

# The National Lottery Community Fund – Written evidence (NPS0086)

## Introduction

We welcome the opportunity to respond to this inquiry, which is particularly timely given the current coronavirus pandemic. This public health emergency has highlighted stark health inequalities and the importance of physical activity. We therefore support the Committee's focus on considering the effectiveness of current sport and recreation policies and initiatives, and how more active and healthy lifestyles can be facilitated.

Sport does far more than merely improve physical health. Our response emphasises the importance of supporting and strengthening communities, now and as part of the post-pandemic recovery. Sport, recreation and physical activity are some of the ways strong, cohesive communities can be fostered. They can also serve as vehicles for social change, whether to reduce loneliness, tackle youth crime, or boost employment opportunities.

As a significant funder of sport activities, we focus on the advantages of our unique approach. We understand sport and recreation in the broadest sense, funding a diverse range of projects that encourage people to move. Being based in the communities we fund allows us to understand local contexts. We believe communities know best what is needed, funding ideas and projects that enable communities to realise their vision.

Our response highlights key learnings from our funding, including the myriad benefits of sport and recreation for communities, the importance of partnership working in local areas, how best to tackle underrepresentation, and learnings drawn from our investment in safeguarding. Based on our evidence, we conclude with a series of key recommendations, which could help inform a new national plan with community wellbeing at its heart.

## Key messages

- 1. The importance of supporting and strengthening communities**, now and as part of a post-pandemic future. Sport and recreation can help connect people and communities.
- 2. The National Lottery Community Fund is a significant funder of sport and recreation**, distributing millions of pounds to communities so that they can lead more active lifestyles, as part of our wider investment in communities. We understand sport and recreation in the broadest possible sense and fund projects and activities that transform communities.
- 3. Key learnings from our funding**, including:
  - Benefits of sport and recreation for communities
    - Improving physical health
    - Improving mental health
    - Improving wellbeing and reducing loneliness through social prescribing

- Strengthening communities
- Improving place and space
- Importance of partnership working in local areas
- Tackling underrepresentation
- Learnings on safeguarding
- A national plan for community wellbeing

#### **4. Recommendations**

##### **The National Lottery Community Fund**

The National Lottery Community Fund is the largest community funder in the UK. We are proud to award money raised by National Lottery players to communities across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. At the heart of our work is the belief that when people are in the lead, communities thrive. Every year we distribute over £600 million to communities across the UK, making circa 11,000 grants. We fund thousands of local groups, driven by small numbers of motivated, enterprising individuals, who help many more people in their villages, towns and counties with small grants of £300 to larger multimillion-pound investments. Over 80% of our grants are under £10,000 and over 60% of awards go to organisations with turnovers of less than £100,000.

We are based in the communities that we serve, funding and engaging with local communities across the UK. In the last five years, our funding has reached every constituency, every local authority and 90% of all wards. Half of our funding went to projects based outside London and other core cities, with 30% of our funding going to projects in the 20% most deprived areas. We have a focus on delivering grants to new organisations, not just existing grantees. Last year, over 40% of organisations funded received grants from us for the first time.

We have a long history of awarding grants to organisations that promote sport, recreation and physical activity in local communities. To date, across the UK we have invested over £542 million in projects that involve sport, although our reach is considerably greater given the range of physical activities that go beyond the formal classification of "sport." People use this funding to do extraordinary things, taking the lead to improve their lives and communities.

##### **Key messages in more detail**

##### **Building strong communities**

The coronavirus pandemic has had a profound impact on all our lives. This crisis has not been felt equally, however, highlighting and exacerbating inequalities experienced by some communities even before the outbreak began. Recent analysis indicates that the pandemic has hit people from ethnic minority groups, those living in more deprived areas, and those in insecure work especially hard.<sup>1</sup>

As we look toward the post-pandemic future, supporting and strengthening communities must be at the centre of our recovery and renewal efforts. Sport,

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<sup>1</sup> The Health Foundation (2020), [The same pandemic, unequal impacts](#)

recreation and physical activity play important roles in bringing people together and are just some examples of how strong, cohesive communities can be fostered. Enabling our communities to adapt and recover will require significant investment and support, and they must be in the lead to shape where we go from here. We now have an opportune moment to reimagine and realise a society where all our communities can flourish.

