

**Active  
Gloucestershire**

**Children and Young People  
Impact Report 2022**



**we  
can  
move**

# Our journey so far

## The need for change

Our vision is for everyone in Gloucestershire to live healthy and happy lives. We know that moving more can improve both physical and mental health. However, across our county, stark health inequalities, increasing mental health challenges and rising obesity amongst young people are contributing to physical inactivity levels. Today, nearly 1 in 4 adults are not moving enough to benefit their health.

It's therefore clear that despite some of the great work we have been involved in, too often discrete, short term physical activity programmes aimed at getting some of the least active groups in our county moving more, have proved largely unsuccessful in delivering long-term, sustainable change. We needed to try something new.

## Working differently

Over the past three years, we have been testing a new whole systems approach to tackling inactivity in our county, based on a theory of behaviour change: a social movement, called **we can move**. At its core it acknowledges that many factors influence how physically active someone is and that no single organisation can effectively change the status quo on their own and all of these factors work together as a 'system.' The movement unites people behind its mission to get the least active people in our county moving more. By addressing all aspects of our daily life, it aims to create an environment in which everyone can become physically active. This approach is far from straightforward. It can feel messy and difficult and often lacks clear and obvious solutions.

As the supporting body for **we can move**, we recognise that we need to work differently and that we now have a role to play in harnessing the power, resources and capabilities of others in the system. As such, we have stepped away from directly delivering projects and transitioned into a backbone organisation that connects leaders from across all levels of the system and inspires and enables them to get more people moving. Our main functions include driving systems change, influencing vision and strategy across different levels of the system, strengthening partnerships, relationship building, mobilising funding and supporting aligned activities.



## Supporting young people in a new way

Given this shift in our role during the last 12-18 months, our children and young people team has spent time trying to identify and understand the factors that have fostered positive behaviour change across the various areas of our work. We have started to co-design approaches with partners, communities and commissioners, focusing on what we can share and learn from each other whilst at the same time, increasing our capacity and impact across the system. Greater funding autonomy from Sport England has enabled us to embrace this radical new approach to working.

Whilst our new role can make demonstrating impact more challenging than in previous years, in the following report, we have identified some of the organisations we have influenced, the projects we have supported and the impact these have made.



# Play Nurture in schools

Play Gloucestershire is a local charity that delivers active and creative outdoor play opportunities for hundreds of our county's school children each year. It has been commissioned by Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to deliver an 8 week continual professional development programme called Play Nurture Plus to staff across twenty of the county's schools. Based firmly on the belief that play can boost a child's enjoyment and progress at school, the programme will train staff to become passionate advocates of active play across their school setting. Over three terms, and alongside Play Gloucestershire's Play Rangers, these newly trained play champions will then deliver therapeutic child-led play sessions, co-created with pupils that have been referred to the project. By harnessing the power of play nurture, this pilot programme aims to help schools understand and meet the needs of some of its most vulnerable pupils, many of whom have complex physical and emotional challenges.

## Projected outcomes

### Build resilience and improve the wellbeing of over 200 vulnerable pupils

in schools that are in areas of high need, with over 20 staff in 20 schools trained to lead on play nurture across the whole school system

## Our role

**Connecting Play Gloucestershire, GHLL and NHS commissioners, resulted in £50,000 of funding to support this programme.**

By **connecting** key stakeholders within the system we have:

- **helped to secure a legacy** of play nurture within our county's schools
- **raised the profile** of Play Gloucestershire
- **opened up conversations** between commissioners and Play Gloucestershire and provided business development support to help find creative ways to upscale this programme across the county
- **supported the evaluation** of the programme, **celebrating and showcasing** its success stories, thereby **helping to build confidence** and buy in within schools.

To find out more about this project and our involvement in it, click here:

Watch Video





**I did not expect the joy, commitment and excitement the project has brought to the children. You can visually see a difference in all who have taken part and the positive impact this has made on them after each session.**

**School Play  
Champion**

**Active Gloucestershire are a vital partner in this project, initially introducing us to GHLL and Gloucestershire's CCG, gathering support and important funding for the project, but now helping to develop the project into something scalable and sustainable.**

**Ben Morris**

Team Leader, Play  
Gloucestershire



# Gloucestershire Holiday Activities & Food Programme

As part of the national roll out of the Holiday Activities and Food Programme, Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) received a £1.5 million grant from the Department for Education in January 2021, to tackle hunger and inactivity faced by thousands of vulnerable children across the county.

This enabled authorities from across the county, to commission physical activity and food provision for children eligible for free school meals, throughout the six weeks of the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays during 2021. It also offered parents, carers and children access to nutritional education as well as signposting them to support.

## Outcomes

Page 7

The summer programme which ran from 2nd to 27th August 2021 had real impact across the county:

**13,000**

vulnerable children reached

**57% of whom**

were recipients of free school meals.

**63 providers**

from across the county received funding to support young people with a further

**115 providers**

supported via matched funding.

### **Raising the profile**

of a number of **smaller voluntary organisations**, enabling them to showcase their capabilities and expertise.

Demonstrating the value of co-produced initiatives.

### **Strengthening relations**

and increasing trust **between commissioners, district leads and voluntary organisations.**

## Our role

- We connected county commissioners, district leads and community organisations through the HAF localities group.
- We increased confidence and belief in commissioning at a local level.
- As part of the GCC HAF **strategic group**, we play a countywide advisory role around physical activity.

**Working with Active Gloucestershire as part of we can move has provided an important link into the Holiday Activities and Food Programme launched in 2021. By spotting opportunities, consulting with partners and sharing a wider perspective on the programme regionally and nationally they have helped inform our city-wide programme which is built from the grassroots up. This has also increased dialogue between those working at a community level and senior commissioners.**

**Mark Gale**

CEO, Gloucestershire  
Gateway Trust



# Yoga in schools

During early 2021, we brought together Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning (GHLL), Shift Yoga and the Gloucestershire School Games organisers, to co-design a yoga/mindful movement training programme for staff within Gloucestershire's schools. The aim was to address the increasing concern around the mental health of young people across the county, by upskilling staff to support them with emotional health concerns.

