

# RISE.

# IMPACT REPORT

2022 - 2023

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# INTRODUCTION

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**IT HAS BEEN A BUSY YEAR FOR THE RISE TEAM IN 2022-2023, BUILDING ON A SOLID FIRST YEAR OF OUR 2021-2031 RISE TOGETHER STRATEGY, WHERE LOTS OF GROUNDWORK WAS LAID FOR THE PROGRESS THAT WE'VE MADE IN THIS LAST TWELVE MONTHS.**

The year has also been a transitional year, as we came towards the end of our inaugural Implementation Plan under our ten-year strategy, and planned and developed our Implementation Plan for the period 2023-2025. We have taken the time to reflect on how we work, as well as what we work on, in order that we can deliver best value for the plethora of partners and stakeholders that we engage with.

This report is structured around the six priorities that are core to our long-term strategic approach, and much of the work towards these

priorities has been grounded in our values of collaboration, positively disrupting and catalysing change. Examples that you will read about in more detail inside include:

- **Building Back Fairer** – engaging with a huge array of community organisations supporting groups who are less likely to be active, including those from lower socio-economic groups, those from ethnically diverse communities, and those who have a disability or long-term health condition. These groups were disproportionately negatively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and are again in the current cost of living crisis, and so the support that we were able to provide to groups through the Together Fund has been invaluable in helping them to get their beneficiaries to be more physically active;



- **Community Building** – recognising the unique place that schools play within their communities, we embraced the opportunity that the third phase of the Department for Education's Opening School Facilities Programme provided in order to be able to support schools to engage with their communities in physical activity opportunities outside of curriculum time;



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- **Tackling Our Climate Crisis** – providing expert support, advice and guidance to partners engaged in the development of the North East's Active Travel Strategy in order to support the required transition to more sustainable forms of transport as the need to reduce carbon production becomes ever-more evident and urgent;
- **Harnessing the Power of Data, Digital and Tech** – trialling the use of an App to engage workforces to walk, run, cycle and move more in order to 'earn' points that are then translated into trees that are planted in the Great Northumberland Forest;
- **Healthy Minds for Healthy Lives** – supporting the wellbeing aspirations of Sunderland College by developing students to lead on the delivery of physical activity and wellbeing interventions for both their peers and for the wider College workforce; and
- **Strong & Influential Systems Leadership** – delivering our inaugural Early Years Conference, where 90 practitioners from across the Rise region came together to share, learn and be inspired around getting our under 5s moving more.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clare Morley".

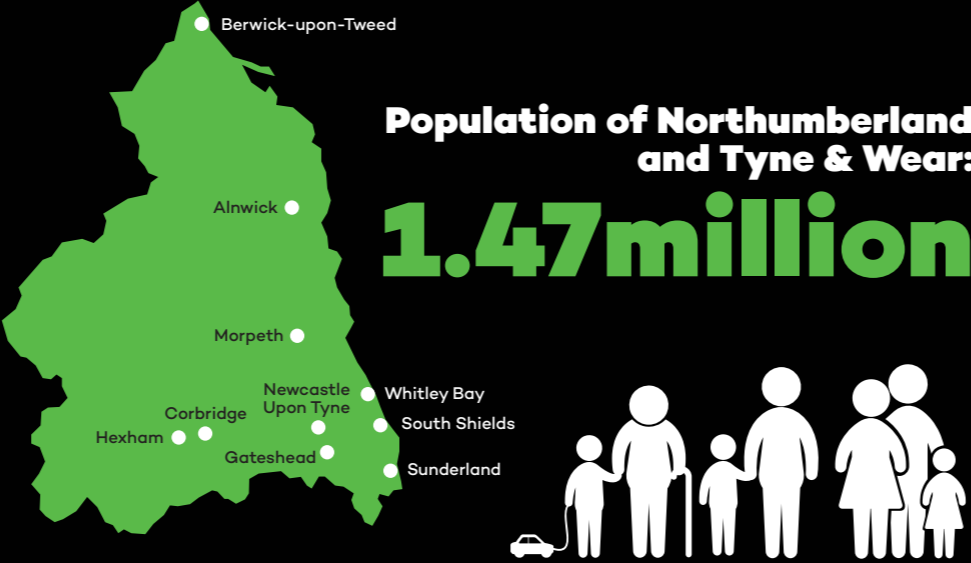
**Clare Morley**  
Chief Executive Officer



