



Impact Data Report

2023

Progress of the Essex Local Delivery Pilot
up to March 2023

Produced by the Active Essex Insight & Evaluation Team

Introduction

The Essex Local Delivery Pilot (LDP) is an eight-year system change programme, led by Active Essex, to test how to tackle population levels of physical inactivity in our most deprived communities.



Figure 1. Essex LDP On a Page

The priorities, ways of working and intended outcomes of the Essex LDP are summarised in our theory of change known locally as the 'LDP on a page'. The intended outcomes cover both system change and population change, and this report intends to assess the changes and impacts relating to these. Specifically, it will consider three 'levels' of impact: system change, projects and programmes and population level change. It will conclude that:

1

There is considerable evidence to suggest that the Essex LDP is making good progress in creating system change. There are many examples of how the LDP has been able to align their objectives to those of different system settings, who in turn are starting to think and talk about physical activity, with some to integrating it into policy and practice, in some cases realigning budgets in order to do this. In saying this, there is still more work to do as the LDP seeks to further hardwire physical activity into the system.

2

Through its projects and programmes, the Essex LDP is achieving a number of the intended outcomes cited in the LDP On a Page. The majority of LDP projects focus on increasing opportunity for physical activity but there are good proportion that also seek to increase capability and motivation. Data collected from LDP project participants suggests that the LDP is effectively reaching those facing inequalities and that these are having a positive impact on a range of outcomes including physical activity, wellbeing and loneliness.

3

While both academic and anecdotal evidence show that engaging in physical activity has a wide range of benefits for individuals and communities, analysis of population level data has not yet shown any clear impacts of the Essex LDP on outcomes for the residents of Basildon, Colchester and Tendring. In saying this, there are some encouragements from this data. The data also shows that inequalities in physical activity exist in Essex, in line with national trends; this confirms the Essex LDP's position that it is important to focus on addressing these. Over future years, it is hoped that physical activity questions will continue to be included in the Essex Resident Survey enabling longer-term tracking of population level outcomes which the LDP contributes to.

1. System Change

In 2018, Collaborate worked with Active Essex and other local partners to undertake a whole system diagnostic. This aimed to assess readiness in each LDP place and across Essex as a whole for a whole system, place-based approach to tackling physical inactivity. To do this they scored against nine 'building blocks' of system infrastructure identified as enablers to creating collaborative, place-based systems.



Figure 2. Collaborate's Nine Building Blocks for Collaborative, Place Based Systems 2018

This work identified different strengths and opportunities within each of the three LDP places. There was a need for a new relationships between services and communities in Basildon; for stronger links between strategy and delivery in Colchester; and the need to channel the energy and commitment in Tendring towards a common set of priorities.

In 2023, Collaborate reviewed the progress of the Essex LDP using a slightly amended set of indicators.

2018 Category	2023 Category
Place-based strategies and plans	We have a clear and shared sense of purpose
Governance	We have a good structure for decision making
Outcomes & accountability	We are accountable to each other for the progress we do (and don't) make
Funding and commissioning	We use our financial resources effectively
Culture change & people development	We work collaboratively and coordinate our activities
Delivery	We work in a relational and asset-based way
Data, evidence and evaluation	We base our decisions on evidence
Collaborative platforms: digital and physical	We share our learning and build on our strengths
Communications & engagement	We communicate well with each other

Table 1. Collaborate Enablers for Place-Based System Change

In their report, they describe the Essex LDP as “a group of people working together with extraordinary effectiveness and achieving a scale of change which is uncommon”. To help demonstrate this, Collaborate produced the below diagrams which indicate the progress made against each of the indicators.

Basildon

Collaborate describe Basildon as a new town which was created to accommodate the population overspill from London, suggesting that the influence of the planners has cast a long shadow. At the start of LDP, Basildon was identified as a place with limited community participation and siloed working between organisations and services. The planned nature of the district along with the paternalistic social-engineering which is often associated with post-war new towns created perceptions of Basildon as a place with pockets of connection rather than an area which had a strong sense of community across the board. Collaborate identified that the LDP work in Basildon had a strong focus on developing and embedding practice, creating a legacy which goes beyond the work of the LDP to influence collaborative working more broadly across Basildon as a place.

