



Wandle Valley



GET ACTIVE

Wandle Valley

Learning Report

December 2018

Introduction

In January 2016, the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust were awarded funding from Sport England's Community Sport Activation Fund to deliver Get Active Wandle Valley, a three-year project aiming to engage local people in physical activity and sport utilising the many parks, open and green spaces throughout the Wandle Valley.



Where and what is Wandle Valley?



The Wandle Valley Regional Park is located in the South West London area of the UK. Formed mainly around the River Wandle, the Regional Park crosses four London Boroughs, namely Croydon, Sutton, Merton and Wandsworth.

Following the natural course of the river is also the Wandle Trail. A mainly traffic-free walking and cycling route of around 15 miles in length that navigating the full length of the Wandle Valley Regional Park.

There are over 40 individual green spaces within the Regional Park. Notably, Wandle Park in Croydon, Beddington Park in Sutton, Morden Hall Park, Merton and King George's Park in Wandsworth,

near where the River Wandle joins the River Thames. Much of the activity that took place within this programme took place within these 4 'hub locations'

The Wandle Valley Regional Park provides many opportunities for leisure, play and work and is home to some 12 nature reserves, and covers 900 hectares in total. There are some 1.1 million residents living in the Wandle Valley and over 46,000 businesses.

For more context on the Wandle Valley and the role of the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust, see appendix 1 within this report or visit www.wandlevalleypark.co.uk/about-us/strategy



Project Funding Breakdown

The project, valued at £236,000 has now concluded and this report will assess how the project progressed, mainly focussing on lessons learned.

As well as a grant of £131,000 from Sport England, the project was supported with funding from four Local Authorities and the National Trust. The match funders, namely LB Croydon, LB Merton, LB Sutton, LB Wandsworth and the National Trust also supported the project by forming the steering group who made key decisions and guided the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust in its delivery.



Target Groups

The project had a focus on 3 different target groups:



**OLDER ADULTS
MAINLY AGED 50+**

Barriers

Health or injury
No opportunity

Motivations

Meet with friends
Enjoyment
Health, keeping fit



**YOUNG PEOPLE
AGED 14-25**

Barriers

Left school
Work commitments
Time

Motivations

Meet with friends
Enjoyment
Keep fit



**CHILDREN AND PARENTS
MIXED AGES**

Barriers

Work commitments
Family
No opportunity

Motivations

Meet with friends
Enjoyment
Take children
Lose weight



What We Said

The project originally set out to engage inactive residents, especially those living in deprived areas within the Wandle Valley:

This partnership bid, delivered in the Wandle Valley Regional Park, is led by the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust, with boroughs Croydon, Merton, Sutton, Wandsworth and The National Trust. The programme focuses on increasing participation in sport across all ages (14+), and is focused on deprived areas along the Wandle. It targets inactive residents, addresses barriers to participation, encourages use of open spaces and links activities to local delivery partners, ensuring sustainability. The programme supports delivery of priorities set out in the All London Green Grid Framework 8 and the Sport and Physical Activity Audit, responding to identified local need.

Taken from the original application submitted to Sport England in 2015.



The application also proposed target wards: Broad Green and Waddon in Croydon; St Helier and Wandle Valley in Sutton; Figge's Marsh and Cricket Green in Merton; Tooting and Graveney in Wandsworth. These were chosen for multiple reasons, including analysis of the focus areas using Sport England and local Public Health data, confirming a need for more walking/running activities, fitness and conditioning activities and cycling. The identified wards have a high ethnic minority population. A number of the focus wards have higher than average elderly populations, and there is a big drop off in participation from the age of 35, supporting a need for family activities.

The application was also based upon:

- Consultation and dialogue with each Local Authority Sport and Physical Activity Team
- Consultation with Public Health Departments in each borough
- An identified need for older adults to engage in physical activity and help meet the local versions of objectives identified in The Public Health Outcomes Framework i.e. improving the utilisation of outdoor space for exercise/health reasons, social isolation and older people's perception of community safety.
- A Sport and Physical Activity audit commissioned by the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust in 2008.

Activities Delivered By Year

Within the original application, 11 sports were identified. These sports were chosen in order to engage with the wide-ranging target audiences. As well as those sports, 11 locations were also identified which were a combination of indoor (2) and outdoor (9) facilities. Appendix 3 shows a breakdown of the sport and physical activity that was actually delivered for each year of the project. It is also worth noting that many activities were delivered in partnership with other organisations such as: Community Golf, Palace for Life Foundation, Our Parks etc.

