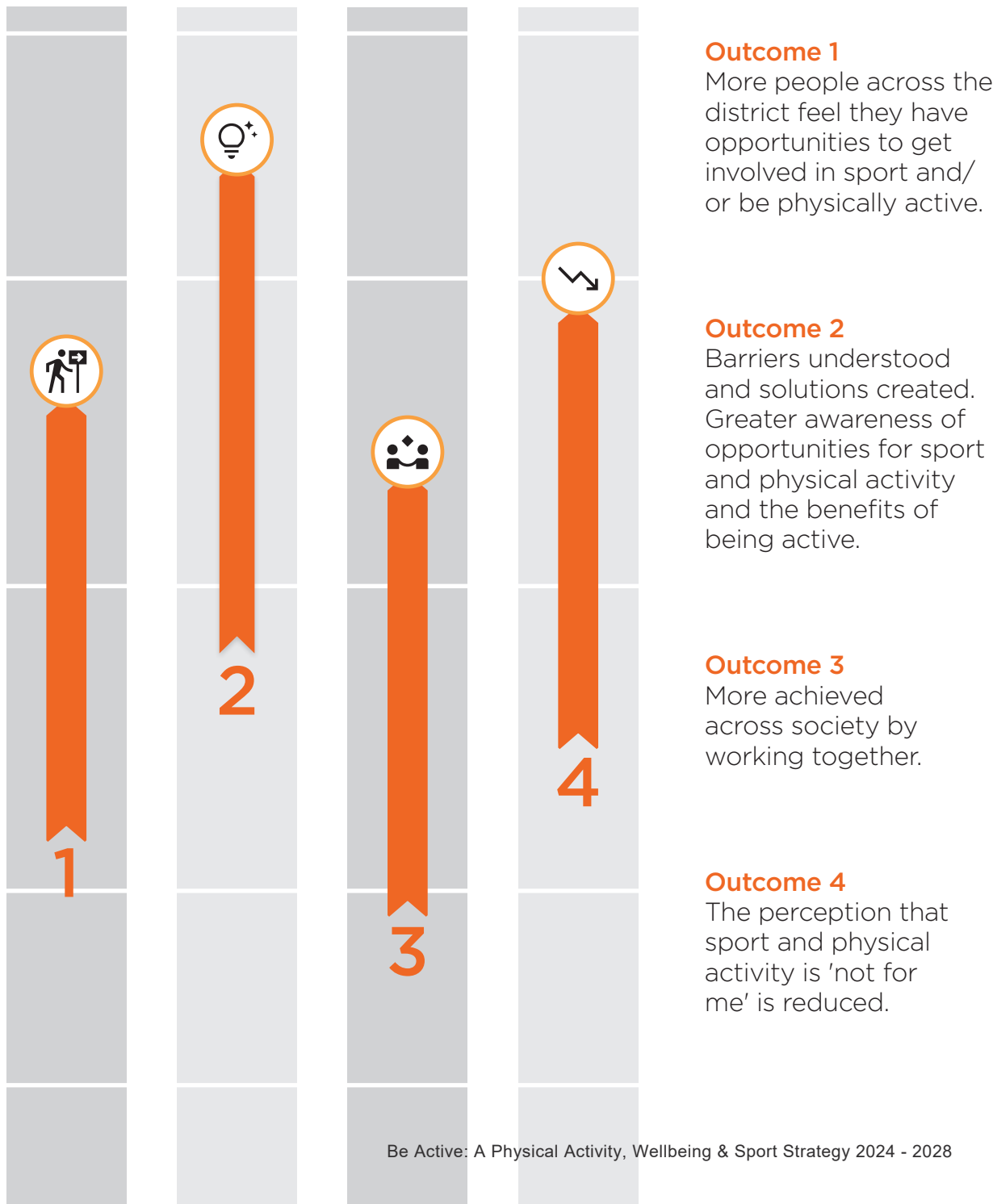


The Finish Line

Be Active will have resulted in changes to levels of participation in sport and physical activity as the vision of More People More Active More Often begins to be realised.



As this 5 year period comes to an end it's important to assess to what extent the outcomes have been achieved. Here's a reminder of the strategy's main outcomes:-



Consultation Process

The consultation process that, along with Sport NI's Sports Club Survey 2019, informs Be Active also informs the outcomes for each of the four themes, highlighted in 'Is Anyone Better Off?'

These outcomes will be used to carry out a review process to help the Council and their partners understand how Be Active has made a difference to people's lives. The review process will include:



Review

The review will adopt the outcomes based accountability approach:-



Be Active

A Physical Activity, Wellbeing & Sport Strategy

This information is available upon request in a number of formats including large print, Braille, PDF, audio formats (CD, MP3, DAISY) and minority languages.

For further information on alternative formats please contact:

Tel: **028 71 253253**

E: **equality@derrystrabane.com**

2024 - 2028



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