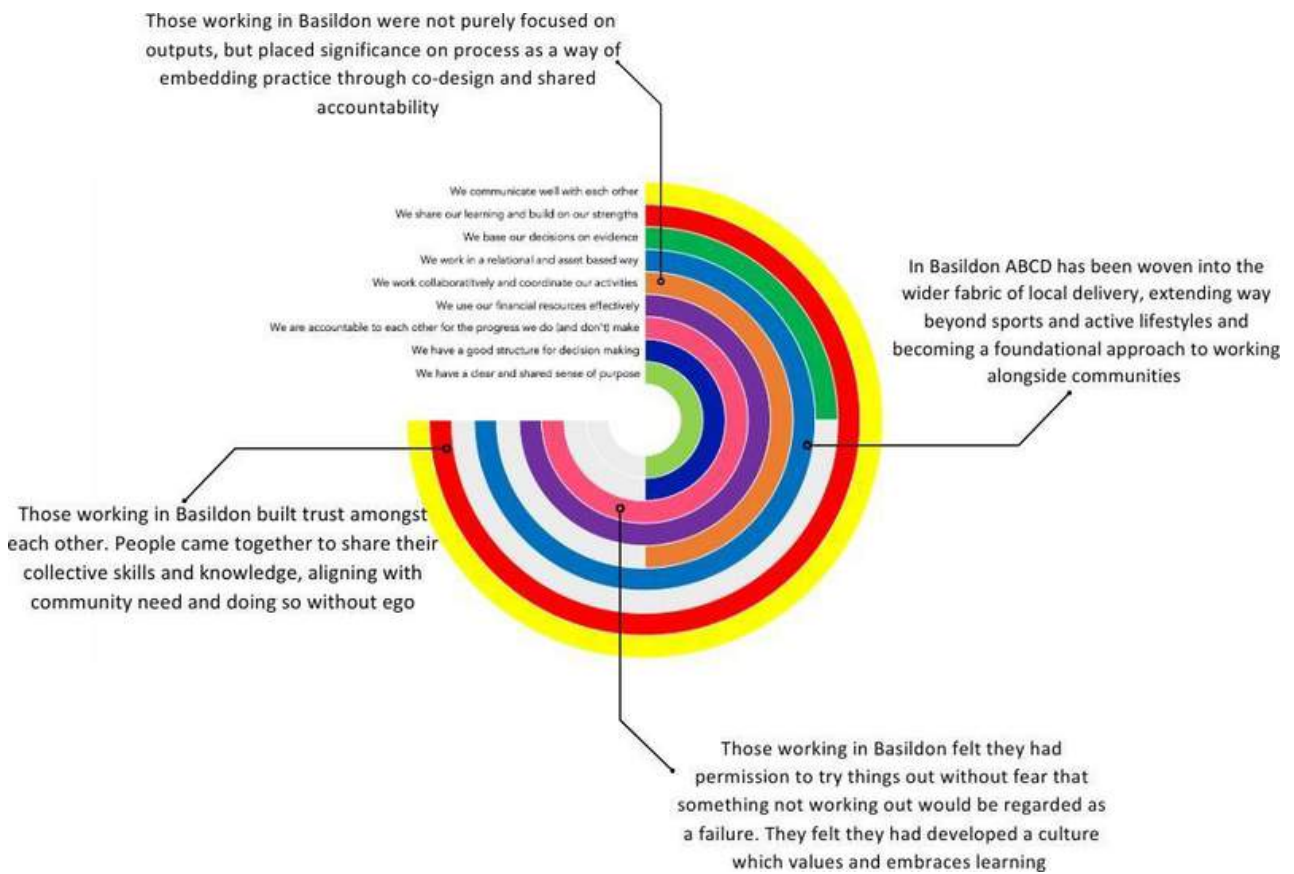


Figure 3. Collaborate Assessment of Change for Basildon (2023)

Colchester

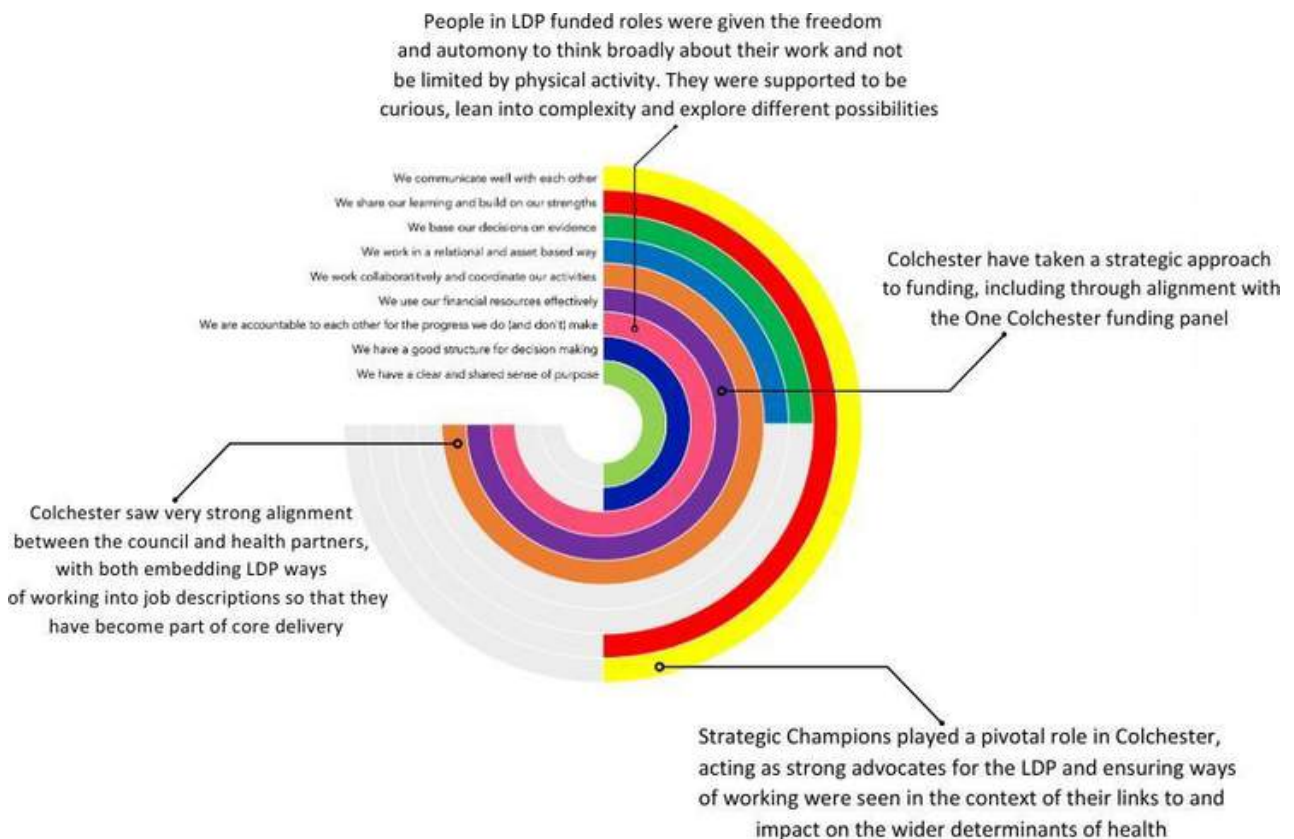


Figure 4. Collaborate Assessment of Change for Colchester (2023)

Collaborate describe Colchester as an old Roman town, one with a rich military history and a strong sense of cultural identity, Colchester is a district with a well-established and well-connected voluntary and community sector. In the early stages of the LDP, Colchester demonstrated a strong sense of shared vision and governance, with the One Colchester Partnership being central to this. These characteristics provided a strong foundation on which to build, with people recognising the potential to further mature and connect the system and look to sustainable approaches to shift the ways in which organisations, including the voluntary and community sector, work to provide the fabric for a long-term social movement for Colchester. Collaborate comment that, within Colchester, a deliberate approach has been taken in to connect the local system and consider how to hardwire ways of working for the longer term to ensure sustainability beyond the life of the LDP.

