

Supporting Community Activation around Wellbeing in the City

Sport & Physical Activity – Oxford City Council

The current landscape:

- The impact of COVID-19 on our community's wellbeing has been huge with the [latest data from the ONS](#) showing that '...the pandemic is taking its toll on people's mental health, with feelings of life satisfaction, happiness and feeling that things are worthwhile dropping with the early 2021 lockdown'.
- In the latest wave of the [Mental Health Foundation's UK-wide, long-term study of how the pandemic is affecting people's mental health](#); 'Over half (54%) of the adult UK population have felt anxious or worried in the previous two weeks because of the pandemic.' And 'Almost a quarter of people (23%) reported feeling lonely in the previous two weeks.'
- [A recent UK survey from University College London](#) also showed that 40% of people are doing less 'exercise' in this lockdown compared to previous lockdowns, 36% reported reduced involvement with arts and crafts, and 30% said they were less engaged with their hobbies.
- According to Sport England's most recent [Active Lives Survey](#) the negative impact of the pandemic over the initial phase of lockdown disproportionately impacted those from lower social groups (NS-SEC 6-8), the 55-74 and 75+ age groups, those living with a disability or long term health condition and those from BAME backgrounds; widening existing inequalities further.
- In Oxford there is already a life expectancy gap of as much as 15 years between the most and least deprived areas of the city. <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2019-08-06/dying-15-years-younger-the-difference-between-rich-and-poor-in-oxford>
- We know that sport and physical activity offers huge benefits to our physical and mental health; it can lower blood pressure, improve heart and lung health, strengthen muscles and bones, improve balance, help manage or lose weight, increase flexibility and mobility, reduce stress and anxiety and improve sleep.
- Factors that contribute towards a person's sense of wellbeing though are vast as highlighted in '[Oxford's new and emerging communities - views on wellbeing](#)' a report recently published by Healthwatch Oxfordshire and Oxford Community Action:

'Wellbeing is supported by:

People described many different sources of support for their wellbeing- and showed resilience, creativity, and huge desire to support those around them. Family, friends, faith and community were central in this.

- *Family and friends are a source of pride and support*
- *Faith is key-giving strength, refuge and support*
- *Community is central- value of being part of something, with huge energy towards giving, contributing, and improving community*
- *Other factors- including work, occupation, exercise, leisure all support sense of wellbeing- as well as having basic needs met including food, money, housing, and a sense of safety*

When feeling stressed or worried, most people first turn to friends and family, faith, and exercise to support themselves.'

A whole system approach:

- The stark health inequalities in Oxford cannot be addressed without an approach that looks across the sectors at all these factors that contribute towards a person's wellbeing and understands how these connect.
- 'Oxford's new and emerging communities - views on wellbeing' also highlights the importance of delivering this with Asset Based Community Development and Community Activation at the heart – designing and building solutions **with** the community rather than delivering to the community:

'The message is loud and clear- that to build access, trust and create culturally appropriate services- communities want to see support designed and delivered with their input, within community settings, and building on community networks.'

- Oxford City Council are currently developing with partners and residents a Thriving Communities Strategy; a discussion paper is currently being drafted:

'The purpose of our work on the Thriving Communities Strategy is to bring together leisure, culture and communities to tackle inequalities; this can be done by encouraging better design of neighbourhoods and spaces where healthy lifestyles are the norm (also called healthy place shaping), developing skills, ensuring growth is inclusive, strengthening communities and making access to services fairer.'

'Leisure, culture and community services can provide the most accessible and inclusive solutions for prevention and rehabilitation, as well as having a positive impact in many other ways, including educational attainment, economic productivity, crime reduction, loneliness, and engaging disadvantaged communities.'

The scope of the Thriving Communities Strategy uses a framework which moves towards this whole systems approach:

- People – *the service, activities and grants that are provided*
 - Pride – *celebrating heritage, encouraging trust and belonging, ensuring inclusivity*
 - Place – *inclusive spaces and places*
 - Progress – *we will demonstrate the impact of our work and continually learn*
- Examples of opportunities already being taken to influence the wider system and integrate wellbeing include:
 - Locality Hubs – Initially in terms of Emergency Response to COVID-19, but now ongoing as a new way of working through the integration of local services to improve service delivery, customer satisfaction and community partnership. Connections across sectors have been forged which allow a more holistic approach to be taken in responding to the needs of those being referred/self-referring into the Locality Hubs.
 - [Community Impact Zone](#) - A partnership of multiple organisations that have come together around a shared mission to 'make sure everyone in Oxford can benefit from opportunities to lead their best life. Through collaboration, early intervention initiatives and community activities, we will work to tackle intergenerational poverty and disadvantage.'