Participant Figures

Sport England require participant figures to be self-created during the application process. These figures then become 'live' for the duration of the project. The target figures submitted with the application were as follows:



46

Activities
Delivered

3761

Total
Participants

36

Coaches
Trained

61

Volunteers
Trained

11

Projects
Continuing
into 2019

28

Bikes Donated
to Groups/
Individuals

Participant Figures

Unique Participants Targets

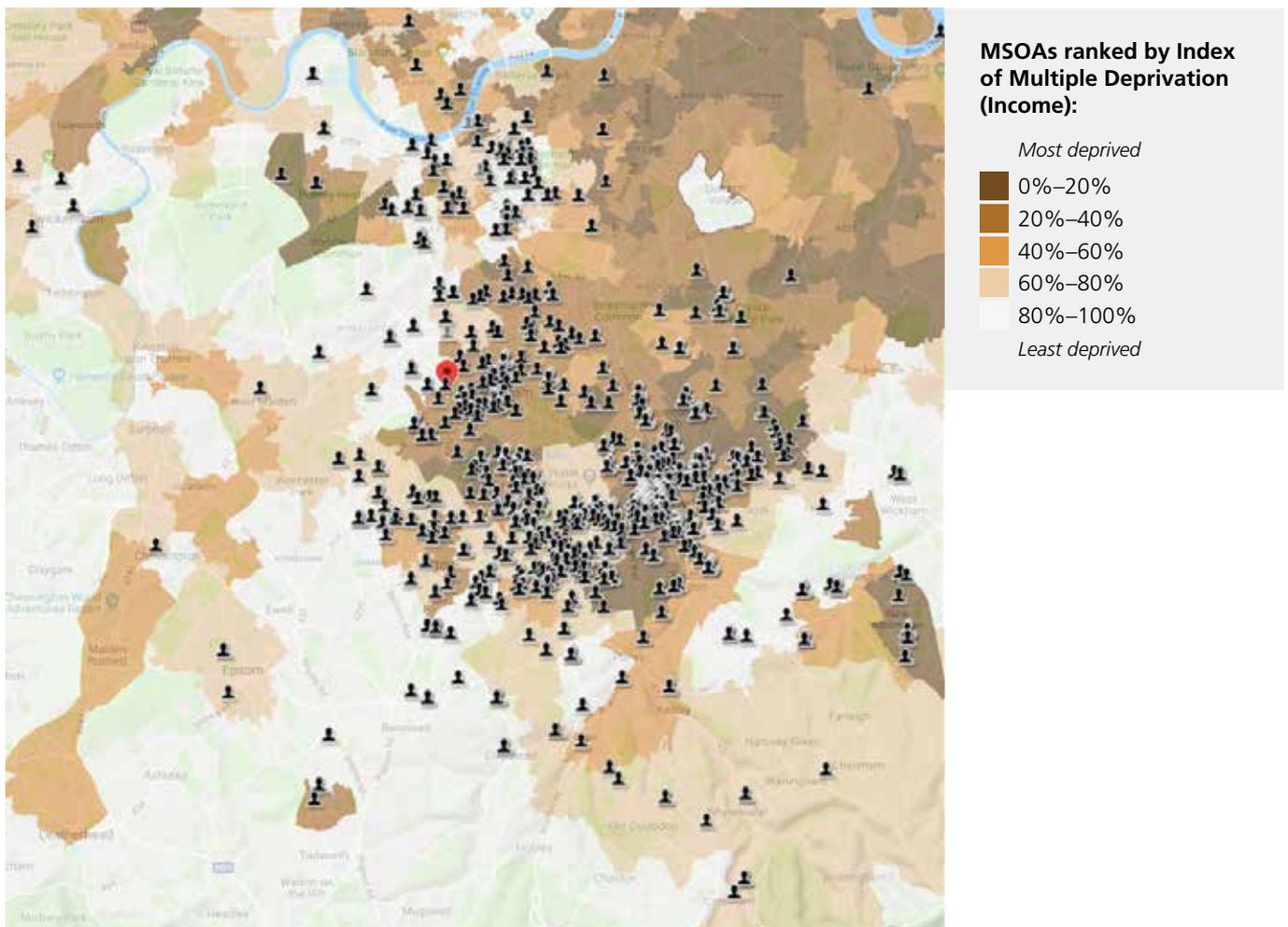
	2016	2017	2018	Total
Target	720	824	972	2,516
Actual	813	1,846	1,102*	3,761*

Throughput/Attendance Target Figures

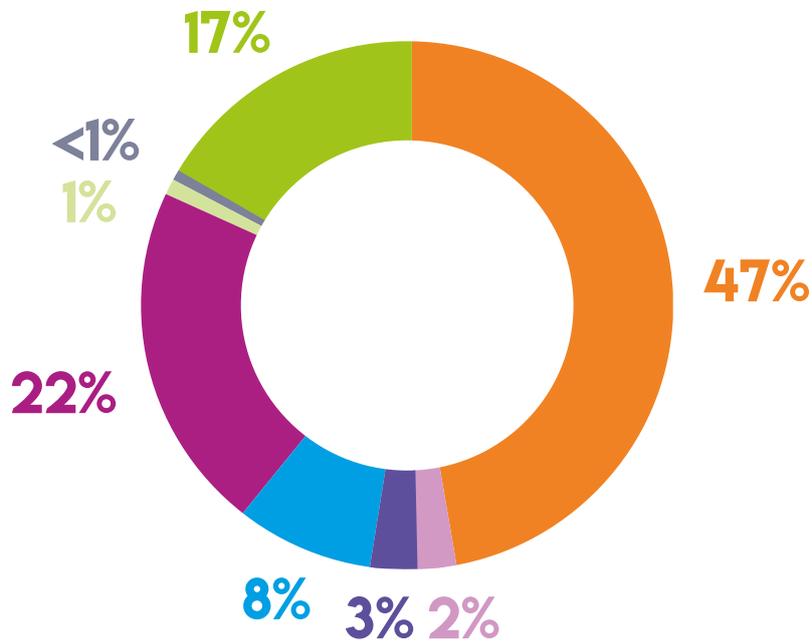
	2016	2017	2018	Total
Target	7,200	8,240	9,720	25,160
Actual	1,536	5,586	6,856*	13,978*

Fig 2. A breakdown of participant targets submitted with the application. *Figures marked with * are up to date to November 2018 and as such, actual figures reported to Sport England in Dec 2018 will be higher.