# THE CHALLENGES IN OUR AREA

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**31.7%**  
(England 20%)

Percentage of people living in the most deprived 20% of areas in England

**25.6%**  
(England 15.4%)

Percentage of children aged 0-19 in absolute low-income families



**43.6%**  
(England 39.1%)

of those 16+ are economically inactive

**4.4%**  
(England 4.7%)

of 16-17 year olds are not in education, employment or training (NEET)

**41.0%**  
(England 37.8%)

Percentage of the population who are aged 50 years and over



**19.7%**  
(England 18.1%)

Percentage of 16+ with no qualifications

Icons by Freepik, Vecteezy



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## Levels of physical activity <30 mins per week



## Healthy Life expectancy (years):



Percentage of **adults** whose day-to-day activities are impacted a lot by disability or a long-term illness

**13.6%**

(England 12.7%)

Prevalence of depression in adults

**3.5%**

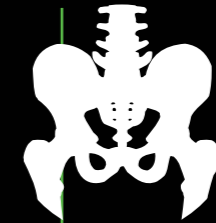
(England 3.0%)

Pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs

**4.2km**

(England 5.2km)

Mean distance to fast food



Hip fractures in people aged 65 and over - per 100,000

**610.66**

(England 551.16)

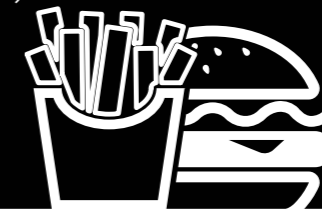
**38.2%**

(England 35.8%) of children (year 6) and



**68.6%**

(England 63.8%) of adults are classified overweight or obese



# OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

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**WE'VE REMAINED COMMITTED TO OUR SIX STRATEGIC PRIORITIES THAT WE ESTABLISHED WHEN WE FIRST LAUNCHED OUR RISE TOGETHER STRATEGY.**

We must continue to build back fairer, support our communities to develop, use physical activity to approach issues that have an impact on our climate, utilise the power of moving more to benefit mental well-being, ensure technological developments are utilised to drive the physical activity agenda forward and use our unique position to support a cross sector systems leadership approach to ensure physical activity contributes to a higher quality of life for communities that need it the most in Northumberland and Tyne and Wear.



# PRIORITY: STRONG AND INFLUENTIAL LEADERSHIP

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## EARLY YEARS - LISTENING TO THE SECTOR

We have continued to build on the work we began in 2021 to develop the provision of physical activity interventions within the early years sector.

To demonstrate our role in responding to issues raised by the sector we produced a 'You Said - We Did' report which highlighted how we have worked with partners to date to support the early years workforce to understand the benefits of physical activity and how they can embed and implement their new learning into practise.



Click [here](#) to view the 'You Said - We Did' report.

## EARLY YEARS NETWORK FORUM

In 2022, we established the Early Years Network Forum in our area. The Network provides opportunities for the sector's workforce to share, offload, network, learn and explore opportunities to collaborate.

## EARLY YEARS CONFERENCE

We also delivered our first ever Health, Wellbeing and Learning Early Years Conference, which was sold out with 90 attendees. The inspiration, enthusiasm and positivity in the room was infectious and highlighted the need for the sector to come together to learn, share and network.



Click [here](#) to read more about the conference evaluation.

*"It has been fantastic meeting likeminded people who share the same ethos for physical/mental wellbeing in the early years. Thank you so much!"* - Conference participant



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## STEP OUTDOORS

We were also successful in an application for funding from our local Integrated Care System to develop our own outdoor learning pilot “Step Outdoors”, which is a training programme for early years setting staff. The Pilot is being run in partnership with South Tyneside Public Health and coproduced with early years professionals at all levels.



## SECONDARY PE LEAD CONFERENCE

In partnership with the Youth Sport Trust as part of the Education Alliance, we facilitated a Secondary PE Lead conference which provided invaluable learning, insight and knowledge focusing on the successes, barriers, challenges and opportunities faced by PE leads within secondary education settings. The conference also looked at how we could work together collaboratively as wider system partners to mitigate some of these barriers and challenges to ensure our workforce is supported and our children and young people thrive.

