

ACTIVE YOUTH

Delivered by:

UK YOUTH

Funded by:



Progress Report

October 2020





Contents

Introduction	3
Context	4
Conceptualisation.....	4
Active Youth Theory of Change	5
Current Context – Covid-19 Pandemic.....	5
Programme Delivery	8
Delivery partners	8
Programme targets.....	10
Programme Outcomes (to date).....	10
Challenges.....	13
Contingency	14
Conclusions	15



Introduction

This report presents the progress on the Sport England funded Active Youth programme managed by UK Youth.

The report will: highlight the context in which the programme is currently working, provide an update on programme delivery, detail the challenges overcome – with a focus on planning and delivering during the Covid-19 pandemic and a summary of how the repurposed funding has been used (related to the National Lottery funding rather than the Youth Accelerator Fund funding). Throughout you will find stories and quotes from young people and youth workers who have been part of Active Youth highlighting the programmes positive impact.

Context

Conceptualisation

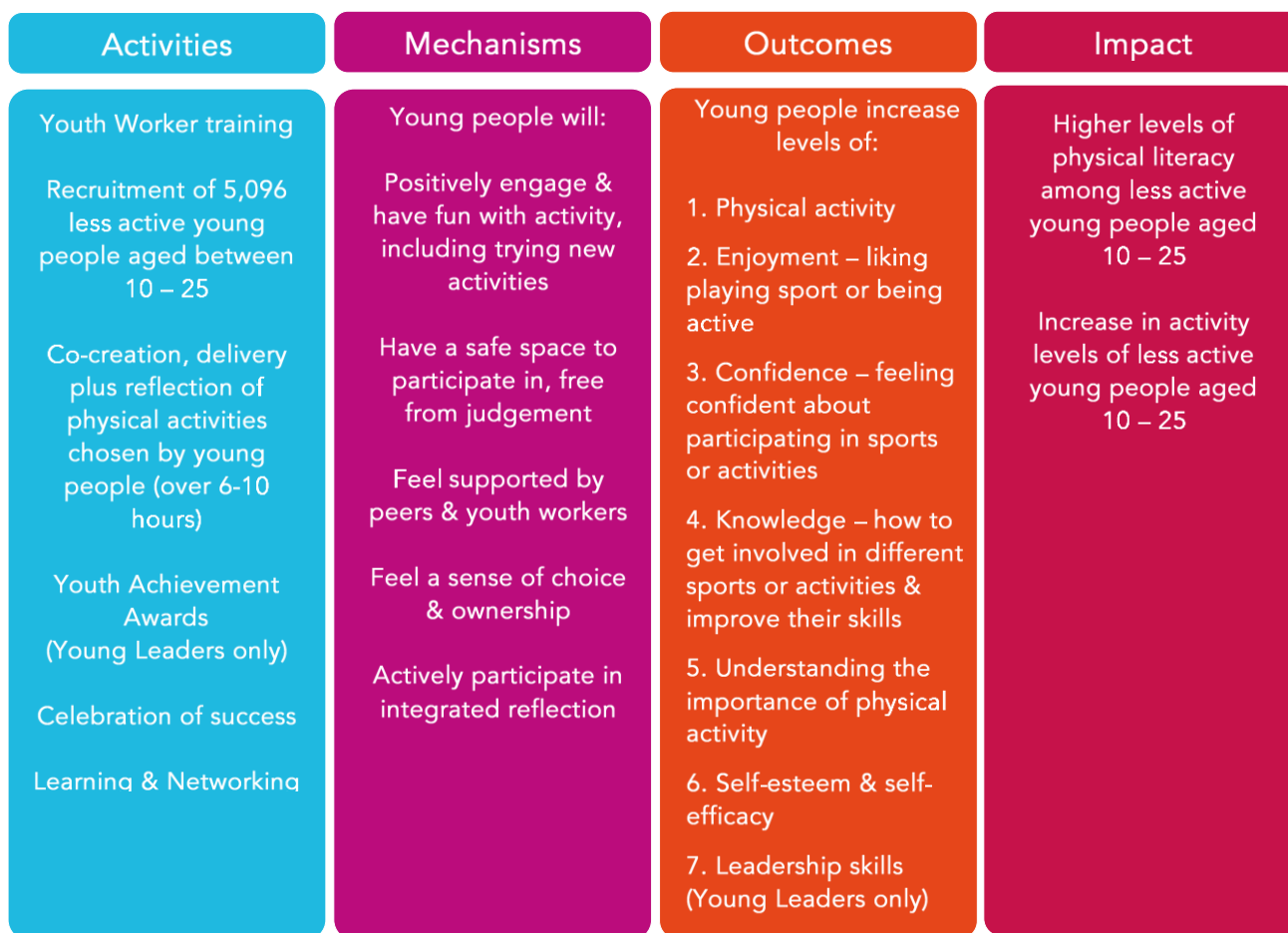
UK Youth's expertise and understanding of the needs of young people led to the design of Active Youth; a high impact, national project that creates and sustains positive change toward physical activity. Active Youth supports local youth organisations to build their capacity and networks to enact this positive change among less active young people. Youth organisations engage less active young people in physical activity allowing young people to experience not only physical activity, but the many associated benefits that being active includes, for example: enjoyment, confidence, knowledge, understanding and leadership.