In this particularly challenging context, we have seen the voluntary and community sector adapt rapidly to support the most vulnerable in communities and to enable community action. The sector has played an invaluable role during the pandemic and will continue to be central to the recovery. We have gathered insights from our colleagues across the UK about what the voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors and funders have learned from the crisis, and their reflections on the way the sector should move forward in the next few years. This included gathering insights from over 400 organisations and hosting a number of convening events, building up a rich evidence base. Despite the acute human and economic costs of this crisis, it's clear that it also presents opportunities for community organisations, funders and wider society to rethink the ways social issues are tackled and how communities can be supported to thrive.

### **Our funding approach**

People understand what's needed in their communities better than anyone. In recognition of this, we are based in the communities we serve and support ideas and projects that matter to people and communities. We use our funding and relationships to help create stronger, more connected communities. We are a significant funder of sport and recreation, distributing millions of pounds to communities so that they can lead more healthy and active lifestyles, as part of our wider investment in communities.

As this inquiry rightly states, a broad view of sport and recreation should be taken and all activities that support an active lifestyle must be considered. In the same vein, we recognise sport, recreation and physical activity beyond definitions of formal and organised sport. Our funding therefore extends to both formal and informal grassroots physical activities, whether tea dances for older people, surfing for disadvantaged children and young people, or gardening projects as part of men's sheds. Community-based approaches to sport and recreation ensure that activities fulfil local needs and aspirations and are flexible and responsive to the changing needs of communities now and in the future.

This ethos of people being in the lead runs through the heart of all our work, enabling us to fund a hugely diverse range of organisations to deliver activities for their community. As a result, many of our grant holders who play a crucial role in promoting more active lifestyles do not have a health or sport background. Instead, they are trusted, valued groups embedded in their local communities. These organisations can tap into local knowledge and relationships, encouraging physical activity among those less likely to engage with traditional sports providers.

### **Key learnings from our funding**

#### Benefits of sport and recreation for people and communities

Improving physical health -

Overcoming the barriers to sports and recreation and encouraging more active lifestyles bring undoubted benefits to the physical health of individuals. Even before the pandemic took hold, there were stark differences in health outcomes across the UK. In England, for instance, the gap in healthy life expectancy at birth between the most and least disadvantaged areas is 19 years.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, across the UK there are high rates of physical inactivity with a third of Britons deemed physically inactive.<sup>3</sup> Tackling health inequalities is more urgent than ever due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Promoting sport and physical activity will be essential if we are to empower people and communities to embrace healthy and active lifestyles.

Our funding has enabled many communities to boost their physical health and wellbeing. We funded a five-year project by the Northern Fells Group in Cumbria, for instance, which delivered a wide range of activities for the benefit of people living in seven sparsely populated parishes with limited access to services.<sup>4</sup> This included the establishment of a gentle exercise class for the community, based on insights into the local demographic. Tailoring activities in this way has ensured high levels of participation and satisfaction. As one participant recounted, "I decided to join the Northern Fells Gentle Exercise Class to at least keep me mobile. What I didn't expect was how much I really enjoyed it, and meeting the people, who like me found certain exercises virtually impossible... I would certainly recommend it to anyone of limited movement, or even anyone who finds the idea of Zumba or Aerobics daunting."

Improving mental health -

Physical and mental health are inextricably linked. Many of the physical activity initiatives we have funded improved not only physical health, but also mental health and wellbeing. An example of this is HeadStart, a five-year, £56 million programme we have developed to explore and test new ways to improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people and prevent serious mental health issues from developing. HeadStart Newham ran a series of creative, sports and dance activities to promote the resilience and wellbeing of 10 – 16 year olds.<sup>5</sup> As a result of the programme, young people reported an increased sense of belonging and that participation had broadened their social circle. Forming positive relationships with others and self-development also helped to build the young people's confidence, which they could apply to other areas in their lives.

This programme points towards the benefit of approaches aiming to promote improved mental health and wellbeing in young people, beyond the interventions provided directly by mental health services. Drawing on activities that young people enjoy, such as sport and physical activity, can help build resilience and contribute to positive mental wellbeing. We recently extended our investment in HeadStart, providing an additional £8.7 million across the six local authority-led partnerships to deliver existing work<sup>6</sup>. They will also have a revised focus on supporting marginalised young people to access the help they need and respond to the increased demand during the pandemic.