*“This programme has really helped me identify the correct girls, and we’ve started to see a difference in their attitudes and engagement in school. I’m keen to start working more closely with YST and Rise to support these girls further and use the insight from the survey to make positive changes to PE and Physical Activity, as well as providing more support to increase confidence and other softer skills”* - PE Lead

## YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Following a successful Youth Leadership Programme last year, we used the learning from the programmes and from youth voice consultations to develop a series of youth-led programmes. These programmes included a partnership with Youth Sport Trust to roll out the Girls Active Programme across four secondary schools in Northumberland, and one in North Tyneside which supported disengaged, inactive teenage girls to be empowered to join the Leadership Programme and deliver activities to over 150 girls and young women.





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## HEALTHIER TOGETHER

We secured further funding from the Integrated Care System North East and North Cumbria Child Health and Wellbeing Network to develop a campaign to support the launch of the new [NHS Healthier Together website](#) and app.

The purpose of the website and app is to provide resources and advice in one place for families, practitioners and young people. We used this opportunity to ensure that physical activity advice was also included through disseminating the information across our network and developing the rollout of an Early Years Healthier Together Campaign. As part of this campaign, Early Years settings disseminated the information and new resources to families. They developed creative and varied campaigns and initiatives, such as workshops for young vulnerable mums, creating fun topics for the children and developed family videos, such as this example [here](#).

## SCHOOL GAMES

Our School Games Programme, in partnership with the Northumberland and Tyne & Wear School Games Organisers (SGOs), continues to develop, sharing learning and best practice to collectively tackle inequalities and inactivity through innovative approaches. These approaches ensure we are providing positive experiences in the right schools and with those children and young people who need it the most. With this in mind, we are proud that a strong successful collaborative inclusion offer is now embedded across both our Northumberland and Tyne and



Wear School Games County events. In 2022, we worked in partnership with our friends at County Durham Sport to develop a collaborative School Games Introduction video to share the new vision and offer for the School Games with wider system partners. - [YouTube](#)

We also engaged in a regional collaboration with our regional Active Partnership Network (Tees Valley Sport and County Durham Sport) as well as the SGOs to offer the first Regional Virtual School Games Live Easter Event which was open to all school games schools. These fun live workout sessions were designed to get everyone active whilst having fun with their friends. This was a really successful first event with an outstanding 10,895 participants who joined from 71 schools across the region.

One young person from a Northumberland school said “it was really good to get us all active before the Easter holidays and remind us how important moving our body is. It was a nice start to the day and left me energised and full of energy. The person leading it was really nice”.

After the success of the first event, it has been agreed that we will continue on this success and offer termly themed collaborative events as a region throughout 2023-2024.



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## WORKFORCE

Working closely with regional and national thriving community leads and via the regional physical activity advisor we have supported a number of VCSE organisations to build capacity and develop their workforce to be social prescribing ready.

More than 70 organisations signed up to the learning together programme and now 66 people receive monthly E-shots on social prescribing related topics such as training and funding. We have been involved in the development of two specific social prescribing sessions via the Active Through Football programme in Gateshead and are currently supporting mapping and consultation around the More Than A Game concept which is being piloted by the National Academy for Social Prescribing and NHS England.

Working alongside the Ramblers Association it was identified that Newcastle was one of a handful of areas in the country that did not have a 'Wellbeing Walks' scheme. Working in partnership with colleagues in the Newcastle Public Health Team we qualified four train the trainers, identified target areas to pilot walks programmes and delivered walk leader training to nine new leaders.

The 'Moving Healthcare Professionals' resource provides a great platform to influence and support health partners to be more confident and competent in having conversations with patients around physical activity. During 2022 – 2023 we were able to deliver five Physical Activity Clinical Champion (PACC) workshops to approximately 100 Health Care Professionals. To build on this we created a unique partnership with Newcastle University to embed PACC training into medical students'

curriculum, ensuring that when they graduate, they already have the physical activity knowledge to be physical activity advocates as part of the preventative and personalised care agenda.



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### PACC EVALUATION STATS:

# 100%

OF PARTICIPANTS FELT **MORE CONFIDENT** ABOUT **PROMOTING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY** TO PATIENTS.