The ultimate impact Active Youth hopes to have on young people and to achieve together are two-fold: higher levels of physical literacy, and an increase in activity levels of less active young people aged 10 – 25. The benefits of physical literacy reach much wider than simply being physically active. The wider benefits of physical literacy among young people may also be; reducing obesity, academic attainment, helping others, happiness, coordination, memory and cognitive function. These benefits can be instrumental to a young person's development and by taking part in Active Youth it is enhancing their ability to live healthy and happy lives.

The Theory of Change (ToC) developed for Active Youth is seen below. The ToC demonstrates the programme journey less active young people will explore and experience as part of the programme. It highlights the inputs and activities that UK Youth drives, the multiple outcomes – including aspects of physical literacy, and finally the overall impact.

“Taking part in Active Youth is the best part of my week”
– Active Youth participant

Active Youth Theory of Change



Current Context – Covid-19 Pandemic

Active Youth was conceptualised in an entirely different context to the one in which we now work. Since 23rd March 2020 the UK has been experiencing various restrictions as the Covid-19 pandemic spread. This has hugely impacted all aspects of personal and professional daily life, not least the youth sector, young people and their lives. It is unprecedented.

When the pandemic took hold in the UK, UK Youth together with the support of Sport England agreed to implement a number of rational and justified changes to the delivery of Active Youth in line with the unfolding and volatile context. These are detailed here:



Programme delivery dates were deferred

The refreshed timetable meant programme recruitment took place during April and May 2020, signing agreements with delivery partners happened in June and July preceding programme kick-off training and the beginning of delivery in August 2020.



Programme kick-off trainings moved online

Training for youth workers, a crucial element of the programme delivery, moved online in August. This meant we could progress with delivery, mitigating the risk of Covid-19 restrictions, further delays, or loss of interest.



Blended and adaptable delivery approach

Active Youth remains a predominantly 'in-person' physical activity programme. However, to ensure we reach and include the most vulnerable less active young people, youth organisations are able to request online delivery options to support these young people to get involved.



Repurposing of Active Youth funding to provide sector support

UK Youth utilised repurposed funds to support the sector, mobilising youth workers and supporting them to be best equipped to continue working with young people.

UK Youth facilitated trainings, created sector guidance, worked with government and leveraged in-kind technology support to those most in need.

With these adaptations in place Active Youth is being successfully delivered nationally. Success stories and quotes from youth workers and young people on Active Youth are included in this report highlighting this impact.

“Just because a young person has a physical or learning disability doesn’t mean sport shouldn’t be a part of their lives. Some of our young people have really embraced Active Youth, especially ones that don’t like screens. It’s great to be able to offer a blended and inclusive approach.”

“We have ideas from the young people. They came up with the idea to get active by involving exercise with something else - hula hoping and panto! This way they play a character, have fun and get moving! The performance is happening in December and we’re going to share it online.”

“We work with some young people who have ADHD and/or compulsions as well as learning difficulties. They decided they’d like to take on a 5km run every morning in summer and they wanted to get into the water; surf, paddle boarding and wild swimming, all that was led by them and after a long risk assessment, we made it happen!”

- Youth Worker at Lifeworks charity, with Space in Devon



Programme Delivery

To achieve the impact of higher levels of physical literacy and an increase in activity levels of less active young people aged 10 – 25, Active Youth brings teams of 14 young people together to be physically active through sports, exercise and/or activity that they choose. Young people take part in 6-10 hours of activity over a period of 2 weeks to 3 months. The activity can be anything ranging from hula hooping to hockey, boxing to burpees. Valuably, Active Youth gives young people the opportunity to explore different types of activity, they determine what activity they will do for the duration of the programme. In Active Youth, a key role for some young people is that of the Young Leaders. Young Leaders complete a UK Youth Achievement Award: Challenge level, by taking on a leadership role in their team and completing an additional 4 hours on Active Youth.