- **Healthy Place Shaping** – To support the broader healthy place shaping within Oxford, Oxford City Council have highlighted core work strands interconnected with a range of other activities across the council such as the locality hubs, regeneration and work within communities; to address inequalities. The works strands are not intended to encompass all the council’s activities, but to show the areas we are prioritising within the healthy place shaping programme. These are:
 - Insight led services
 - Leisure restart and renew
 - East Oxford’s back garden – healthy recreation for residents
 - Active travel
 - Active design – healthy places and spaces
 - GO Active Outdoors – see below for more information
 - GO Active Families – currently on pause due to COVID-19
- **Local Cycling and Walking Activation Plan (LCWAP)** – Collated by our Healthy Place Shaping Consultant and fed into by a broad range of local partners; this is currently being driven forward by the Active Travel in the City group, Chaired by Oxford City Councillor Louise Upton. The LCWAP highlights the known barriers to active travel facing our communities plus current and suggested interventions to help overcome these barriers.

Current Physical Activity provision in the city supporting resident’s wellbeing:

Using the [International Society for Physical Activity and Health’s \(ISPAH\) Eight Investments that work for physical activity](#) as a structure; we can see there is significant work going on across the city to decrease inactivity, reduce inequalities and improve health and wellbeing:

ISPAH’s Investment Area	Current interventions	Brief overview incl. lead organisation	Further information
Whole-of-School programmes	realPE/realPE at Home, realPlay and realFoundations	<p>Oxford City Council</p> <p>realPE - Upskilling Primary School Teachers around physical education so they can deliver high quality lessons that link to the curriculum and have a sustainable model for delivery.</p> <p>realPE at Home – Since March 2020 families have been given a login to access resources for the home.</p> <p>realPlay and realFoundations – an Early Years Foundation Stage programme that</p>	<p>https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20230/sport_and_physical_activity/1014/school_physical_activity</p> <p>14 Primary Schools in the city currently signed up to realPE</p> <p>Total no. of users for realPE at Home so far = 1013</p>

		uses physical activity as the driver for children’s learning.	
	Forest Schools	<p>Oxford City Council</p> <p>Outdoor classroom sessions delivered in parks and green spaces across the city for local schools.</p>	<p>https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20230/sport_and_physical_activity/1014/school_physical_activity</p> <p>“The children have really enjoyed Forest School this year and it feels more important than ever that they should get some quality playtime with their friends having missed out on so much in lockdown. We are very grateful for the opportunity to use Rock Edge to support this, so thank you to you and all the team...” <i>Kate Jaeger, Reception Teacher, Windmill Primary</i></p> <p>“I have heard such great things about forest school - from both pupils and staff alike!” <i>Matthew Watt, Head teacher Tyndale Primary</i></p>
	Street Tag	<p>Oxfordshire County Council</p> <p>A fun, free, smartphone app that turns physical activity into a game and converts walking, running and cycling into Street Tag points (tags). There is currently a County Schools Leaderboard and County Community Leaderboard.</p>	<p>https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/social-and-health-care/public-health-and-wellbeing/street-tag</p> <p>10 city schools engaged in the last season ending in January 2021.</p>
Active Transport	Walk Once a Week (WOW)	<p>Oxfordshire County Council – Public Health</p> <p>A pupil-led initiative where children self-report how they get to school every day – now using the interactive WOW Travel Tracker.</p>	<p>https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/products-and-services/projects/wow</p>
	School Streets		
	Park & Stride scheme		