Participants came from all over the Wandle Valley but the majority lived in areas of deprivation:



Funding spend by category



- Staff Costs (Project Coordinator Only)
- Coaches Fees/Expenses
- Equipment Hire/Purchase
- Transport/Travel Costs
- Hire of Facilities
- Other (Training)
- Promotion and Publicity
- Other (Management Costs)



Lessons Learned

Throughout the project, a huge number of lessons were learned. These were varied but largely focussed on the following five themes:

- **Organisational learning**
Learning for the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust (and Sport England) in delivering projects of this scale. Any learning here should be applied to future delivery of similar projects.
- **Workforce**
Learning here included the recruitment, training and skillset of existing and new coaches and activators.
- **Delivery**
Learning focussed on the direct delivery of activities, including the location of activities, the nature of the activities and the style of delivery.
- **Marketing and Communications**
Includes branding, how to market to participants and raising awareness of activities.
- **Other**
General observations and/or opportunities that arose throughout the duration of the project



Mid-term Evaluation

It is worth noting that approximately 18 months into the project, London Sport conducted a mid-term evaluation of the project which encompassed various findings, including:

1

More staff time and capacity to deliver such a project could have enhanced the project outputs and outcomes as it would have allowed more outreach work and increased the ability to influence partners and stakeholders.

2

The project had raised the profile, both locally and regionally, of the Trust in general. This was evidenced by the doubling of twitter followers since the programme began (Jan 2016) up to mid-term (July 2017).

3

High levels of administration and slow processes such as monitoring and evaluation have impacted the ability to effectively market and engage new/ existing audiences. Although the project did exceed it's unique participant targets for 2016 and 2017.

4

The programme of activities could have been more dynamic in terms of tweaking and altering sessions, including their times and locations to increase retention rates.

5

More could have been done to understand the progress throughout the project, i.e. has their behaviour changed as a result of the physical activity they are taking part. This could have been done through improved data collection methods.



Lesson One



KNOW YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

Ensure you adjust your brand and delivery accordingly

Get Active Wandle Valley looked to target 3 specific groups. These were:

14-25 YEAR OLDS

FAMILIES

PEOPLE AGED OVER 50

Whilst information was gathered at application stage on each of these target groups, the reality of reaching them with marketing, activities and engagement was a complicated task. Upon inception, Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust created a brand identity for the Get Active Wandle Valley project. This included the creation of three sub-brands. The main reason for this was born out of an understanding that the Wandle Valley logo (shown at the top of this page) would not appeal to a younger age group. This was further evidenced in the mid-term evaluation conducted by London Sport, as well as the much lower participant figures for 14-25 year olds that engaged with the programme. It would be ideal to ensure that service users are identified as early as possible in order to involve them in designing, planning and delivering project activities.

Other examples of lessons relating to this theme included the Trust's engagement with families. Firstly, there were very few instances where 14-25 year olds were exercising or participating with their parents, grandparents or carers, as was initially intended. Secondly, where families were participating in Get Active Wandle Valley activities, this was on a very ad-hoc basis. For instance, families may visit a park once every six to eight weeks, rather than going there every Saturday morning at the same time. Families who did visit parks/green spaces every week, were normally already active and attending structured activity for their children (e.g. Football at Beddington Park, Sutton).

Whilst information from Sport England's market segmentation was used at application stage, more insight and research could have been utilised in order to alter marketing tactics throughout the programme – for instance, Focus Groups at mid-term revealed that 14-25 year olds would be more likely to regularly attend sessions if:

- Their attendance resulted in credits or an award (e.g. Duke of Edinburgh Awards)
- Activities were group based rather than individual
- The sessions were for participants of a similar skill level

In focus groups with those over the age of 55, participants stated they would be likely to regularly attend sessions if:

- Sessions were divided by skill/ability level
- The sessions were located within 10 minutes of their home
- Coaches and activators were knowledgeable beyond just sport (e.g. physiotherapy or osteopathy)

These wide ranging and vastly differing motivating factors for attendance therefore require excellent knowledge of the target group and sessions should be designed with needs, motivations and those barriers in mind.

Recommendations

It is worth noting that approximately 18 months into the project, London Sport conducted a mid-term evaluation of the project which encompassed various findings, including:

1

Consult with your target group(s) before creating a brand/product to ensure it reflects and appeals to the specific group. Spend lots of time in the design phase of your product to ensure it is fit for purpose.

3

Take the time to constantly test, review and design your brand/product to ensure it works for the audience.