Delivery partners

Active Youth Cohort One (August 2020 – April 2021) kicked-off with 12 organisations from UK Youth's Movement plus a number of their affiliate organisations, across five regions in England.

The organisations delivering Active Youth are working with young people from areas of high deprivation and/or areas of low social mobility. To determine these areas, the Index of Multiple Deprivation and the Social Mobility Index were overlaid to highlight the areas in England with a prevalence of both. We reached out to organisations in the UK Youth Movement to understand the interest for a physical activity programme in these areas of deprivation and low social mobility and their ability to engage with less active young people in those areas. The result is the reach demonstrated below:

"I'm stronger and pretty tired but I feel much happier."

"I know it's worthwhile and I know why I'm doing it."

"Being active makes me feel great! I also like it because of the snack afterwards"

- Quotes from young people on Active Youth

Partners and young people



**ON
SIDE**
Always there for young people
784



N e
YOUTH
196



**ELITE
AWARDING**



SKILLS 4... WORK
Directing Your Future
56



youth fed
196



**street
games**
98



**Sporting
communities**
392



YD **YOUNG
LEICESTERSHIRE**
Putting Young People First
196



yg
young gloucestershire
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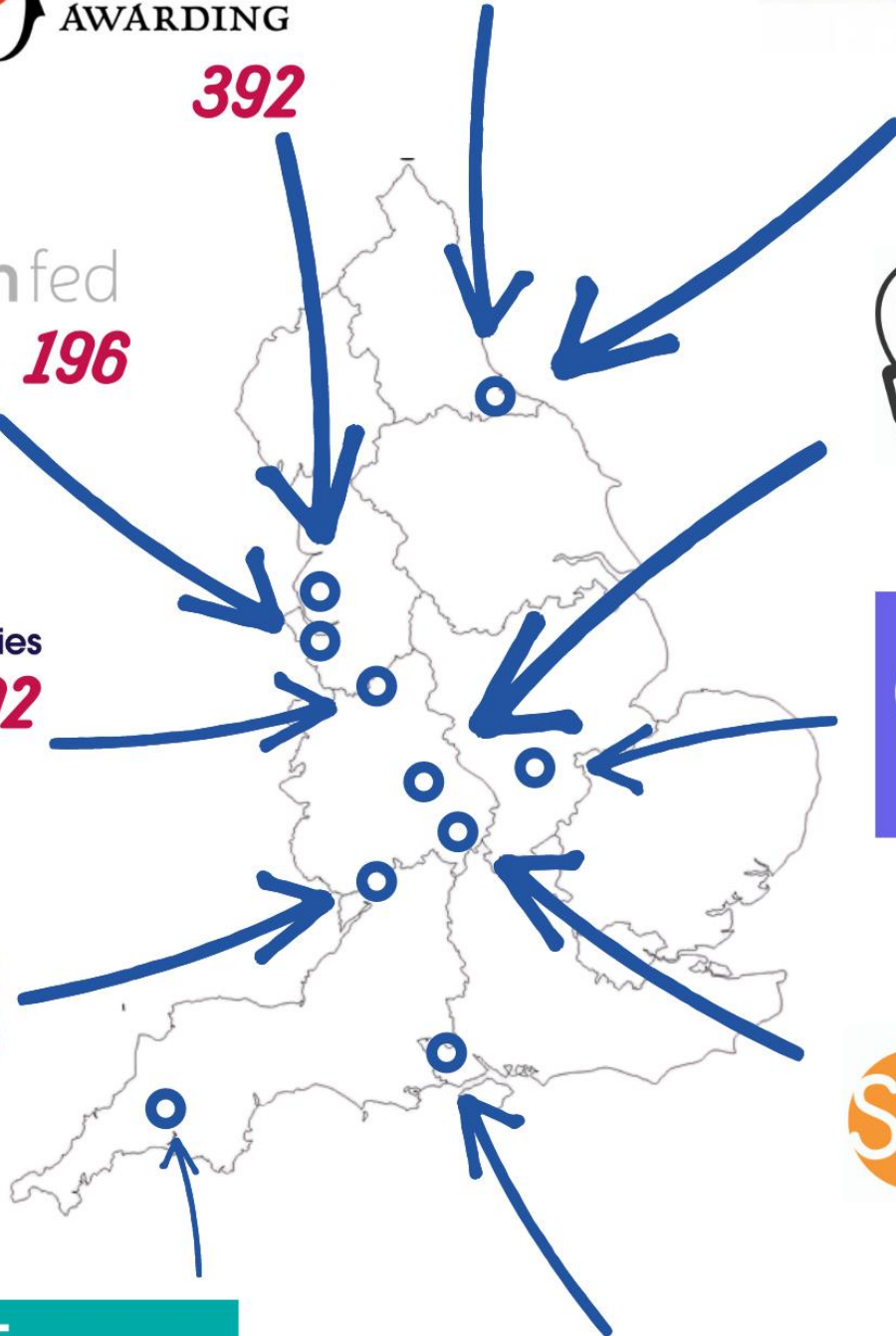
S4L **SPORT
4 LIFE** **UK**
CHANGING LIVES THROUGH
THE POWER OF SPORT
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space*
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UKY | **AVON
TYRRELL**
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Programme targets