# 86%

OF PARTICIPANTS SAID THAT THE TRAINING WILL HELP THEM TO BE **MORE EFFECTIVE** IN THEIR ROLE.

# 86%

OF PARTICIPANTS SAID THAT THE TRAINING **INCREASED THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING** OF THE BENEFITS OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.

# 93%

OF PARTICIPANTS HAD A **GREATER KNOWLEDGE OF THE IMPACT OF TALKING TO PATIENTS** ABOUT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.



## INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

During the year, Transport North East have been consulting on two strategies which aim to deliver the objectives of the North East Transport Plan. 'Making the Right Travel Choice' and the 'Active Travel Strategy' seek to increase the opportunities for active travel across the region and to make active travel part of the transport solution to help to tackle climate change and to improve health and well-being.

As part of the consultation process, we have been included on the steering and stakeholder groups supporting the strategy development. We have been able to input into the strategies and to support extending the reach of the consultations including linking Transport North East with community groups to establish the barriers and opportunities for creating a fully connected and integrated transport system.



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## OLDER PEOPLE

We utilised the Live Longer Better (LLB) ethos across several platforms, from arranging Sir Muir Grey to be the keynote speaker at the Northumberland thriving together launch, to embedding the [learning and training resources](#) within GPs' community health pathway systems to delivering five Physical Activity Clinical Champions (PACC) workshops to approximately 100 local partners, as well as 75 participants registering for the LLB online training programme.

Participating GP Practices have supported the delivery of 56 patient-centred physical and social activity sessions, with more planned throughout 2023/24.

A member of our team has been coopted onto the ICS executive group as the ageing well VCSE sector representative. In addition the same member of the team has also been nominated as the VCSE Rep on the ICS ageing well board. This provides a great platform for Rise to influence health system leads in regard to the role physical activity can play in relation to the priorities and outcomes detailed within the Ageing Well five-year plan.

In partnership with the NENC Applied Research Collaboration, West End Family Health, Oxford Terrace and Rawling Road Medical Group and our local third sector partners, we continue to demonstrate the value of adopting an alternative approach to proactive patient care. Centred around effective place-based partnerships, which utilise existing local community provision to facilitate a supported multi activity intervention, we have successfully supported Primary Care teams with their response to local anticipatory care and preventative health management challenges.



# PRIORITY: BUILDING BACK FAIRER

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## TOGETHER FUND

In June we secured £200,000 from the Sport England Together Fund to continue helping community organisations to deal with issues caused by Covid-19. It allowed us to provide funding of up to £10,000 a time to a wide range of organisations who have a clear understanding of the inequalities that exist in their communities, including the barriers that stop them from being active.

The fund has been used to enable community groups to continue to recover and grow and engage with their communities, supporting people to be engaged and active, particularly those organisations working with the fund's priority audiences:

- Lower socio-economic groups
- Culturally diverse communities
- Disabled people
- People with long-term health conditions.



Read more about the investment [here](#) and watch our video [here](#).

## EARLY YEARS BURSARY SCHEME

As part of our continuing support for the development of the Early Years sector, we also developed a bursary scheme. We knew from our insight that a key barrier to delivering physical activity in Early Year settings was a lack of funding to cover staff training and supplying staff to backfill when permanent staff are on training as well as resources and equipment to support their work.

Our Early Years Bursary Scheme was available to Early Years settings to improve physical activity opportunities for under 5's in a fun and accessible way, based on individual and community needs.

Projects could also tackle wider social outcomes such as school readiness, and social and communication development, but increasing sustainable physical activity had to be the focus.

As a result, 90 settings applied, and 15 bursaries were awarded to support the sector which will be used by them during 2023 - 2024.



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## ACTIVE START

During the year we also worked in collaboration with Active Cumbria to pilot [Active Start](#) throughout 2022. Active Start is a programme created to inspire and increase activity levels in the early years through activity and active play. We delivered courses to over 60 early years practitioners and received amazing feedback. Due to the fantastic feedback we will continue delivery in 2023 – 2024 with up to 100 more practitioners trained across Northumberland and Tyne & Wear. We will also be working with Sunderland Council to train up to 100 more practitioners across their local authority area.