2

If your brand or product doesn't relate to a particular target audience, don't be frightened to 'hide' your brand, (or the fact that you are doing activity at all) in order to get them involved.

4

More research should be done to understand the barriers and motivations to exercising in an outdoor environment or using outdoor space (for exercise other than organised and traditional sports such as football, rugby etc.)

Lesson Two



YOUR DELIVERY STYLE
will impact the outputs (and
outcomes) of your project.

The Get Active Wandle Valley project has trialled and delivered in a variety of ways, including; traditional, structured delivery in the case of Fit Families Touch Tennis; unstructured, incidental activity in the case of Golf in the Park; activities focussed around social activities such as Forever Fit.

In each case and for each style of delivery, the outcomes and outputs for the target audiences differed, this has been compared in the table below:

Type of Activity	Comparisons
Traditional, Structured (Touch Tennis, Pickleball, Beginners Running etc.)	Average regular repeat attendees Average unique participants Mean Throughput Ratio: 4.76
Incidental, Unstructured (Golf in the Park etc.)	Fewer regular repeat attendees Highest unique participants Mean Throughput Ratio: 1.67
Focussed around social aspects (Forever Fit etc.)	Highest regular repeat attendees Average unique participants Mean Throughput Ratio: 11.94

CASE STUDY

Forever Fit, Ravensbury Park and Beddington Park



What We Tried

At the start of the project, the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust set up an outdoor exercise group aimed at older adults (aged 50+) to help get, and keep, them active. By design, this activity needed to be entry level and as such, participants would take part in an exercise session that was low impact but would improve health and wellbeing.

At this stage, the Trust chose to change the format of the session and trained both activators in leading Health Walks. Anecdotal feedback from participants suggested that the location and timing of the session was not suited to other participants who were interested in the sessions but yet to attend.

As a result of this feedback the Trust advertised a Health Walk, from 11:15am, meeting at a nearby park with a local café. The format of the sessions was such that it allowed for a health walk (approx. 40 – 60 mins), a social break of around 30 minutes (using the local park café), followed by an outdoor exercise session.

What didn't work



LOCATION

The walking routes were limited, and the meeting place wasn't suitable



TIMING

The initial start time of 10am was too early for many participants in the local areas



NO SOCIAL ASPECT

Participants felt isolated and that they were only there to exercise



JUST OUTDOOR EXERCISE

This wasn't appealing enough to many individuals

What worked

1

CHANGING THE TIME AND LOCATION TO SUIT PARTICIPANTS

Changing the time and location to better suit participants was a game changer and instantly resulted in a boost in participant numbers. The better walking routes appear to have also supported retaining participants and encouraged them to keep coming back.

2

TRAINING ACTIVATORS WITH ADDITIONAL SKILLS TO ALLOW THEM TO ENGAGE PARTICIPANTS BETTER

Providing activators with the tools and skills to safely lead an entry-level activity such as walking, allowed the Trust to reach a wider audience and gave them more appreciation for their participants who may find that walking can be strenuous and would never consider an outdoor exercise class.

3

THE SOCIAL ASPECT

Anecdotally, many participants have forged strong community links and friendships from attending the Forever Fit sessions at Ravensbury Park. This has encouraged repeat attendance (both for the sessions themselves and for participants walking together on their own). In many cases, it has been known for a participant to still come along to the social section of the session, even if they are not walking or exercising.

4

INCREASING PARTICIPATION IN THE EXERCISE SESSION THROUGH THE 'HOOK' OF WALKING

By providing walking as the main 'attraction' to participants, many participants will initially come for this part of the session. It is then the job of the activator to encourage as many participants as possible to stay for the exercise session later in the day. The Trust has found a positive increase in participation in these outdoor exercise sessions since introducing and coupling them with a walk.

At inception (January 2016), findings from free activity targeted at inactive people in parks were largely unrecorded. Since then, in the local area we have seen similar activity with organisations such as Our Parks and Silver Fit. This type of activity also now plays a major factor in many leisure providers regular programmes (see GLL / BETTER in Croydon who are delivering multiple outdoor activity sessions as part of their leisure contract). Information and data gained from these activities should be analysed in order to be able to set targets more accurately and better engage inactive people through the use of green infrastructure.

As noted in the introduction to this report, unique participants were expected to attend a Get Active Wandle Valley session ten times in order for the Trust to achieve its throughput target. In hindsight,

for family activity in parks, this is highly unlikely – in interviews conducted by Community Golf, families stated that they would be unlikely to attend the same park every week due to other commitments and to avoid boredom. For those that were attending the park every week, they were normally coming to the park for other activities such as football/tennis etc. Whilst we recognised some of the wider benefits of this park activity for families, the project was under constant pressure to deliver its throughput target, which perhaps led to the delivery of 'safer', more structured activities which may have been less appealing to our target audience.

Recommendations

1

Setting targets in line with the delivery style or type of activity will ensure success. For instance, if the project focuses on incidental, unstructured activity in parks and green spaces with families, targets should be high unique participants but lower on regular attendees or throughput in order to avoid failure.