During Cohort One (August 2020 – April 2021), Active Youth aims to reach over 2,800 less active young people of the complete programme total of 5,096. Using the Chief Medical Officer's (CMO) guidelines and the Sport England definition, 'less active' is defined as: someone who does less than 30 minutes of activity per day. Moreover, in England, the majority of young people do not achieve the *recommended* activity level of 60 minutes per day across the week, as endorsed by the CMO. Active Youth aims to positively impact the enjoyment, confidence, knowledge, understanding (physical literacy) and behaviour (becoming more active) of the young people it engages.

Furthermore, Active Youth will engage over 400 Young Leaders in Cohort One, from a programme total of 728. As mentioned above, Active Youth Young Leaders will complete 10 hours on the programme, supporting in the delivery while developing leadership skills and attaining a Youth Achievement Award: Challenge level.

Programme Outcomes (to date)

Cohort One of Active Youth kicked-off in August 2020. At the time of writing we are awaiting participant records and impact data for analysis as the programme has been in delivery for just 2 months.

To date, Active Youth has accomplished a number of outcomes in the set-up phase and in the initial delivery period. The highlights are described below:



Conducted an initial scoping exercise of youth organisations in our Movement before finalising partner recruitment and contracting 12 youth organisations to deliver during Cohort One.



Created, designed and distributed programme resources. These resources included Active Youth's youth worker handbook and all monitoring and impact tools with the support of our Research and Impact team.



Facilitated three virtual programme kick-off training sessions for over 40 youth workers. These sessions included a walkthrough of the programme resources, discussions on roles and responsibilities, an introduction to the Youth Achievement Awards.



Street Games and Eartha Pond were invited to share expertise and knowledge on the what, how and why of inactivity, barriers facing less active young people, and motivate and encourage youth workers in the delivery of Active Youth.



Covid-19 contingency planning (detailed further in the Challenges section).



Ongoing virtual support provided to all delivery partners throughout the delivery phase, this includes virtual visits (where possible).



Distributed funding to all 12 youth organisations worth over £100,000 enabling them to set-up the programme locally.



Consulting partners on the planning and content of the national Learning and Networking Days (LANDs) in December to which all delivery partners will be attending. The LANDs will provide an invaluable space for Youth Workers to share programmatic learnings with each other and UK Youth, these sessions will provide desirable capacity building training as well as networking opportunities. These were a highlight and proved a successful part of previous programmes.



Repurposing of programmatic funding to support and sustain UK Youth, the UK Youth Movement and Avon Tyrell Outdoor centre during the early stages of Covid-19 and ensure accessible support to young people in these times.

- We developed and are continually enhancing a new support website for the sector (<https://youthworksupport.co.uk/>)
- Secured in-kind support from corporates and other charities (e.g. technology donations offered from Google, Microsoft and Raspberry Pi)
- Delivering online training events for youth organisations to address the new challenges resulting from the pandemic
- Supporting the Government to understand the impact of the pandemic on the youth sector and appropriate responses
- Allowed Avon Tyrell to maintain upkeep of the Grade II listed building, maintenance, insurance, utilities and leasing of equipment to ensure the centre was ready to be reopened immediately upon Government guidance and continue to provide developmental experiences for young people.



This is Nina at Broadsands beach with Lifeworks Charity taking part in a paddle boarding session.