## ACTIVE PARTNERSHIPS EARLY YEARS COMMUNITY OF LEARNING

We continue to co-chair the Active Partnerships Early Years Community of Learning group which meets termly to discuss all things Early Years going on in the Active Partnership network. We share good practice, ideas and challenges at a local level as well as working together and collaborating to champion the early years agenda at a national level.



## COACH CORE

In December 2022 we concluded year two of the Northumberland and Tyne and Wear Coach Core programme. Our focus for this cohort was again ensuring that our offer reached those young people who needed it the most. We engaged young people from all of our six local authority areas and we continued to target those young people from lower socioeconomic areas which are a priority for Rise across our work. 35% of the apprentices we recruited were from IMD 1 and 2 and in total 45% were from the areas IMD 1 – 5. In addition, 55% of the apprentices recruited were male and 45% female.

Alongside the cohort of Level 2 apprentices, during year two of the programme we also piloted the Level 3 Community Sport and Health Officer apprenticeship with five young people. At the end of the year (April 2023) across the Level 2 and Level 3 apprentices, all young people had confirmed employment beyond their apprenticeship.

We were also delighted to secure two awards at the National Coach Core Awards in London in February 2023 for Learning Coach of the Year and Employer of the Year awards. To read more about these fantastic achievements, click [here](#).



# PRIORITY: COMMUNITY BUILDING

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## OPENING SCHOOLS FACILITIES

We were delighted this year to successfully bid for a share of the Department for Education's £57 million 'Opening School Facilities' fund, which is a three year investment to provide support and investment into schools to develop and increase their extra-curricular opportunities and activities for children, young people and families whilst creating community links that open their facilities for the local community outside of the normal school day.

The programme is co-designed with and by children and young people giving them a voice to empower them through leadership and volunteering opportunities. This approach will support them to access fun needs-led inclusive and diverse opportunities that will support their personal and social development whilst looking after their physical and mental wellbeing.

The Opening Schools Facilities programme was launched to schools by us in January 2023. The target for year one (deadline 14th March 2023)

was to recruit and distribute £1million to 48 schools.

Using our insight and local knowledge we worked intensively in collaboration with wider strategic system partners to recruit the schools and support them with their action plans and funding applications to provide new extracurricular opportunities for targeted children and young people and the wider community to reduce inequalities and inactivity.



Read more about the 'Opening School Facilities' fund [here](#).



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## CREATING ACTIVE SCHOOLS

The Creating Active Schools (CAS) Framework has been developed to promote a whole systems approach to school improvement, with all stakeholders, from local authorities to school leaders and pupils playing a role in embedding physical activity in the school's ethos.

During the early part of the programme, in 2022, we began working with five schools in Newcastle to develop CAS in their schools. We developed a community of Learning Network Forum where all five schools would come together to share good practise, learning and any challenges. By the end of the year, three of the schools had already made great progress in embedding physical activity into their school approach and policies.

We also began working with Sunderland Together for Children to link in CAS and Opening Schools Facilities programmes and other areas of work with their health and well-being aims and objectives. A headteacher from a local primary school was seconded to support several schools in the area to help tackle the overweight/obesity levels in primary schools across Sunderland.



## BITE BACK – COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS PROGRAMME

The aim of the Bite Back programme is to ensure every young person has access to healthy, nutritious food, no matter where they live.

Through the Bite Back programme, we funded five grassroots youth organisations to each recruit 10 to 15 young people aged 11 to 18 years (from low income and ethnically diverse community backgrounds). Groups became youth food community champions/researchers, identifying issues that matter to them in their communities to tackle inequalities and supporting young people and families to access

affordable, healthy food. In turn this also helped to improve their physical and mental well-being through empowering and influencing change in their communities.

With support from Rise, the youth champions from each group worked to influence and educate their peers, working in partnership with businesses and strategic key partners across the local authority areas to share learning and behaviour change. Public Health teams also came on board to support the groups to ensure young people, regardless of backgrounds, have access to healthier food options in their local community to reduce obesity levels and overall inequalities.