2

Create opportunities for participants to socialise but tailor that to suit the audience. For instance, older people preferred to meet over tea/coffee in a mutual setting. For others, building that time into the first ten minutes of the session may be necessary (especially for young people or families, who are time limited).

3

Sport England should play a role in the co-creation of targets using insight and tools to ensure targets are both realistic and achievable, before accepting applications. This would provide efficiencies of scale and improve evaluation across projects.

Lesson Three



FUNDERS NEED TO FLEX!

Sport England play a huge role in this country in terms of granting funds for physical activity and sport projects such as Get Active Wandle Valley, it should be recognised that this project suffered from poor timing and an unwillingness to change targets and outcomes.

The project application was submitted and approved in late 2015, in March 2016 the latest Sport England Strategy (An Active Nation) was released. Due to a delay in recruitment processes, project activities did not get underway until May 2016. Despite activities commencing after the release of the new strategy, the Trust was regularly reminded that the project should meet the aims of the previous strategy and any significant changes to targets or delivery methods would not be considered. Furthermore, the project was not allowed an extension for the four months delivery that had been missed due to the slip on recruiting a project coordinator.

Feedback from project partners included the following views:

- As well as the need for deliverers to constantly review, alter and improve delivery, funders should look to do the same. Targets could have been changed with a larger focus on outcomes (rather than outputs) to align with the new strategy.
- Targets should be co-created, using similar/other projects that have been delivered in the past in order to create realistic, effective programmes. Rather than reviewing applications in silo and approving them on an ad-hoc basis.
- The need to upgrade and create a state-of-the-art monitoring system akin to travel / supermarkets / smartphone applications etc. that allows projects to monitor participation both through project specific activity AND individuals' remote activity. Simpler options such as barcodes etc. could also be explored



Recommendations

- 1** Sport England should consider the creation of a new monitoring and evaluating system that can be used by funded projects. This will remove unnecessary burdens on administration time and paperwork that can impact on compliance with data protection etc.
- 2** Project outcomes and outputs should be regularly reviewed by Sport England, in partnership with grantees, to ensure maximum value for money is achieved and projects remain current and in line with the latest national and local strategy and policy.
- 3** A dedicated mentor / support network should be created for funded projects over a certain value, to ensure that organisations have the level of support needed to maximise value for money.

Lesson Four



WORKFORCE IS A BARRIER AND a motivation to participation

At inception, the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust employed a project coordinator to deliver the project. As previously mentioned, the Get Active Wandle Valley programme delivered a wide variety of activities to a wide variety of audiences.

From the Trust's perspective it was also necessary to recruit qualified and appropriate instructors, activators and coaches in order to meet insurance and other requirements. In theory, this would also enhance the experience for participants as they were trained by qualified individuals, although recruitment of these coaches and partnering with existing delivery organisations was not straight forward.

Take the example of Forever Fit, where a cohort of local people had already existed through a training programme set up via Merton Council. In this instance, only 2 out of the 10 trained actually became Get Active Wandle Valley activators, with the other 8 finding other work or already holding existing work within Personal Training or the fitness industry. Similarly, for Cycling, after the Trust conducted recruitment (in partnership with London Sport) of existing ride leaders, only 4 out of a possible 14 were deemed suitable for the programme and chose to regularly lead rides for us.

It was also noted that there were inconsistencies when working with other physical activity and sporting delivery organisations. Where charities and charitable organisations exist, partnership working proved successful as Get Active Wandle Valley was able to identify shared goals with the other charity and come to an agreement on when and how activity should be delivered, using the expertise of both the Trust and the delivery organisation.

In other cases, where a profit-making model is in place, i.e. the fitness industry or Cycling Instructors, Get Active Wandle Valley was often 'priced-out' of partnering with that organisation with organisations and individuals charging upwards of £38-40 per hour for some activities. With anecdotal evidence, it was also found that although charging the highest prices, many of these instructors were not suitable for the activity on offer and participants actually had a negative experience.

Where activities were led by volunteers, the most successful model was that of organic growth, training participants and allowing them to lead sessions worked in sustaining activities and keeping them going past the funding expiration date. It should be said, that where the balance was right, i.e. Forever Fit, having the right coaches and activators has a hugely beneficial impact on regular attendance and sustainability of sessions.



Recommendations

1

Organisations looking to deliver similar projects should focus on the organic growth model of training participants to ensure that activity is sustainable from the outset and that sessions do not rely on 1 or 2 skilled coaches.

2

Local Authority budgets on areas such as Transport, should show more consideration to recreational activity and utilised in a way that removes barriers and allows people to access physical activity at an affordable price – i.e. using it to fund Walking for Health programmes or led group bike rides

Lesson Five



A REFLECTIVE STEERING GROUP makes for an effective steering group

The steering group for Get Active Wandle Valley was made up of the match funders for the project. At the time of application and having garnered match funding from both Public Health departments and Sport and Leisure departments from four local authorities, it was intended that there be at certain level of support from Local Authorities throughout the project. This was defined in an SLA which all local authority partners signed up to.

Unfortunately, throughout the duration of the programme (but particularly in the early stages) the current climate of Local Government austerity led to many local authority staff being made redundant, further stretching the remaining steering group members who remained in post.