Tendring

Collaborate note that intrinsic to the work of the LDP in Tendring is the history, geography and demographics of the place itself. Using the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, Tendring is ranked as the most deprived of all Essex districts. 23 of Tendring's 90 LS areas are in the 10% most deprived in Essex, and a part of Jaywick is the most deprived area in England. An understanding of this and the impact poverty and deprivation has on physical activity and the experience of those living in communities more broadly served as a motivating factor in developing the sense of purpose which underpins the culture of LDP working in Tendring. Alongside this, the natural assets and resources present in Tendring as a coastal district offered real opportunities to embed physical activity for all communities in a sustainable way. Collaborate highlighted that one of the key successes for Tendring has been building a team culture and a sense of purpose which those working in the area felt they had a stake in and ownership of.

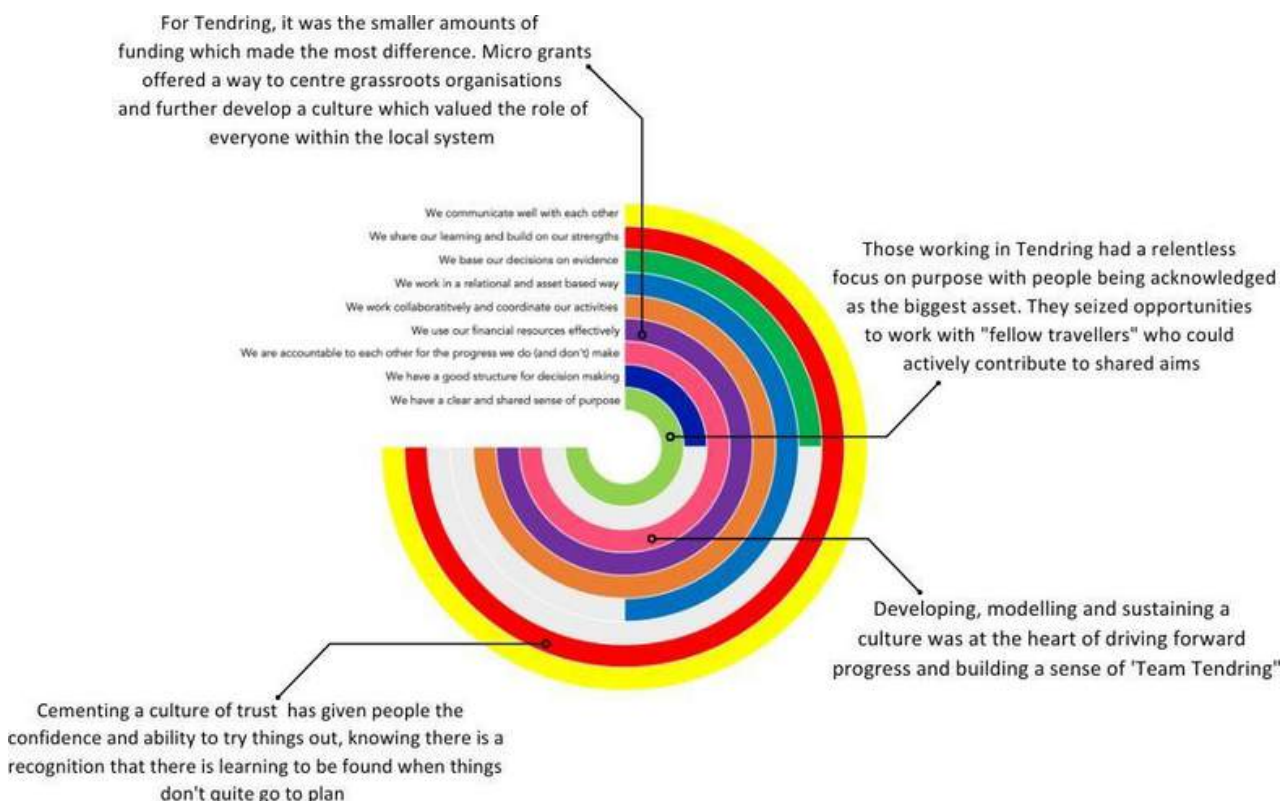


Figure 5. Collaborate Assessment of Change for Tendring (2023)

There is no doubt that the Essex LDP has contributed to system change within Essex. This section breaks this down into the outcomes included in the Essex LDP on a Page:

- Prioritisation of physical activity across systems
- Realignment of system budgets
- Shared vision and accountability
- Evidence that enables scale & replicate
- Changes to policy and practice

Prioritisation of Physical Activity Across Systems

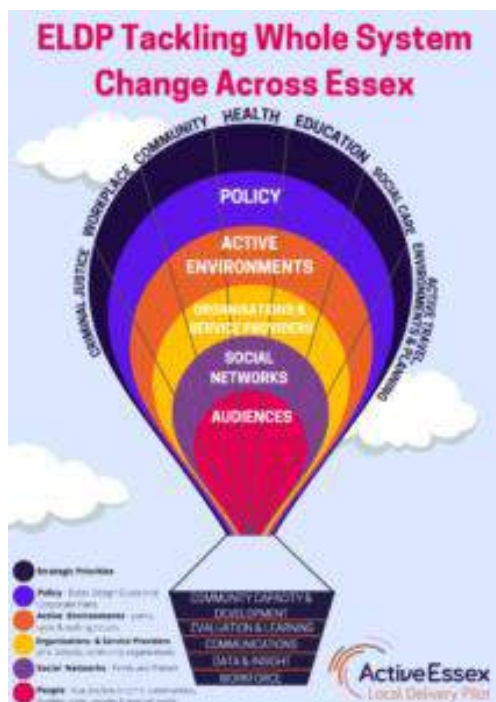


Figure 6. Essex LDP Balloon Diagram

Collaborate's 2018 assessment of readiness for system change showed that, in general, physical activity was seen as the responsibility of the sport and physical activity sector, but people were on board with the LDP's vision to start sharing that responsibility.