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## FOOTBALL FOUNDATION MULTI-SPORTS INVESTMENT

At the end of 2022, we were successful in securing a three year regional role to support the Foundation's investment into new Multi-Sport facilities (Playzones, 3G pitch installation and grass pitch improvement) which will now make up 40% of their portfolio. A member of our team was therefore seconded into the part-time role of Network Manager.

Working across the Active Partnership areas of Rise, Active Cumbria, County Durham Sport, Tees Valley Sport, North Yorkshire Sport, Yorkshire Sport and Active Humber, the Network Manager provides additional capacity within the Active Partnership network to strengthen the relationship between local delivery and Sport England's 'Uniting the Movement'. This will help to ensure that the correct type of facilities are provided to the communities that need it most, whilst following the requirements drawn from local consultation.

## OLDER PEOPLE

During the year we established support to the South Tyneside clinical health pathways team, providing expert advice to develop physical activity messaging and advice to enable all clinicians and allied health professionals to have appropriate physical activity conscious conversations with patients, and support signposting/referral into relevant community-based activity opportunities. These efforts have been coupled with our ongoing coordination of the Physical Activity Clinical Champions training programme which has been successfully delivered to NHS, public health, local authority and third sector staff.

## CROWDFUNDING

Since September 2022, we have been providing support and guidance to organisations across the North East applying to Sport England's two crowdfunding streams, Active Together and Places & Spaces. As of March 2023, projects we've supported had raised over £95,000 in total, including over £40,000 of investment secured from Sport England.



To find out more about projects we've supported, click [here](#) and to view video case study from Prudhoe Golf Club, click [here](#).



# PRIORITY: TACKLING OUR CLIMATE CRISIS

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## LOCAL AUTHORITIES' APPROACHES TO CLIMATE CHANGE

During the year we researched each of the local authority areas' climate change journeys and agendas and discovered that all six local authorities are working to address climate change in different ways.

For example, Northumberland County Council has a Council Thematic Group made up of senior officers across the Council who work with the carbon team to ensure that carbon reduction is built into all new policy development.

North Tyneside have developed Action on Climate Change North Tyneside, whilst South Tyneside are driving the Council's activities to be carbon neutral by 2030.

With this knowledge we began work to see where our agendas align or cross over and how we could support the local authority agendas in relation to climate change.

## INVOLVING SCHOOLS IN CLIMATE CHANGE

We were involved in several initiatives which promoted sustainable and active travel to schools.

We supported South Tyneside Council to promote a climate change and active travel to school competition which received good interaction with the schools. Following its success, the competition will be offered again with the hope of engaging more schools.

In addition, we supported South Tyneside Council to implement school street closures within the Borough. The learning from Newcastle City Council has been shared with South Tyneside and the school street closures are being co-ordinated in partnership with Sustrans as we head into 2023/24.

We also promoted and supported Living Streets Walk to School Week and Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel. These initiatives are also continuing into 2023/24.



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## ACTIVE TRAVEL

One particular project that we successfully delivered was the [Bikeability](#) project which was funded through the Bikeability Trust. The funding was to widen the participation in cycle training particularly for underrepresented groups.

To achieve the outcomes of the project we worked with the Sunderland City Council, local schools, a local cycle provider, a community

engagement worker and a project in Sunderland to offer cycle training within a community setting.

The evaluation and learning from the project has led to cycle training being provided outside of the school setting. The learning has also since been shared with our other local authority areas to increase participation in Bikeability training across the region.

## CONSULTATION SUPPORT

During the year, there were several consultations on Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents which we contributed towards, including the Northumberland Local Plan and validation requirements document, the South Tyneside Local Plan, the South Tyneside Supplementary Planning Document for Green and Blue Spaces and the Gateshead and South Tyneside Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document.

By commenting as part of the consultation process, this opened further discussions with the local authorities and strengthened our relationships with planning officers.

Alongside this we have also been keeping up to date with National Planning Policy development to assist in our responses locally. For example, the National Planning Policy Framework consultation will ultimately influence local planning policy.



# PRIORITY: HEALTHY MINDS FOR HEALTHY LIVES

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## THE COUCH TO 2K PROGRAMME

The Couch to 2k programme supports young people aged 11-18 to gain self-confidence, improve fitness, increase physical activity and have fun via weekly walking / jogging / running sessions over 6 - 8 weeks. Building on the success of our previous Couch to 2K pilot programme and subsequent successful projects in Newcastle and Gateshead, we took the programme to Northumberland this year. Working collaboratively with The Children's Foundation and Northumberland Council's Emotional Wellbeing Support Team we used youth voice to understand and increase participation and physical and mental activity levels with looked after children and young people.