Another observation on the steering group could have noted that there was a lack of diversity; there were just five individual members on the steering group. There were no members from BME communities, there were no female members and

there were no members under the age of 25 and no members over the age of 55. More could have been done to engage with and invite local residents to improve the diversity of the steering group, which would have in turn, provided better discussion and insight on engaging or retaining our target groups in physical activity.

Recommendations

1

Projects of a similar nature with wide-reaching audiences should involve target groups throughout the project by inviting them to sit on or attend steering group meetings to aid with designing and tweaking delivery.

2

Sport England should consider making a requirement that, where appropriate, a steering/delivery group should be in place for all projects. Sport England should also consider a requirement whereby members of the target demographics, target locale or previous project participants are regular members of said steering group.

Lesson Six



CYCLING IS A WHEELY BIG DEAL for some people.

As one of the key pillars of the programme of activities, the Trust has spent a lot of time working with local people to encourage them to cycle more. Initially, this came together in 2016 when the Trust delivered Wandle Wheelers as part of the annual Wandle Fortnight Festival. Since then, the Trust have provided a number of led rides, one-off events, bike maintenance workshops and training for cyclists and potential cyclists.

The majority of this activity has utilised the Wandle Trail. Whilst most of the trail is traffic-free and perfect for cyclists of all abilities, a huge number of challenges exist in creating a trail that is completely safe and usable for cyclists, including those with adapted bikes or trailers, for instance. Many cyclists cite the 'Missing Link' as a reason for not riding on the trail – this is a section of the Wandle Trail which requires cyclists to cycle on a busy road which is dominated by vehicle traffic. At our first Wandle Wheelers event, riders cited this being especially dangerous and convoluted where all participants were forced to get off their bikes and walk owing to the heavy traffic. Since this time, the

Trust has received much anecdotal feedback such as vegetation being overgrown in places, making the Trail difficult to negotiate, decreasing visibility and thereby also increasing a person's sense of vulnerability. This creates yet another barrier for people who are not likely to cycle.

With regards to cycling itself, barriers cited to ride leaders and project coordinators often come down to the simple notion of owning a bike, owning a helmet or knowing how to ride a bike. When attempting to engage harder to reach groups, these were the most common reasons why people didn't cycle.

CASE STUDY

Uptown Youth Centre Bike Workshops



What

A series of led rides and bike maintenance workshops with young people from a youth centre in Merton. At the end of the workshop, young people will get to use the bikes they repair and maintain.

Where

Morden Hall Park, Uptown Youth Centre (both Merton)

When

Throughout Summer 2018

What we did

We offered young people aged 11-25 from Uptown Youth Centre the opportunity to take part. Since the first workshop, we have also donated 7 bikes to the Youth Centre for activities and regular led rides which the Trust would lead. The young people attended 2 workshops at the Youth Centre and 1 workshop at Morden Hall Park.

Did it work

Feedback from Uptown Youth Centre elicited the following:

Uptown Youth Services young people participated in the Wandle Fortnight community celebration, Wandle Wheelers bike events, bike mechanics and rides on the Wandle Trail.

This event was enjoyed by all the young people and staff who took part and they learnt how to repair faults and maintain their bikes. It would be a great opportunity to offer this workshop and rides to more young people, families and the local community as a whole.

Uptown Youth Service, their young people and members have expressed an interest in participating in consultations for project ideas in the wandle valley, contributing to their delivery plan for the wandle valley regional park.

One of the most notable outcomes was that now, 3 young people are now using the bikes as travel options for school. These three young people were all categorised as overweight or obese during BMI testing at their school.

Summary

To evaluate, a huge number of lessons have been learned from this three-year, complex project. In attempting to capture them all, it is the hope of the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust and its match funders, namely LB Croydon, LB Merton, LB Sutton, LB Wandsworth and the National Trust that this learning report can be used in implementing the successful delivery of similar projects.

Largely, the project has allowed the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust to raise its profile, increase its reach and get closer to its residents. It has allowed the Trust to understand some of the day-to-day issues residents face in getting active, not just in obvious barriers to physical activity and sport (such as owning the right equipment), but also how the physical infrastructure, and in particular, green infrastructure can affect residents' physical activity levels.

As well as the recommendations outlined in this report the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust wishes to give thanks to all the supporting funders, organisations, partners, individuals, coaches, volunteers and participants who have made the project what it is today. With some activities continuing on into 2019 and beyond, it is the hope of the Trust that these activities and activities alike, will remain a fixture of the Wandle Valley, continuing to make it a place for healthy living and enhancing the physical and mental health of residents and visitors.

What Next?

Many of the activities that have been a part of the Get Active Wandle Valley programme will continue into 2019, these will all be listed on www.wandlevalleypark.co.uk/activewandle.

In some cases, groups have become traditional sports clubs, whilst others are continuing on under the leadership of existing coaches and volunteers. All of the details will remain online and will continue to be promoted from January 2019. The Trust are now supporting many of these activities in a voluntary capacity and where possible, local authority partners and the National Trust have been encouraged to continue to facilitate and support these projects.

The Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust continues to work towards its strategy of 'Bringing the Park to Life' – find out more here: www.wandlevalleypark.co.uk.