## Outcomes

**£7,000** of funding provided.

**36 staff in 31 schools** trained to **deliver and lead yoga in their school.**

**94%** of staff participants stated they were **committed to continuing delivery** within their schools.

## Our role

**By connecting key organisations across the system, we have:**

- **connected** yoga practitioners, GHLL, School Games organisers and school pastoral and PE leads
- **co-funded** £7000 for this programme in partnership with GHLL
- raised the profile of the impact of this project
- **supported** and **funded** the development of a countywide yoga offer, to introduce more yoga into classrooms and wider school communities.

To find out more about this project and our involvement in it, click here:

Watch Video



Yoga Evaluation



**I have been doing 3 sessions a week since finishing the course, supporting Year 5 and Year 6 children and also one for staff. My Year 6 children have told me it's making a huge difference to their lives at school – with increased focus and improved behaviour.**



**School Wellbeing  
Ambassador**

# Opening school facilities

In April 2021, Sport England invited Active Gloucestershire to participate in the second round of their 'Opening School Facilities' programme, which aims to encourage schools to open their facilities after school and to the wider community. Having secured a grant of £161,000, we began by prioritising primary schools and secondary schools across the county based on the number of pupils eligible for free school meals and the number of children with SEND statements on roll. We then worked with the county's School Games organisers to shortlist partner schools. These schools were then invited to apply for grant funding to support their proposals for getting their most inactive pupils active after school and forging links with local sport and physical activity groups.

## Outcomes

During 2020/21,

**15 Gloucestershire**

schools specifically targeted for their work with SEND and inactive pupils, received grants totalling

**£131,300**

The programme helped to **strengthen links between schools, community coaches and clubs**

## Our role

- We **applied for** and **secured** the grant funding from the Department for Education.
- We commissioned School Games organisers to research, develop and solicit applications from targeted schools.
- We **developed** an appropriate and effective grant management process.
- We **carried out** monitoring and evaluation of the programme, **helping to assess** what worked and what could be improved.



**At Watermoor, we have noticed an increase in skipping and active play at break times thanks to the OSF grant, with all children receiving their own skipping rope after having a workshop with Dan the Skipping Man. Thanks to support from Active Gloucestershire we have been able to purchase equipment and train staff for both archery and boxing, which our children can't wait to do.**

**Pastoral Support  
Teacher**

Watermoor CoE  
Primary School

# New and emerging work areas

## Using physical activity to support emotional health: physical activity on referral

We are piloting a **physical activity on referral programme** in schools; connecting young people from the Young Minds Matter referral pathway to physical activity opportunities, to support their physical and emotional wellbeing. This programme is a step towards putting physical activity at the very heart of the conversation about young people's wellbeing and supporting those services connected to young people. Our role is to pilot this approach, to share learning with Gloucestershire NHS and to provide recommendations on how services like these can use physical activity to support young people at an early stage.

Active Gloucestershire have played an integral part in piloting and setting up some exciting new social prescribing projects across Gloucestershire, developing and promoting physical activity on prescription. Throughout the pilot they have adapted and moulded the project to suit the needs of the children, young people, families and schools. Their person centred, holistic approach stands out in all aspects of the work and the project continues to expand across Gloucestershire, broadening the reach and engaging more young people in activity.

### Stephanie Watts

Lead Senior Mental Health Practitioner  
Young Minds Matter

## Youth development work within our communities

In partnership with Young Gloucestershire and led by our new youth development officer, we are taking a new approach to supporting young people in our communities. We will encourage young people from deprived communities to develop their collective voice and empower them to explore the benefits of active participation within youth work. We will continue to support local community builders and groups to embed activity across the groups they support and to build capacity within this sector.

## Supporting new mothers across the county

We are scoping partnership opportunities for a co-designed programme which will use social marketing to build physical activity into the lives of mothers across the county in a way which is more realistic and accessible for their needs.

## Creating whole school behaviour change to support and sustain physical activity in schools

We have commissioned Move More to test the Creating Active Schools framework in 12 schools this academic year. The project will focus on working with school leadership teams to change the school system and adopt a whole school approach to physical activity. We will share learning as part of the national Creating Active Schools network, evaluate impact and explore ways to upscale this across schools, adopting a head teacher led approach.

This will look at how we can sustainably embed programmes like our hugely successful **Daily Mile** campaign, across the school system.

[Find out more about Daily Mile](#)



## Supporting traditional networks through change

We are supporting our School Games organiser network to broaden their offer to schools and run events for young people who are typically less active and who wouldn't ordinarily represent their school at sporting events. The aim is to enable those participating, to experience physical activity more positively and to support schools as they use physical activity and sport to support the needs of all young people.



## ✔ Our learnings

- We have discovered that “how” the work is done is what is key to our success and progress.
- We have had to adopt a new mindset and be willing to learn from others by asking more questions.
- True partnership work takes considerable time and can be “messy” – but if trust can be built around a shared purpose, the potential for greater impact is considerable.
- We have had to adopt a test and learn approach and be open to honest feedback from a range of partners, stakeholders and others within the movement, which has, at times, felt uncomfortable.
- Change isn’t always easy but we are committed to learning about this new approach and sharing our findings with others.
- We have come to understand that complex outcomes require a shift away from traditional measures of success.



## Join the movement

Find out more at:

[wecanmove.net](http://wecanmove.net)

[activegloucestershire.org](http://activegloucestershire.org)

Follow us:



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