"When you think about a whole system approach to tackling inactivity, only one tiny part of it is activities and classes. It is more about things that are embedded into everyone's lives and that is the bigger challenge"

In order to create whole system change, the Essex LDP identified a number of different system settings to work with, intending to 'hardwire' physical activity into these; Criminal Justice, Workplace, Community, Health, Education, Social Care and Active Travel, Environments & Planning (outlined in the balloon diagram).

For Active Essex, 'hardwiring' could include changing policy or practice so that physical activity is included.

In their recent report, Collaborate found that across Basildon, Colchester and Tendring, workshop participants consistently said that one of the greatest impacts that the LDP has had is on 'the way partners think about how to increase physical activity', suggesting that there is progress being made in encouraging the prioritisation of physical activity across the system.

The Essex LDP has been particularly successful in leveraging funding from other areas of the system, receiving match funding of over £16 million. This too suggests that progress is being made in encouraging the prioritisation of physical activity, as system leaders are choosing to use their (often limited) resources to invest in physical activity.



Figure 7. LDP Approved Investment Proposals Apr 20 - Mar 23

There are many examples of prioritisation of physical activity among the specific system settings identified and targeted by the Essex LDP. Some of these will be explored below, detailing changes to knowledge, attitudes, policy and practice including information of funding leveraged by the LDP.

Community

In 2018, Collaborate reported an acknowledgement among stakeholders that there is a need to use the assets in the community and build on what works. Local groups were highlighted as being particularly important.

The LDP Microgrants Programme was a small grants fund delivered by the Essex LDP up to March 2023 offering £50 to £2,500 to local people and organisations who have a great idea to help their communities get active. In total, 121 microgrant applications were approved across the Essex LDP and £247,209 funding was agreed. This programme led to a number of community groups delivering physical activity for the first time when they were given the opportunity and encouragement to do so.

In Colchester, the LDP Coordinator was embedded into the Community Enabling Team meaning that this team has been influenced, upskilled and given the confidence to continue the promotion of physical activity beyond the life of this LDP-funded role. Decision making around LDP funding has also been integrated into the One Colchester funding panel, increasing awareness of initiatives being funded and, on occasion, leading to interventions being funded by another source.

In total, the LDP has leveraged funding of £3,188,207 from the community system across LDP areas. This includes £58,727 from Colchester Catalyst; a grant-making trust focused on improving health outcomes, £425,803 from Essex County Council's Strengthening Communities Team and £81,500 from CVSs.

Parents4Parents Microgrant



Basildon “Parents4Parents” aim to improve the outcomes of children and families facing everyday challenges in the Basildon area. This is done by providing access to trained volunteers who offer community support. They operate several projects during each school term that include an ESOL Group (English for speakers of other languages), an Art Cafe, a Coffee morning/Drop-in and an After School Youth project.

Mental health and wellbeing support have always been key to the work of Parents4Parents; often using creative methods such as arts and craft sessions to work with parents. Although they had never considered physical activity before, they thought it was a great opportunity to introduce something different and expand how they engaged with and supported parents. Parents4Parents often work with parents who cannot afford to put food on the table for their children. Unsurprisingly, exercise and eating healthily can end up being less of a priority for these families.

After receiving an LDP Microgrant, Parents4Parents introduced yoga into their women’s ESOL group. Many of the women who attend the group are vulnerable, isolated and lacking in confidence and consequently would not access an exercise class by themselves.

“ We were able to bring somebody to them rather than them going out. They would not access it in the community. They just wouldn't do it. But by actually bringing it into their ESOL session, the trust was already there, the safe environment was already there and they've really connected with it. We chose very carefully the instructor that we took into them, that was a key factor for us we made sure that we felt that she would run the class and support them in the way that they need it to be supported and it's just worked really well. We started out with a gentle exercise yoga and they've now had three sessions of yoga. We've put that in over the last few months. And actually, I've just booked them to have Zumba going in January and they're really excited to do that. So obviously that's a much more intense kind of movement, but that's, that's going to be quite exciting

Parents4Parents are also looking into self-defence and increasing a chakra dance program they started recently. They aim to have a variety of physical activity options available to the parents they work with moving forward.

Health

In 2018, Collaborate noted a sense of frustration among stakeholders at not being able to engage effectively with health colleagues, particularly in Basildon. It was felt there were untapped opportunities to work in a more preventative way and optimism that the newly created Integrated Care Boards (ICB) and Integrated Care Systems (ICS) could be an opportunity to test physical activities contribution to this.

LDP leads from Colchester and Tendring became heavily involved in the North East Essex Alliance, leading on the 'Be Well' domain and ensuring that physical activity was embedded in this work and working to include it within this section of the Suffolk and North East Essex ICB Joint Forward Plan 2023-2028.

In Basildon and Colchester & Tendring, staff members have been recruited and embedded in the health system. This has led to increased conversation about physical activity within the health system. In Basildon, LDP-funded GP training was delivered to 148 participants alongside the creation of a network of 'physical activity champions' within surgeries. To date, this has led to two Primary Care Networks (PCNs) signing up to be Active PCNs and 1 GP Surgery has signed up to be an Active Surgery. In Colchester and Tendring, the Physical Activity & Partnership Officer is part of the Health Alliance 'Stay Well' and 'Waiting Well' domains and has embedded physical activity into these.

*"Culture change is slowly in place, with the overall attitude of our staff in this patch being more open minded to physical activity and the benefits of encouraging and supporting it."
(LDP Staff Member)*

In saying this, there is more work to do within the health system. While many colleagues in the NHS have positive attitudes towards promoting physical activity, they are limited by financial and time constraints which make it difficult to implement changes to increase physical activity provision in some pathways.