Finally, for any queries, questions and to find out more about Get Active Wandle Valley please contact us:

Email: info@wandlevalleypark.co.uk

Web: www.wandlevalleypark.co.uk/activewandle

Appendix 1

The context for the Wandle Valley Regional Park

In 2016, the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust led the development of a new strategy. This identified six strategic aims to help achieve the vision:

The Wandle Valley is a clean, safe, sustainable and attractive natural environment. Its river character is protected and enhanced, and its biodiversity, heritage and archaeology are celebrated.

The Wandle Valley and the Regional Park becomes a driver of economic growth, and a strong business case develops for investment in heritage and the environment.

The Wandle Valley's rich heritage and culture (current as well as past and future) is celebrated, preserved and developed, making it accessible to diverse local community and attractive to visitors.



Diverse communities along the Wandle Valley feel a shared ownership of the park, and are actively engaged in its development, management and enjoyment. Local communities, partners, stakeholders, businesses & visitors recognise the regional park and support it through advocacy, volunteering, fundraising & partnership working.

The natural capital of the Wandle Valley and the River Wandle, with its network of green and blue spaces, is maintained and enhanced and its resilience to climate change increased.

The Wandle Valley's is a place for healthy living. It enhances physical and mental health, by improving access and quantity of good quality public realm and greenspace.

Get Active Wandle Valley has played a role in supporting all of these strategic aims, although none more so than the Health and Wellbeing attributes.

Appendix 2

Full Lessons Log with scoring and weighting system.

Lesson	Description	Important (1-10)	Weighting (1-5)	Total score
New Strategy	Despite this project being approved under the 'old' SE strategy, and figures were based on this, there was no flexibility from SE on this, we were held to high throughput targets which forced us to deliver certain activities that were not experimental or adventurous in nature and in the actual landscape of 'Active Nation'. At times we were unsupported by SE and more could have been done to work with us to tailor activities and capture these learnings.	10	5	50
Target Setting	Targets set were perhaps unrealistic, and the fact that the throughput was very high did mean that a focus on activities were chosen in order to meet these targets. This led to missing out on other outcomes such as introducing people to a sport they have never or would normally never play e.g. golf in the park vs Forever Fit sessions. This could have been helped if SE were willing to be more flexible and be more aligned with the new Active Nation strategy.	10	5	50
Nature of delivery will affect your outputs and outcomes	Delivering in outdoor spaces with semi-structured, incidental activity e.g. Golf in the Park won't encourage return participants (weekly) although it may be more like tri-monthly. Busy parents and busy lives! Not always walking through the park did intro over 1000 people to golf that may never have played before vs. structured activity such as walks etc.	10	4	40
Project Slips of 4.5 months	The project slipped by 4.5 months and the project coordinator was not in post until mid-April. After a request to the funder, the project would not be allowed an extension and as such, this impacted the nature of delivery, whereby activities needing to be set up had to happen quickly. This also negatively impacted project performance and KPIs as the project was always catching up. SE did note that momentum was heading in the right direction for the project. Although some activities that could have had larger social impact etc. may have been missed.	10	4	40
Known your brand and build it around your target groups	Must take a back to front approach, we weren't successful at engaging all groups – so would need to consider, in future, what is effective for a 14-25 y/o vs. family etc.	9	4	36
Setting of targets	Targets self-created, solution: self created (guidance from Sport England should be given to future applicants)	8	4	32
Steering Group effectiveness	LA Austerity, lack of support at times, not diverse, missed out residents, young people and older people reps etc.	8	4	32
Barriers	We noted many different barriers based on the different activities, cycling was one of the most prominent, which led to a change in delivery plan – cyclists/potential cyclists cited the following: no helmet, no bike, no confidence etc.	8	4	32
Monitoring and Evaluation	A solution should be sought to address monitoring and evaluating projects: £3k was spent on systems, and it still wasn't possible to ensure this was completely accurate. It was impossible to capture additional activity unless individuals reported directly to us, although we have anecdotal evidence of additional throughput. Also led to lengthy and admin-heavy processes.	10	3	30
Better links with the 'right organisation'	Linked to knowing your brand and/or target groups, if we had more links with experts (e.g. Age UK) that would have made the engagement and project more successful and informed of us of where to fill the gaps).	6	5	30
Free activity vs paid activity	Free activity is great for inactives as it removes a barrier, but in the case of Wandle Park Beginners Running, it also meant people weren't invested and so didn't actually follow through after booking the classes.	6	5	30
Lack of appropriate coaches		7	4	28
Lack of appropriate delivery organisation	e.g. Cycling UK charging heavily for one off rides etc. Their model is focussed around council contracts – not community engagement. Council budget could perhaps be better used on community cycling programmes.	7	4	28
Lack of appropriate facilities	i.e cycling on the trail for beginners and the impact of missing link. Lack of BMX facilities for beginners – already monopolised by others etc.	7	4	28
Organic Model e.g Wally Walks	The model of recruiting from participants and offering training was essential. This training validated insurers, but for WFH this is relatively easy, other courses would require a trainer and budget. Other GP surgeries also doing this now.	8	3	24
Park Charges	In the context of local authority austerity and the need to charge for services such as park activity/walks etc. Also confusing and time consuming to book, for future orgs, Las should streamline the process to encourage sustainable physical activities in future. Creating policies for free activity etc. Cost may be on park, but this is offset by health benefits, NHS, employment and other social value etc.	8	3	24
Green Infrastructure suitable for activity	The Wandle Valley has an abundance of green space, although opportunities for physical activity were not always in-built into these i.e the walk at Mitcham Common – needed a more suitable meeting place – organisations should consider this more when planning activities. Cycling another example when the trail was not well maintained. Although basing activity on green infrastructure was more accessible than leisure centres etc.	8	3	24
The hand holding works!	By supporting participants, on the phone or face to face, they are more likely to go along to sessions and build their confidence. Although this is capacity heavy.	7	3	21
Demonstrating social value of project	Whilst figures were important to the funder, Sport England, it was extremely difficult to continue to monitor and evaluate social outcomes. Although there were anecdotal evidence and case studies of people who attended sessions and then found new confidence to be employed etc.	7	3	21
Missed opportunity – ID Verde	Funding/support/collaboration with Idverde as they were across all 4 boroughs was missed	4	4	16
Families – link to young people	Must hook parents in order to have families involved.	5	3	15
Families – link to schools	A link to schools would have supported the raising awareness and the delivery to young people and their families (captive audiences).	5	3	15
Effectiveness of paid for social media campaigns	Including the findings from Make Sport Fun – these learnings have shown good results in attendance etc. A focus will be needed on monitoring those who actually tend.	5	3	15
Methods of marketing	Banners etc – were effective in raising awareness but lack of support from councils in getting them put up etc.	3	4	12
The grant funding for the trust	Was an effective tool and injected life into the trust, allowing for a full-time member of staff who was able to raise awareness, build following and improve the organisational image for the trust.	3	3	9
14-25 y/o not engaged as much as they could have been	This age group wasn't engaged in our activities... put this down to branding - the Wandle Valley logo is perhaps more aligned to older audience (National Trust-y), could apply to delivery learning as well – activities delivered, not appealing? Skating / BMX etc.	4	2	8
Missed opportunity – National Trust	Using the facilities and replicating the success of sites such as Osterley... also missed used of their volunteers and recruiting a welth of sport volunteers etc.	4	2	8