You can read more about the success of the previous programmes [here](#).

## WORKING WITH SUNDERLAND COLLEGE

During the 2022/23 academic year we supported Sunderland College to develop a student workforce to deliver physical activity sessions to inactive students and staff and deliver a well-being roadshow. As part of this work the college undertook a baseline survey with students to understand their barriers to being physically active. From the survey we produced a recommendations report to shape the delivery model which the college then implemented based on the results.

Sixteen students undertook various training courses such as boxing activator, multi-skills courses, safeguarding and first aid. The students then rolled out a programme of activities across the academic year including student v staff football and basketball. In addition, the student workforce project also enabled the college to reopen their gym which had not been possible since the pandemic due to staff capacity.



To find out more about the project watch our video [here](#).

## US ACTIVE PROJECT

During the year Rise supported US Active, a charity who utilise physical activity to support young people aged between 12 and 25 with or at risk of developing mental health difficulties to transform their lives, to employ a Youth Engagement Officer.

Our Research and Insight Development Manager worked with the Youth Engagement Officer to gather insight from young people to gain a better understanding of their behaviours and motivations around physical activity. From this work the Youth Engagement Officer has created a Youth Board to support the direction of the charity and ensure it is meeting the needs of young people in the future. In addition, through the Youth Engagement Officer the charity has now forged links with Newcastle Skills Hub, Gateshead Looked After Children Team, Sunderland College and multiple social prescribing networks to support youth mental health through physical activity.



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## PLACE-BASED WORK IN BERWICK

Over the past 12 months we gleaned a more in-depth understanding of the wider social health and wellbeing issues faced by young adult males across Berwick and the surrounding rural areas.

Due to our learning and the [work we are doing](#) we have presented our Impact Report to the Northumberland Physical Activity Strategy Group. The presentation showcased how the asset-based approach we have adopted in Berwick empowers the community and provides provision which has long term sustainability.

We also provided insight for New Local in conjunction with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation around deep poverty and destitution and provided insight to the North of Tyne Combined Authority research around working to support residents who are economically inactive. Our Key Worker also presented at the Northumberland VCS Liaison Group, highlighting the challenges we have faced securing support for young people with learning disabilities transitioning into adulthood.

Overall, we saw more engagement from young men with diagnosed and undiagnosed

neurodiverse issues which has a huge impact on their health and wellbeing. In addition, we continued to see similar trends in engagement from young men who are unemployed, socially isolated and living in debt/poverty who lack support from statutory services with their health and wellbeing.

## MIND – MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS FOR SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Over the past 12 months we have supported MIND locally and regionally to promote mental health awareness training across the sector. The training was developed by Mind, Sport England, 1st4Sport and UK Coaching. 34 people have accessed this training to increase knowledge and understanding of mental health within a sport and physical activity context.



# PRIORITY: HARNESSING DATA, DIGITAL & TECH

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## INSIGHT AND KNOWLEDGE

The use of data and technology has continued to play a significant role in our work.

We have utilised a number of systems to support us to work more efficiently and be better informed with insight and knowledge.

We have been using all opportunities to listen to our partners, participants and end users to learn about what works and what doesn't, the challenges and barriers faced, as well as the routes to successful outcomes they have discovered.

Existing data and insight gathered from national sources including the NHS, public health, the Office for National Statistics and Sport England plays a big part in informing our decision making.

Many of our partners also hold their own sector specific data which has also been a key element of informing decisions and co-designing activities and work.



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## ACTIVE LIVES

In December 2022, we produced a summary of the local Children and Young People Active Lives results, covering the academic year 2021 – 2022, which can be found [here](#). The report summarised the sport and physical activity behaviours of 5 to 16-year-olds, providing us with data for the six local authorities of Northumberland and Tyne & Wear. The report showed continued progress towards increasing physical activity among our children and young people, but also that there is still the need for more work to do.