In total, the LDP has leveraged funding of £594,375 from the health system for interventions including GP training, embedded posts and £366,200 towards scaling up Motivated Minds.

Criminal Justice

Collaborate's 2018 report did not comment on the extent to which physical activity was embedded within the criminal justice system, however this is an area that has seen considerable development within Essex over recent years.

Gaining a space on the Violence and Vulnerability (V&V) Board was central to the LDP's influence in this system setting. This led to being invited to be part of the community voices sub-group to feed ideas and insight on the ground into the operations board as well as being on the panel for the V&V community fund and advocating for sport and physical activity. 60% of the projects that have been given funding since have included sport and physical activity.

Working with the V&V Board has also provided insight and direction to ensure that any projects that the LDP funds within this sector have a clear focus and need.

Sport & Youth Crime Prevention Project

The Sport & Youth Crime Prevention (S&YCP) Project is delivered by the Active Essex Foundation (AEF) and aims to use sport and physical activity to divert vulnerable young people away from exploitation and criminality towards a positive lifestyle with positive outcomes. The primary output of the project is employing two members of staff who will grow and support a network of locally trusted organisations (LTOs) who use sport and work with vulnerable young people. It is hoped that this project will create an evidence base to demonstrate to the Youth Justice System that sport is an effective tool to enhance positive outcomes for young people in the context of youth crime and violence.

In the first 12 months of the project, strong links have been developed with the Violence and Vulnerability Unit. S&YCP staff are now embedded in their structure, a member of the team is managing the Secondary Workstream programme of work which gives a real ability to influence.

Funds amounting to £387,000 have been leveraged into the LTO network, including £98,000 via the Ministry of Justice and over £288,000 via the VVU Secondary Workstream. This came to LTOs through working closely with S&YCP project staff on developing bids and helping create projects.

Working with Active Essex, S&YCP project staff were able to identify a gap in the Essex ActivAte Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF). HAF was providing over 150 free clubs each school holiday, but they were not engaging young people who were involved in or at risk of becoming involved in the youth justice system. S&YCP project staff worked with the network of LTOs in order to provide a range of activities for these young people. System budgets were aligned to combat both areas. In 2022 our specialist HAF programme secured £130,000 and a further £160,000 for the 2023 programme.



Active Travel, Environments & Planning



In 2018, access to key sports facilities was identified as a barrier to encouraging and sustaining participation, particularly among those without a car, in all three LDP areas. It was also noted that previous housing development had not encouraged or taken physical activity into consideration and the layout of housing estates often fostered isolation. Planned regeneration work was identified as an opportunity to build active environments that encourage more active lifestyles.

Since then, the LDP team has formed a close working relationship with the Essex County Council Sustainable Transport Team, collaboratively working on projects that

achieve both our aims including Essex Pedal Power (a free bike scheme), Safer Greener Healthier (a behaviour change campaign) and Essex Cycle Grants (a grants programme for cycling projects). A significant benefit of this relationship is that Active Essex have been able to broaden the reach of the Sustainable Transport Team deeper into communities (around 60% of the Cycle Grant recipients since Active Essex collaboration were previously unknown to the Sustainable Transport Team). However, there is less evidence of change in terms of prioritisation of physical activity within this team. In saying this, in 2023, a new Assistant Relationship Manager was employed by Active Essex to focus on cycling projects; it is hoped that this role will act as a 'bridge' into the Sustainable Transport Team, having input and influence on work that they are doing both with and apart from Active Essex.

"Active Essex has acted as a conduit to bring different services together to solve common problems." (Sustainable Transport Team Member)

"Working together is smarter [...] the system is much more joined up, we're sharing resources, sharing learning, and [...] accelerating some of that work much better than if we did it on our own" (Active Essex Staff Member)

In 2018, the Essex LDP was able to influence the Essex Design Guide so that Sport England's Active Design Principles were included. Following the success of this, Active Environments Officer roles were created and embedded within Basildon Borough Council and Colchester City Council. This enabled them to further influence attitudes, policy and practice in the Active Travel, Environments & Planning system. It is hoped that either these posts will be adopted by the local councils beyond the current LDP funding, or that considering physical activity will be so embedded that they will not be needed.

In total, the LDP has leveraged funding of £4,427,490 from the Active Travel, Environments & Planning system, primarily for cycling schemes such as Essex Pedal Power, Wheels for All and Basildon Simply Cycling. £80,000 funding was also leveraged from the Essex County Council Sustainable Transport Team for the 'Safer, Greener, Healthier' behaviour change campaign.

Active Environments Post

As part of hardwiring physical activity into the system, Active Essex has employed Active Environments Coordinators across Essex Local Delivery Pilot (LDP) areas. This embedded role involves linking up and coordinating across a range of current work streams as well as carrying out projects to promote active living. There is a focus on promoting opportunities for increasing and enhancing active travel throughout the borough and influencing the introduction and design of active environments. They are expected to liaise and work with Councillors and council staff, statutory, community and voluntary sector organisations, private and public sector partners, Active Essex, Essex County Council and the Essex LDP.

Aaron is an Active Environments & Active Travel Capacity Coordinator for Colchester. Over the past year he has been reflecting on his role and the impact it has had. During this time he has been involved in writing the Active Travel Delivery Strategy to provide the guidance for developers to deliver active travel infrastructure as a core principle in their developments that will ultimately increase the capacity & opportunity for people to be more physically active. He has found the policy planning team to be receptive and positive towards embedding physical activity into policies and processes.

Aaron has been able to witness a new way of thinking and approaching policy and practice:



I am really pleased that in a meeting last week we discussed the review of the Local Plan and how it was to be reviewed in a completely different way to the 'norm'. Rather than scope out areas for housing allocations needed for growth followed by various other areas to then go to member/public consultation for feedback... we have and need to retain and enhance and what we need to incorporate sport and PA provision in order to plan the housing allocation.