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	Bikes for Key Workers	<p>Active Oxfordshire/Cyclox</p> <p>A project providing bikes for key workers across Oxford city.</p>	<p>https://www.cyclox.org/index.php/2020/04/28/bikes-for-key-workers-project-launches-in-oxford-city/</p>
Active Urban Design	Regeneration projects	<p>Oxford City Council</p> <p>Oxford City Council are leading projects that support the vision of the Strategic Economic Plan for Oxfordshire and are supporting a variety of partner schemes being delivered in the city.</p> <p>Of particular relevance is the Community Centre regeneration programme which includes Blackbird Leys, Bullingdon and East Oxford Community Centres.</p>	<p>https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20182/regeneration-and-development/948/regeneration-and-development-in-oxford</p>
	Barton Healthy New Town (BHNT)	<p>Oxford City Council</p> <p>A new Community Health Development Officer started in post November 2020 to continue the work of the BHNT project to improve the health and</p>	<p>https://www.oxford.gov.uk/bartonhealthynewtown (Please note these webpages are currently being updated)</p>

		wellbeing of Barton residents.	
Healthcare	Social prescribing	Oxfed / Hedena Health Oxford City Council ensures activities are posted on the LiveWellOxfordshire webpage to be utilised by Social Prescribers in the city.	https://www.oxfed.uk/about-social-prescribing-service https://livewell.oxfordshire.gov.uk/
	GO Active Get Healthy – with Diabetes	Oxford City Council/Active Oxfordshire A programme designed to support people living with diabetes to increase their physical activity levels as a way to better manage their condition.	https://www.getoxfordshireactive.org/about-go-active-get-healthy From the November 2020 Evaluation Report: 'Statistically significant outcomes were seen in improvements in physical activity levels as well as perceived health related quality of life achieved by the participants in this programme.'
Public Education, including Mass Media	Make Every Contact Count (MECC) & Physical Activity Awareness Workshop	Oxfordshire County Council/Oxford City Council One of the Sport & Physical Activity Officers at Oxford City Council is training to be able to deliver the MECC and Physical Activity Awareness training free of charge to other Council Officers, Members and for local community/voluntary organisations.	https://www.makeeverycontactcount.co.uk/training/
	Walk Leader training	Oxford City Council Free training for local volunteers to become Walk Leaders and ongoing support to set up and lead regular Health Walks in the community	https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20278/sports_and_physical_activities/725/health_walks_in_oxford Hear from one of our Health Walk Leaders on why she enjoyed being a Health Walk Leader: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XuUMZatkRgc&t=1s
	#MoveWithMayorMark campaign	Oxford City Council Social media campaign with Oxford Lord Mayor	https://www.oxford.gov.uk/MoveWithMayorMark

		to encourage Oxford residents to move more through videos of the Lord Mayor trying various activities and sharing these and his journey on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Launched Jan 2021.	
Sport and Recreation for all	Local sports clubs	A variety of local sports clubs with teams for children, adults and people living with a disability.	https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20230/sport_and_physical_activity/1206/sports_clubs
	Local Leisure Centres, Pools and Ice Rink	Oxford City Council/Fusion Lifestyle	https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20230/sport_and_physical_activity/1206/sports_clubs
	Parks and green spaces	Oxford City Council	https://www.oxford.gov.uk/homepage/195/parks_and_open_spaces
	Ping! Oxford	Oxford City Council Annual festival of free table tennis at the outdoor community table tennis facilities across the city.	https://www.pingengland.co.uk/oxford/
Workplaces	Sport England's Active Employee Toolkit	Tips and tools employers can use to support the health and wellbeing of their employees through physical activity.	https://www.sportengland.org/campaigns-and-our-work/active-employee-toolkit
Community-wide Programmes	GO Active Outdoors	Oxford City Council New online resources created to bring together as much information as possible about where to get more active outdoors and the range of activities available in the city's parks, green spaces and on the waterways.	https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20315/go_active_outdoors Over 350,000 impressions made on social media during initial 6 week launch in summer 2020.
	Activity Hub	Oxford City Council Online directory of virtual activities – 'Ideas	https://www.oxford.gov.uk/activityhub

		to help you move, smile and stay well!'	
	Youth Ambition	<p>Oxford City Council</p> <p>Engaging with young people in positive youth work activities to help them to broaden their knowledge, skills and capabilities.</p>	https://www.oxford.gov.uk/youthambition/
	Dancin' Oxford	<p>Oxford City Council</p> <p>The leading dance organisation in Oxfordshire working with those involved in dance provision to enhance the profile, quality and variety of dance activity in the city.</p>	https://www.dancinoxford.co.uk/
	Active Reach	<p>Active Oxfordshire</p> <p>Partnership place based project in the Leys, Oxford.</p>	https://www.activeoxfordshire.org/active-reach