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<sup>2</sup> The King's Fund (2020), [What is happening to life expectancy in the UK?](#)

<sup>3</sup> British Heart Foundation (2017), [Physical Inactivity and Sedentary Behaviour Report 2017](#)

<sup>4</sup> Wingspan Consulting (2020), [Village Action Project Evaluation Report](#)

<sup>5</sup> HeadStart Newham (2019), [Creative and sports activities: a process evaluation of implementation and benefits for young people](#)

<sup>6</sup> The National Lottery Community Fund (2020), [£14.7 million National Lottery cash boost to support young people's mental health and tackle loneliness in older people](#)

Improving wellbeing and reducing loneliness through social prescribing -

Social prescribing – where a person is referred to a range of local, non-clinical services to improve health and wellbeing – can connect communities and healthcare. It addresses people’s needs in a holistic way, whilst reducing pressure on the NHS, and links patients to community-based activities, rather than simply prescribing them medicine. Our grant holders do pioneering work in this area. The Conservation Volunteers, a national community volunteering charity, ran a social prescribing pilot in the cardiology department of the Queen Elizabeth hospital in Birmingham. A link worker supported patients with cardiomyopathy, an inherited condition where the heart muscle thickens. Because this limits physical activity, patients are prone to other conditions, such as diabetes, and are likely to be admitted to hospital regularly.

The charity provided a link worker and a Green Gym, a conservation area where people can get involved in physical activity in the hospital grounds. The link worker established a relationship with each patient, exploring what they were able to do and prescribing the Green Gym and other activities. This intervention complemented the medical approach. The clinical lead for the pilot described this scheme as the missing piece of the treatment, a “powerful opportunity for the link worker to spend a decent amount of time with patients, understand and do something.”<sup>7</sup>

Social prescribing can also be used as a powerful tool to tackle loneliness. The connections between loneliness and physical and mental health are well documented.<sup>8</sup> Research has shown that chronic loneliness can have a severe impact on physical and mental health, comparable to obesity or smoking as a risk factor for mortality. We have funded a number of projects that have tackled loneliness through a social prescribing approach, encouraging people to take part in sport and physical activity.

Our Ageing Better programme is a six-year, £78 million investment to improve the lives of people aged over 50 by addressing social isolation and loneliness within communities.<sup>9</sup> It aims to develop creative ways for older people to be involved in their local communities and is delivered by 14 cross sector partnerships across the UK. Part of this has been achieved through social prescribing schemes, improving health and wellbeing whilst reducing social isolation and loneliness. Formal and referral partners include Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), GP practices, adult social care, mental health teams, local housing associations, debt advice agencies, community and volunteer networks. This has meant people have been referred via both community and medical routes into community provision. Some partnerships have particularly focused on engaging marginalised groups, such as Black and minority ethnic (BAME) communities. In Sheffield, they engaged more effectively by working with a local BAME charity.

Once referrals have been made, many partnerships connect people to local activities, such as through a hub network in Birmingham and outreach and drop-

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<sup>7</sup> The National Lottery Community Fund (2019), [Connecting communities and healthcare: Making social prescribing work for everyone](#)

<sup>8</sup> The National Lottery Community Fund (2019), [Bringing people together: how community action can tackle loneliness and social isolation](#)

<sup>9</sup> The National Lottery Community Fund (2021), [Ageing Better](#)

in sessions in Camden. Participants across the programme valued making friends and taking up new hobbies, including sport and physical activity. Even walking to local venues to meet new friends enhanced both activity levels and mood, as participants engaged with others in a similar situation.

Overall, our Ageing Better partnerships found that their approaches are generating a range of positive outcomes, including:

- Reduced social isolation and loneliness
- Increased self-confidence, knowledge and understanding about accessing local services and activities
- Improved health and wellbeing outcomes (including mental and physical health, ability to self-manage health conditions and make healthy lifestyle choices, improve home safety and maintain independence)
- Increased membership of clubs, organisations and societies

Strengthening communities –

Beyond the physical and mental health benefits of sport and recreation, there are numerous benefits for the wider community. Sport is not played purely for sport's sake. Sport activities that particularly promote relationships with other people can be beneficial for marginalised or vulnerable groups and have been found to contribute to social cohesion.<sup>10</sup> Our funding has highlighted that physical activity can help tackle social issues in a community, build community cohesion and foster a sense of belonging. We have funded community-based sport projects that tackle youth disadvantage and crime, address discrimination and broaden social circles.