Through his work on the Green/Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy for the Active Environment Strategy he has been to take a community focused approach to increasing PA through policy change which has been greatly welcomed.

Other System Settings

While considerable progress around prioritisation of physical activity has been seen in the above system settings, this has not so much been the case for others, such as workplaces, education and

social care. For workplaces, the Coronavirus pandemic and the resulting changes to ways of working have considerably affected the LDP's ability to reach employees. For education and social care, the challenges have been a result of trying to work with stretched systems that are already struggling to achieve their core objectives.

Realignment of System Budgets

Beyond directly leveraged (or matched) funding, the LDP has also seen realignment of system budgets. Indeed, Collaborate's 2023 report shows findings that in all areas, those involved in the LDP have seen changes to 'the way resources are allocated locally'. The LDP is aware of £14,297,270 new investment to tackle physical inactivity which is associated with the LDP but not a direct match to Sport England funding.

This includes Basildon Borough Council and Basildon & Brentwood Alliance choosing to fund further work with Street Tag (£28,000), £58,000 NHS funding received by Wheels for All disability cycling project and both North Essex Alliance and Basildon & Brentwood Alliance finding funding to continue the strength and balance work stated by the LDP-funded Prevention & Enablement Model (PEM). Perhaps the most significant example is the impact of the Holiday Hunger work that the LDP funded in 2019, which led to Active Essex delivering the £7.5m Holiday Activities and Food programme on behalf of Essex County Council



*"Our holiday activity food programme that's taking place across the whole of the county has been delivered by our partners in the LDP and without them we simply wouldn't have been able to have reached as many vulnerable families and working families as we have been able to."
(Elected Member, Essex County Council)*

More recently, the Sport & Youth Crime Prevention Project has been successful in influencing the wider system to realign their budgets and increase spending on physical activity interventions for young people involved in or at risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system.

In saying this, we have also faced challenges within certain systems, such as Health and Adult Social Care, where budgets are tight and a shift to spending more on prevention is hard to influence, even when there is evidence of effectiveness (e.g. PEM).

As well as asking about the changes that had been seen by those involved in the LDP, Collaborate also asked what further changes are hoped for. In all areas, staff said that they would like to see further changes to the way resources are allocated locally.

Shared Vision and Accountability

In 2018, Collaborate reported that across all three LDP areas, there was appetite for more joint working with a single vision and a shared set of outcomes to be held accountable to. Their recent report suggested that one of the most important and effective ways of working for the LDP has been 'building a culture'. This includes putting purpose at the centre, giving agency, spreading ownership and enabling others to do, and starting where partners are.

Collaborate noted that within the LDP team (both Active Essex staff and place-based staff), there was a clear sense of purpose around what the programme is trying to achieve. However, the team had also recognised that partners had other priorities and rather than leading with physical activity, they focused on things which mattered most to partners and the places in which they were working.

"There have been lots of investments from health into physical activity because of the LDP. This was because they could see we were hitting a lot of their health outcomes. Their investment really built momentum." (LDP Staff Member)

Essex Pedal Power

Essex Pedal Power (EPP) is a community-based pilot programme that launched in the Clacton and Jaywick areas of Tendring in Spring 2021 and extended to Colchester, Harwich and Dovercourt and Basildon in Spring 2023. The Essex Pedal Power programme provides qualifying residents with free, high-



quality bikes to support them to become more physically active, whilst also enabling them to travel to work, school and leisure activities, at low cost, both financially and environmentally.

The 6 intended outcomes of the project are:

- Increase cycling participation to level up inequalities
- Increase sustainable travel through cycling, including developing local cycling infrastructure
- Increase the employability of local people and improve the local economy, including access to employment, education and training opportunities
- Increase the fitness and physical health of inactive people
- Increase the wellbeing of inactive people
- Increase the resilience, connectedness and social capital in local communities

By using a whole system approach, EPP has fostered collaboration between different organisations for the planning, delivery and evaluation of the program. Active Essex, Essex County Council, Essex Highways and The Active Wellbeing Society work closely together to deliver the program. Raleigh and See.sense contribute by providing high quality free bikes and patented GPS trackers. Moreover, Basildon Borough Council, Colchester City Council and Tendring District Council work closely with Operations teams across Essex. A partnership with Basildon & Thurrock University Hospital allowed the extension of Pedal Power to the Hospital's employees in the lowest pay band.

The shared vision of the wide and close partnerships within Essex Pedal Power has enabled positive change for the communities in which EPP has been launched. Through the Essex Pedal Power scheme, 1,055 Essex residents have been provided with new bikes.

One of the ways that has drawn partners into the vision of the LDP is through governance structures. These include a Strategic Sponsors Group made up of senior leaders from key areas and sectors, and local decision-making groups. In Basildon, both strategic and operational groups have been formed, including senior leaders as well as local community leaders. In Colchester, the decision making around funding has been embedded into the One Colchester Funding Panel, expanding the input and accountability.

Building on the influence of the LDP and some of its key principles, in 2021 Active Essex Launched 'Fit For the Future', a physical activity strategy for Essex, rather than a strategy for the sport & physical activity sector. This was a considerable shift, giving the system an opportunity to take shared ownership accountability for reducing physical inactivity.

Evidence That Enables Scale and Replicate

In 2018, Collaborate found that the three LDP areas made limited use of data to inform decision making and this was acknowledged as an important gap.

Since then, the LDP team have focused on gaining a greater understanding of the places it works within, both through utilising data and also through employing LDP Coordinators and allowing them time to 'discover'. Indeed, Collaborate's 2023 report commented that in LDP areas, the understanding of the place goes deeper than practical or professional considerations, but staff know the unique characteristics and identity of each place.

The LDP has also invested considerably in evaluation to understand and demonstrate what works (as well as how and why), both at a programme level and a project level. An academic partner has been supporting the LDP and two embedded Evaluation Researchers have also been employed. Projects that have undergone or are undergoing deep dive evaluation include PEM, Beat the Street, ParkPlay, Essex Pedal Power and Essex Sport & Youth Crime Prevention Project.