Challenges

The Covid-19 pandemic has been, and continues to be, the biggest major challenge facing Active Youth. The challenges UK Youth navigated and overcame in order to deliver Active Youth, are detailed here:

	Current adaptations (from August 2020)	Future adaptations for Cohort One (until April 2021)
National lockdown	Lockdown meant that Active Youth could not be delivered in its original, in-person, format. Original, in-person delivery dates were deferred from May 2020 until August 2020 when youth services were included in the essential services could be delivered safely in-person.	Active Youth will continue to be delivered in-person, with teams of 14 young people and one staff member comprising a bubble. In the case of another national lockdown contingency plans have been made, with options to reduce group size, deliver outdoors and embed moving some delivery online.
Youth organisations & clubs closed	During lockdown number of youth organisations remained closed and were unable to delivery online services. Fortunately, Active Youth delivery partners are not currently affected by closure and remain open to deliver their youth services including Active Youth.	In the event of youth organisations closing UK Youth has a thorough risk assessment in place and mitigation measures to support any organisation that can no longer deliver in-person or at their current site. For example: over recruitment of young people from a wide range of delivery partners and locations and flexible delivery methods.
Youth services suspended	Active Youth delivery was deferred due to youth sector services not being designated as essential services initially, therefore UK Youth decided to postpone the programme until in-person delivery was feasible. Delivery started in August 2020, when in-person youth services with group resumed.	In case youth sector, in-person activity is suspended due to Covid-19, Active Youth will deliver online and/or with smaller groups in outdoor settings.

<p>High risk delivery of sports/activity</p>	<p>The risk of indoor sports and/or activities remains high in terms of Covid-19 Government guidance, however outdoor provision is currently deemed less risky. All delivery partners are operating under Covid secure regulations from government with guidance from NYA specific to youth sector activities and virtual support throughout from UK Youth on programme specific challenges.</p>	<p>Until Covid-19 has a vaccine, all delivery partners are expected to follow the law, regulations and local guidance on working in a Covid-secure way specific to the sector. In the case that Active Youth may be deemed high risk, on a case by case basis, UK Youth will put in place contingency measure with each delivery partner based on local regional specifics.</p>
<p>Evolving local restrictions</p>	<p>Local contexts have not impacted the delivery of Active Youth to date, as restrictions were made on a national level.</p>	<p>Localised restrictions due to the increasing spread of Covid-19 means that Active Youth are making local case-by-case decisions on programme adaptations to ensure young people can safely continue on the programme.</p>

Contingency

Currently, Active Youth is taking measures to mitigate against the risks of Covid-19 to enable young people to safely engage with the programme and to be able to continue delivery. Contingency measures UK Youth are taking are in line with the most up-to-date National Youth Agency (NYA) guidance which remains at an Amber readiness level. At this level Active Youth will continue to run with; Covid Secure venues, maximum bubbles of 15 young people, face coverings for anyone aged 11+ and social distancing.

Looking to the future, in the event that the NYA readiness level moves to Red, UK Youth will ensure delivery partners are aware of the changes, understand the implications and support them to work and deliver safely. In the case of Active Youth, the programme contingency allows for a move to blended online and in-person delivery, outdoor activity options are still available, smaller group sizes, and/or postponing delivery. Preparation for all eventualities is underway.



Conclusions

Covid-19 has caused havoc throughout the programme period so far, we can assume it will continue to be a challenge, one that must be monitored and mitigated against for the duration of Active Youth. We are in close contact with our Movement and national bodies such as NYA, to listen to and understand the ongoing challenges for Active Youth delivery partners, the young people we support, and the wider Youth sector.

Thanks to the understanding and flexibility of Sport England, Active Youth is successfully engaging less active young people despite the challenging context. The programme, now more than ever, is much needed and wanted across the country by youth workers and young people alike. We are very proud to be able to deliver this programme in an adaptable and safe way, succeeding in supporting young people get active.

In December we are planning a Learning and Networking Day to further share experiences and learnings as well as provide useful training and networking opportunities to all delivery partners involved in Active Youth. The detail and outcomes of this day will be shared in the end of Cohort report in June 2021.

Moving forward, we continue to support our partners successfully complete Cohort One through the challenges they experience – being understanding and flexible will ensure that the programme is having the greatest possible impact in this situation. Cohort One will end in April 2021 and will be followed by a 2-month learning and reporting phase. In June 2021, UK Youth will be reporting on the completion of this cohort. Following the learning phase and the Cohort One report, UK Youth, where appropriate, will ensure Cohort Two (July 2021 – January 2022) encompasses the adaptations and enhancements to ensure the success of Active Youth.

“At first I was nervous and a bit embarrassed, but once you get going it doesn’t matter. After the session I feel tired but positive and ready for anything”

– Active Youth participant, with Skills4Work in Gateshead



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