In Bradford, for example, we are currently funding Big Joes Youth Boxing Academy to deliver a range of boxing activities and awareness sessions on knife crime and mental wellbeing. The project aims to provide children and young people aged 7 – 15 with positive diversionary activities to help reduce anti-social behaviour, isolation and to improve wellbeing. Figures released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) have shown the number of knife crimes in England and Wales reached a record high in 2019, increasing 7% on the previous 12 months.<sup>11</sup> This project seeks to reduce the chances of younger age groups becoming involved in crime, particularly among children at risk of exclusion from schools, through the transformative power of sport.

Being involved in community-level sport can be a catalyst for further engagement in civic activities. Research has found that sports volunteering for young people can result in positive attitudes and behaviour and encourage further civic activity.<sup>12</sup> Landmark sporting events such as the Commonwealth Games and the Olympic Games also encourage community involvement. Even when an event concludes, it can leave a long-lasting positive legacy and help to preserve community spirit. As the Birmingham Commonwealth Games in 2022 draws ever nearer, consideration should be given to maximising the positive social impact of this event and ensure it is inclusive for the whole community.

Improving place and space -

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<sup>10</sup> What Works Centre for Wellbeing and Happy City (2019), [Understanding Thriving Communities](#)

<sup>11</sup> Office for National Statistics (2019), [Crime in England and Wales: year ending June 2019](#)

<sup>12</sup> What Works Centre for Wellbeing and Happy City (2019), [Understanding Thriving Communities](#)

Having to go to a sports centre to take part in activities can be the decisive factor in whether people participate or not. People might worry about whether they will fit in or be accepted into a mainstream sporting environment. They might also face barriers in travelling to leisure facilities, whether due to a lack of suitable, affordable transport or mobility issues.

Our funding is rooted in local communities, supporting ideas and projects that matter to people and communities. That means we fund physical activities and opportunities in the places where communities want them, which often fall outside of traditional sporting settings. This ensures projects are based in, and engage with, the communities they seek to serve and suited to local needs. We also recognise that developing community infrastructure through sport and physical activity helps to establish valuable assets for a local community. They act as focal points within a local area, creating physical places for communities to meet, socialise and build relationships, as well as be physically active. Investment in space and place can help level up areas that have been left behind, whether through a green space, play area for children, or cycling path.

In partnership with the National Lottery Heritage Fund, we ran the £254 million Parks for People programme. We funded 135 projects through the programme, mindful of the numerous benefits that parks bring to communities. As part of our evidence review, we found that the presence of nearby parks and green spaces is associated with increased physical activity and exercise.<sup>13</sup> There are also strong interlinking relationships between green space, physical exercise and mental wellbeing. Conditions associated with modern and sedentary living, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes and obesity, are all mitigated by access to and use of green spaces. Obesity levels among children are also lower when there is more nearby green space, particularly those with play areas.

Parks and green spaces should therefore be managed to support health and wellbeing. Design, maintenance and activities should encourage physical exercise appropriate for all sections of the population. This could include funding social prescribing activities within green environments; supporting fitness and physical exercise in parks in low-income areas; and improving lighting and pathways to increase a sense of security and safety.

As well as investing in and maintaining high quality environments, there must be a focus on activities that animate green spaces and encourage people to use them. Parks are a form of both physical and social infrastructure. Investment should support activities that increase community engagement, bring different social groups together, encourage volunteering and open up parks in less affluent areas. This can be achieved in a number of ways, including funding community-based groups to provide activities in green spaces, creating welcoming meeting spaces such as cafes in parks, and ensuring high standards of care and maintenance are provided in all parks and green spaces to deter crime, littering and antisocial behaviour.

Along with parks and green spaces, high quality walking and cycling routes can also increase levels of physical activity. We funded a project by the charity Sustrans to complete new walking and cycling routes, extending the National

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<sup>13</sup> The National Lottery Community Fund and the National Lottery Heritage Fund (2019), [Space to thrive: A rapid evidence review of the benefits of parks and green spaces for people and communities](#)

Cycle Network in more than 80 communities UK-wide. Findings from the project included that changing the environment, rather than changing perceptions about exercise appears to be key to changing people's physical activity through active travel.<sup>14</sup> This further bolsters the case for continued place-based investment that enables physical activity and active travel in local communities.