Changes to Policy and Practice

Collaborate's 2023 report notes 'the working practices of partners' as one of the biggest changes seen by LDP staff in all areas and there are indeed some good examples of the LDP embedding physical activity into policy and practice, particularly within planning, active travel and health.

Essex Design Guide

Active Design is about designing and adapting where we live to encourage activity in our everyday lives. It's a combination of ten principles that promote activity, health and stronger communities through the way we design and build our towns and cities.

In 2015, Active Design Guidance was produced by Sport England in partnership with Public Health England. This guidance built on the original objectives of improving accessibility, enhancing amenity and increasing awareness, and set out the ten principles of Active Design. These ten principles were developed to inspire and inform the layout of cities, towns, villages, neighbourhoods, buildings, streets and open spaces, to promote sport and active lifestyles.

The Essex Design Guide was developed and published in 2018 and through good positioning and actively asking to be part of the conversation, Sport England, Active Essex and ECC Public Health were able to be part of the steering group. For the first time, active design principles and a theme on health and wellbeing were included in a guide like this, specifically identifying ten key areas where design guidance can help to activate spaces. In 2019, the Essex Design Guide won a national award for excellence in planning for health and wellbeing at the Royal Town Planning Institute.

Alongside embedding physical activity into policy and practice, the LDP has also been successful in embedding ways of working such as whole system working, place based approaches and asset-based community development.

In 2018, Collaborate identified that there was an appetite for using whole system change to tackle physical activity, but that Essex was early in the journey and that mechanisms for collaboration and the buy in and skills among partners were not yet embedded. In their 2023 report, they comment that the LDP has managed to shift ways of working towards more of a systems approach.

"[The LDP has] rewired the way we work as a system." (LDP Staff Member)

"The future of partnership working in Basildon has been forever changed by the LDP." (LDP Staff Member)

Collaborate highlight in particular the impact of the leadership training they delivered at the start of the LDP journey and how involving the wider system in learning together drew them in to systems thinking and systems approaches.

“Collaborate’s training was pivotal moment – doing it together, and with colleagues from neighbouring Colchester too. Plus with insights from Basildon too.” (LDP Staff Member)

One of the greatest successes of the LDP has been embedding asset-based community development (ABCD) as a way of working. ABCD training has been delivered to over 250 individuals across Essex from those working in the community to Senior Leaders within Local Councils. This has led to a considerable shift in mindsets of some working in strategic positions, particularly in Colchester where training was rolled



out to Colchester Borough Council staff and this way of working is the bedrock of the new Communities Can approach. Collaborate also noted in their recent report that in Basildon, ABCD has been woven into the wider fabric of local delivery, extending beyond sports and physical activity and becoming a foundational approach to working alongside communities.

“Everybody is involved with ABCD... we’re all on the train together and pulling people along with us.” (LDP Staff Member)

The LDP has also seen some successes embedding ‘LDP ways of working’ in other agendas within Essex County Council, such as the wider Public Health function who have recently adopted a place-based approach, using Active Essex’s structure as a model, and the Essex Levelling Up agenda which was influenced by the LDP to adopt a whole system, place-based approach and maximise system input through leveraging funds. Furthermore, the LDP has influenced the ways of working of the wider Active Essex team, with ABCD training being rolled out across the team.

Summary

The evidence above demonstrates that the Essex LDP is making good progress in creating system change. There are many examples of how the LDP has been able to align their objectives to those of different system settings, who in turn are starting to think and talk about physical activity, with some to integrating it into policy and practice, in some cases realigning budgets in order to do this. In saying this, there is still more work to do as the LDP seeks to further hardwire physical activity into the

system, continuing to work with those system settings which have been more challenging (e.g. health and social care) and ‘codifying’ the changes that have been achieved into policy so that they are not dependent on the individuals who have made them.

2. Projects and Programmes

Since the start of the Essex LDP, we have approved funding for 97 projects, investing a total of £5,473,696 as well as issuing 121 Microgrants to local community groups totalling £247,209. This section considers the impact of these investments, reflecting particularly on individual and community change and the following outcomes included in the LDP on a page:

- Increased capability, opportunity and motivation for physical activity
- Reduced physical inactivity
- Improved health & wellbeing
- Increased community resilience and cohesion
- Reduced health inequalities

Increased Capability, Opportunity and Motivation for Physical Activity

The first of the intended outcomes listed in the LDP on a Page under Individual and Community Change is Increased Capability, Opportunity and Motivation for Physical Activity.

The COM-B model for behaviour change suggests that capability (C), opportunity (O), and motivation (M) are the key factors needed to change behaviour (B) and that increasing any of these will increase the likelihood of behaviour change (e.g. increasing physical activity).

The larger LDP investments were assessed against the COM-B Model to determine which of the three factors they were likely to increase (see appendix 1). Of the 77 projects involving direct delivery to individuals, 31 (40%) were assessed as likely to increase capability, 61 (79%) increased opportunity and 36 (47%) were likely to increase motivation.



Figure 8. COM-B Model (Michie et al, 2011)

	n	%	LDP funding	Total funding
Capability	31	40%	£2,893,571	£8,437,437
Opportunity	61	79%	£4,068,417	£17,815,095
Motivation	36	47%	£3,193,832	£9,373,570

Table 2. LDP Interventions Intending to Increase Capability, Opportunity and Motivation

Capability

31 projects funded by the Essex LDP were assessed as likely to increase capability. These included projects looking to deliver training or upskilling, such as upskilling and supporting older people to access digital physical activity opportunities, as well as projects enabling those with additional barriers to take part in physical activity, such as disability cycling schemes and 'Pool Pod' which enables disabled people to easily access swimming pools.