Appendix 3

List of activities delivered throughout the project (2016-2018)

Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
Activity	Sport	Activity	Sport	Activity	Sport
Club 150 @ Beddington Park	Outdoor Fitness	Forever Fit & Ravensbury Park/ Mostyn Gardens	Walking/Outdoor Fitness	Wally Walks	Walking
Axial Crocus	Outdoor Fitness	Forever Fit @ Beddington Park	Walking/Outdoor Fitness	Melanie's Walks @ Beddington Park	Walking
Led Rides	Cycling	Sutton Daytime Beginners	Athletics	Forever Fit @ Ravensbury Park	Walking/Outdoor Fitness
Explorer @ Morden Hall Park	Orienteering	Wally Walks	Walking	Forever Fit @ Beddington Park	Walking/Outdoor Fitness
Wandle Wheelers @ Wandle Delta	Cycling	Beginners Running @ Wandsworth Common	Athletics	Yoga @ Vestry Hall	Yoga
National Fitness Day	Event	Korfball @ The Grove	Korfball	Golf in the Park @ Wandle Park & Beddington pArk	Golf
Forever Fit @ Morden Hall Park	Walking/Outdoor Fitness	Our Parks – Turn Up Tone Up @ Wandsworth Common	Outdoor Fitness	Forever Fit @ Goan Community Centre	Keep Fit
Archery @ Southfields/Henry Prince	Archery	BMXercise @ Merton Track	Cycling (BMX)	Pickleball @ Wandle Park	Pickleball
Golf @ Beddington Park	Golf	Wandle Absolute Beginners Running @ Wandle Park	Athletics	Beginners Running @ King George's Park	Athletics
Golf @ Wandle Park	Golf	Korfball @ Tooting Bec Common	Korfball	Forever Fit @ Riverside Centre	Keep Fit
Forever Fit @ Ravensbury Park	Walking/Outdoor Fitness	Give Running a Go! @ Morden Hall Park	Athletics	Decathlon Running Group @ Wandle Park	Athletics
Forever Fit @ Beddington Park	Walking/Outdoor Fitness	Mindful Walk @ Beddington Park	Walking	Family Touch Tennis @ King George's Park	Tennis
		Archery @ The Aspire Centre/King George's Park	Archery	Give Running a Go @ Morden Hall Park	Athletics
		Family/Forever Fit Touch Tennis @ King George's Park	Tennis		
		Archery @ Carshalton College	Archery		
		Golf in the Park @ Wandle Park & Beddington Park	Golf		
		Wandle Wheelers @ Multiple Locations	Cycling		
		Pickleball @ Waddon Leisure Centre & Wandle Park	Pickleball		
		Forever Fit @ Riverside Centre	Keep Fit		
		Walking Football @ Multiple Locations	Football		
		Cast in the Park @ Morden Hall Park	Angling		