In 2022 we revamped and relaunched our Active Lives Children and Young People Survey approach and the way we engage with schools to make the process more accessible and streamlined. We developed a bespoke 'Digital Hub' to enable schools to find up-to-date information about the survey. The hub also includes information on the benefits and incentives to schools of participating in the Active Lives process, as well as the DfE Healthy Schools Rating Scheme. This new approach proved to be very successful in improving the return rate of surveys from our schools, which in turn will be reflected when the results of the survey are published in December 2023.

## TRIALLING NEW CONCEPTS

During the summer of 2022 we worked in partnership with Northumberland County Council and The Great Northumberland Forest, to launch a pilot project for staff at Northumberland County Council, utilising a free-to-use app to plant trees in the Great Northumberland Forest.

The app converts users' recorded physical activity into donations to a range of environmental / social projects. We funded the creation of a Northumberland County Council team on the app to convert their physical activity into tree donations for the Great Northumberland Forest.

The concept testing was a success which has led to us investigating the development of our own bespoke app that we can provide to organisations to encourage their employees to be more active.



To see the summary of the pilot project, click [here](#).



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## SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS

Throughout the year, we continued to work hard to ensure that children, young people and adults at risk can take part in physical activity opportunities in a safe environment. We once again undertook a comprehensive self-assessment and produced an annual plan to improve our safeguarding practices.

We completed numerous actions over the course of the year to help safeguard children, young people and adults at risk, including appointing a Board safeguarding champion for the first time, reviewing and updating the safeguarding section of our website, ensuring safeguarding was embedded across all of our key programmes, providing knowledge and guidance to partners, and providing/accessing training opportunities internally and externally.

## INVESTORS IN THE ENVIRONMENT

In January 2023, we were delighted to announce that we'd been awarded the Investors in the Environment Bronze level accreditation.

The Investors in the Environment accreditation demonstrates our commitment to achieving net zero carbon emissions and to minimising our environmental impact. The Bronze level accreditation also helps us with our SME Climate Hub pledge and 10-year Rise Together strategy to halve our carbon emissions by 2030 and to reach net zero emissions by 2050.

To read more about this achievement, click [here](#).

In 2023/24 we will continue with our commitment by beginning to work towards the Silver level accreditation.

## PARTNER SURVEY

Having scored a very high Net Promoter Score (NPS) of +77 in our 2021-2022 partner survey, we were delighted when our 2022-2023 partner survey returned an NPS of +89, demonstrating the value and support that we provide to our partners on a daily basis. In addition, 97% of respondents strongly agreed/agreed that the impact of their work was increased by working with us.





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## OUR TEAM

During 2022, we strengthened our team with several new appointments. We recruited:

- a Business Development Director to develop and implement our income diversification and sustainability strategy;
- a Trusts and Foundations Manager to diversify our income streams;
- an Administration Officer to provide support to the team;
- a Research and Insight Development Manager to ensure that our decision making would be based on robust evidence and the impact of our work is captured; and
- a new Strategic Lead to direct and manage our work with Children and Young People.

We also worked with Northumbria University to recruit a Graphic Design Intern and with Sunderland University to recruit a Research and Insight Intern.



## GOVERNANCE

As a Tier 3 funded organisation, we are required to meet the highest standards of governance as set out by Sport England, in addition to the governance standards set by the Charity Commission. During the year, we have therefore had to collate and provide a plethora of evidence to Sport England as to our compliance with Tier 3 of their Code of Governance requirements. The final aspect of our compliance, which must be completed by Spring 2024 but about which work has already started, is the creation of Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) that is fit for modern times. Our EDI Sub-Committee has overseen our EDI Action Plan 2021-2023 and has

now started in supporting the transition to the DIAP format, which is designed to ensure that our work in the EDI space is transformative.

## CYBER ESSENTIALS

Cyber Essentials is a government backed self-assessment which gives confirmation that an organisation is taking correct protection against a wide variety of the most common cyber-attacks.

We undertook certification to reassure our Board, team and our partners that we are continuously working to secure our IT against cyber attack and to give peace of mind that our defences will protect against the vast majority of common cyber-attacks simply because these attacks are looking for targets which do not have the Cyber Essentials technical controls in place.

We completed the self-assessment in June 2022 and received certification that we had successfully completed Cyber Essentials.



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