### The importance of partnership working in local communities

Partnership working has been vital for delivering many successful sport and recreation initiatives in local communities. Multidisciplinary and multi-agency approaches bring a range of actors and specialties together, ensuring extensive reach and the best possible support for communities. We funded The Wave Project in Cornwall and North Devon, for example, to develop and deliver a sustainable surf therapy programme for vulnerable and isolated children and young people.<sup>15</sup> Working with professionals from health, social and educational services in the region, the project was able to identify children and young people who would benefit from taking part. This included referrals from the NHS, schools and local authority services. Over three years, the project delivered 72 surf therapy courses supporting 720 children improve their confidence, self-esteem and social relationships. Children were also trained as volunteer surf mentors, who would go on to help other children learn to surf.

Working in partnership not only delivers impact for communities but can act as a catalyst for change within organisations. Our funding has supported the project Muslim Girls Fence – a collaboration between Maslaha and British Fencing. This aims to facilitate spaces at a grassroots level for Muslim girls and women to challenge assumptions and narratives relating to their gender, racial, religious and other identities through both physical and creative methods. The girls are coached to learn the traditionally elite and white, male-dominated sport of fencing. Through this, they physically confront the stereotypes of fencers, but also the expectations our society has of them: that Muslim women and girls are weak, subordinated and lacking agency. This project is one innovative example of how Maslaha has been tackling long-standing issues affecting Muslim communities. It has also encouraged British Fencing to focus on fencing as a way to improve physical and mental wellbeing and challenge different forms of discrimination.

In recognition of the importance of partnership working, in collaboration with The King's Fund we have developed a new £3 million programme Healthy Communities Together<sup>16</sup>. The programme aims to support local areas to develop effective and sustainable partnerships between the voluntary and community sector, the NHS and local authorities to improve health and wellbeing, reduce health inequalities and empower communities. As well as providing grant funding, the programme will support the development of relationships between partners, identifying and agreeing how best to work together, to ensure the involvement of organisations working across communities, and create a plan of activities. These could include sport, recreation and physical activities – whatever helps deliver meaningful benefits to address health inequalities in communities. As the programme progresses, we will work with the Healthy

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<sup>14</sup> Sustrans (2016), [Fit for Life: Independent research into the public health benefits of new walking and cycling routes](#)

<sup>15</sup> The Wave Project Cornwall and North Devon (2019), [The Wave Project final report](#)

<sup>16</sup> The National Lottery Community Fund (2021), [The Healthy Communities Together programme](#).

Communities Together partnerships to identify and disseminate learnings from their experiences.

### Encouraging those from under-represented groups to lead more active lifestyles

If whole communities are to benefit from sport, recreation and physical activity, efforts must be made to ensure underrepresented groups can take part. Traditionally underrepresented groups such as women and girls, ethnic minorities, disabled people, older people, and those from less affluent backgrounds often face greater barriers but have the most to gain from becoming more active and connected with their communities.

Our funding has supported many organisations to increase participation among underrepresented groups and encourage them to be physically active. In Northern Ireland, we funded a 12-month pilot project (September 2018 - August 2019) to support Sported members operating mainstream groups to become more knowledgeable and accessible organisations for young people who are blind or partially sighted.<sup>17</sup> The aim of the Include Project was to remove barriers and increase opportunity for involvement.

Working in partnership with Angel Eyes NI, a small local charity, the project helped Sported members to develop their understanding of how to offer opportunities for blind or visually impaired young people. Staff and volunteers took part in a visual impairment training programme, developed inclusion plans, and increased awareness of how to promote their accessible projects and events to young people.

This also provided an opportunity for young visually impaired people to become involved in local community sports groups. They participated in supporting the development of groups' awareness around visual impairment and many subsequently attended their respective groups on a regular basis. It is hoped this will lead to more opportunities for these young people to become active in sport and in their local community.

Learnings from this pilot will be shared within Sported across the UK and used to roll the project out further, as part of a strategy to improve opportunities for underrepresented groups to access sport and receive the benefits it generates.

Key learnings from the project:

- Underrepresented groups and their families can offer their lived experience to help groups understand how to make their activities more accessible and inclusive.
- Training programmes for staff and volunteers help to improve awareness and understanding of different needs, for example those who are blind or visually impaired. As one participant commented *"It's not about focusing on disabled young people, but rather understanding that we are all 'differently-abled' and should make changes accordingly."*<sup>18</sup>
- Groups that run physical activities should embed their learning and develop and implement inclusion action plans to set out how they will engage with and include underrepresented groups.

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<sup>17</sup> Sported (2019), [Include project report](#)

<sup>18</sup> Sported (2019), [Include project report](#)

## Improving and implementing effective duty of care and safeguarding standards for sports and recreation activities at all levels

We are committed to protecting the rights and interests of the people who benefit from the grants we make. People and communities should never experience any form of abuse, neglect or harm of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare and wellbeing of all groups and to contribute towards keeping them safe. In addition, we have a duty to ensure that any allegations of harm or abuse that take place in the projects we fund are investigated properly by grant holders and that appropriate measures are taken should such allegations be found to be true. We are committed to doing everything we can to protect people proportionate to our role as a funder.

We believe that all organisations should be a safe place for their beneficiaries, volunteers and staff. That's why we have jointly developed and funded the Safeguarding Training Fund with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). It will provide £1.14 million of funding over two phases until March 2022 to improve the VCSE sector's access to safeguarding and safe culture support materials. In phase one, the 'Safer Social Sector Partnership' led by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) produced and launched a suite of free online resources to help charities improve their safeguarding practices<sup>19</sup>. In phase two, which launched in October 2019, six organisations<sup>20</sup> were funded to distribute the phase one materials, promote and champion safeguarding, and enable local networking and self-support.

Our ongoing investment will help develop organisations' safeguarding knowledge, skills, practice and values. We encourage charities and other organisations to make full use of our resources. The comprehensive set of resources that have been developed are free at the point of access and suitable for all charities big and small across the sector. We hope this will help improve and implement effective duty of care and safeguarding standards for community activities at all levels, including those which promote sport, recreation and physical activity.

### A national plan for community wellbeing

As outlined, our funding in community-led sport, recreation and physical activity has improved the physical and mental wellbeing of people and communities across the country. We know from our investment and other evidence, however, that many people and communities can feel alienated by the term "sport" and find mainstream sport less accessible. These barriers are particularly present for marginalised and disadvantaged groups, such as ethnic minorities and disabled people.

Communities and the people within them have a strong interest in improving their wellbeing, and sport and physical activity can be important tools in helping people address wellbeing inequalities. Surveys of public opinion show that communities think wellbeing has been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic and must be prioritised as we recover.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, we suggest a national plan for

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<sup>19</sup> NCVO (2021), [Safeguarding](#)

<sup>20</sup> Voluntary Organisations Network North East, Action with Communities in Rural England, Voluntary Action Leeds, Social Care Institute for Excellence, The Federation of London Youth Clubs, National Association for Voluntary Community Action.

<sup>21</sup> Health Foundation (2021), [Public perceptions of health and social care in light of Covid-19](#)

wellbeing could be developed. Focusing on community wellbeing as the ultimate goal, rather than sport and recreation as an end in itself, will mobilise communities and build strength, resilience and connectedness in our systems.

### **Recommendations**

How we bring together, support and strengthen our communities must be a central part of discussions as we emerge from the coronavirus pandemic. Sport, recreation and physical activity will play vital roles in delivering positive change. We must ensure a people-centred approach is taken, supporting communities who understand best what they need in order to thrive.

Based on key learnings from our funding, we therefore recommend that any new national plan considers the following points:

1. How sport, recreation and physical activity can help to support and strengthen local communities, with a strong focus on improving wellbeing
2. The need for sustained investment in projects and ideas that matter to, and are led by, communities
3. Ensure communities have access to green spaces, parks, walking and cycle routes that are high quality and well-managed, maximising their potential for strengthening communities and encouraging active lifestyles
4. Partnership working to be supported and encouraged in communities between different actors to promote activities that support healthy outcomes and foster community cohesion
5. A focus on improving the participation of underrepresented groups, building on the learnings from successful initiatives
6. An emphasis on organisations understanding their safeguarding responsibilities and ensuring they have the knowledge and tools to embed safeguarding and safe practices, including through making use of available guidance and resources

**We hope this submission will be helpful to the Committee. We would be very willing to share more information on any of the areas this response has covered.**

*29 January 2021*