Pool Pod – An Example of Increasing Capability

LDP funding has contributed to the installation of two Pool Pods (one in Basildon Sporting Village and another in Leisure World Colchester) to improve the accessibility of leisure facilities.

Early findings from research commissioned by Active Essex and conducted by the National Social Marketing Centre (NSMC) suggest that the Basildon Pool Pod has been a success. Sport for Confidence, who use the pool at Basildon Sporting Village for accessible swim sessions, called the Pool Pod a “game changer”



and reported that more people with disabilities have been attending the classes since the Pool Pod was installed because it has reduced reliance on carers.

The Pool Pod at Basildon Sporting Village has been beneficial to other pool users, too. It offers an easy and dignified way to enter the water to those who are older, have fall concerns, or find pool steps challenging for other reasons. Staff have observed that four ladies have joined an Aqua Aerobics class since the Pool Pod was installed: previously, their uncertainty about the pool steps had prevented them from attending.

The research has found that the Pool Pod is so popular in Basildon that the installation of a second one might be required. While the Pool Pods have had some teething difficulties, a ‘mystery shopper’ who the NSMC sent to use the Basildon Pod rated the overall experience as “9 out of 10”, commenting favourably on the attitude and knowledge of the staff she met and their willingness to sort out the minor problems she faced.

For other users, the Pool Pods have been transformational. Hazel, who attended a Sport for Confidence trial swim lesson at Leisure World Colchester was able to access the pool with ease, comfort and confidence for the first time in ten years. Hazel said:

“I had such a lovely time. It was so good to be able to exercise with less pain. My husband said it was lovely to see my real smile. I really hope this can become a weekly group. It is the only chance I have to exercise.”

Opportunity

The majority (79%) of LDP funded projects were assessed as being likely to increase opportunity for physical activity. These included direct delivery to a range of groups including young people, older people and families as well as infrastructure changes such as an 'Active Aging' outdoor gym and a tarmac strip for young people to ride bikes and do wheelies on.

Pool Pod – An Example of Increasing Capability



ParkPlay launched in Vange, Basildon, in Spring 2021 and has since expanded nationwide. ParkPlay sessions, which are held every Saturday morning in 43 green spaces across the country, bring people of all ages and abilities together for two hours of free games and informal physical activity. Since 2021, 17 ParkPlays have been launched across Essex and the biggest individual ParkPlay has welcomed 210 people.

Increasing opportunity for play and physical activity in green spaces is important everywhere but particularly in Essex. When asked how much they agreed with the statement 'My local green and natural spaces are good places for children to play', a third of respondents to the 2022 Essex Resident Survey did not agree. 37% said they did not agree with the statement 'My local green and natural spaces are places that encourage physical health and exercise'. The figures are higher among respondents who live in less affluent areas.

ParkPlay is welcoming, inclusive, fun and free, and therefore especially valuable for those struggling with the cost of living crisis (which disproportionately affects those in deprived communities). ParkPlay also offers alternative opportunities to be active for children who do not participate in school-based physical activity. A PlayLeader shared the following story:

“ A young ParkPlayer who has recently started being home-schooled said to me that [he] couldn't wait for Saturdays as this was his PE lesson for the week. He attends ParkPlay weekly with his parent & I am sure the benefits of ParkPlay for him are huge, especially as he now has more limited social engagements due to not being in mainstream school.. ”

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“ ParkPlay has given my community something to be proud of and an excuse to be free, enjoy games and talk about their lives. What is paramount for me and the ParkPlay families is being able to get to trust one another by building rapport and becoming a family. Active Essex's support is helping to build happier, healthier communities and utilise our green spaces in Basildon. ”

In February 2023, Active Essex and the LDP announced an extension to their partnership with ParkPlay. The funding will continue to support delivery and expansion of the accessible outdoor activity initiative until spring 2025.

Motivation

Of the LDP funded projects assessed, 36 (47%) were assessed as being likely to increase motivation; 13 (17%) directly and 23 (30%) indirectly by increasing both capability and opportunity (in line with the COM-B model). Examples of projects that were assessed as directly increasing motivation include marketing campaigns and gamified interventions. Examples of projects that were assessed as

indirectly increasing motivation include Essex Pedal Power which offers a free bike (opportunity) and cycle training (capability), and the Prevention and Enablement model (PEM) which delivers physical activity sessions (opportunity) led by Occupational Therapists who give advice and guidance on how people with disabilities and long-term health conditions can take part in the activities (capability).

Gamification - An Example of Increasing Motivation



Gamification is the use of technology to turn walking, running or cycling around a local community into a game. Active Essex has been working with Intelligent Health (creators of Beat the Street) and Street Tag to test this concept, create an evidence base and understand the range of outcomes that delivering these games can lead to. The games have been

tested in Basildon, Colchester and Tendring in a range of settings including community, workplaces and care homes.

Across the three LDP areas, Beat the Street and Street Tag have engaged 11,621 players who have covered 1,893,941 miles. These interventions have shown that they are effective at engaging inactive people living in deprived communities and that playing increases activity levels, even up to 6 months later.



It made us go out and do lots, me and my husband did lots of walking which we probably wouldn't have done. Our team was quite competitive so you felt like you had to up your game a little bit, to make sure you were doing your bit.

(Beat the Street Participant)

The scheme has shown significant improvement with residents' mobility. Their spirits have been lifted and their determination to walk that little bit further each day has been inspiring. Seeing them actively engaging and participating through their own free will is so rewarding and satisfying to see – especially one resident who chose not to leave her room at all prior to the scheme being in place.

(Care Home Wellbeing Lead)



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Project Participant Data

Survey responses have been collected from participants at a number of LDP projects (n=3,065) with questions including information on physical activity, wellbeing and community cohesion.

While there was no observed change in the perceived capability for physical activity between baseline and active participation in LDP projects (86% for both), there were increases in both perceived opportunity and motivation. At baseline, 79% agreed or strongly agreed that they had the opportunity to be physically



Figure 9. COM-B for Physical Activity Over Time Among LDP Participants

active compared to 85% of those actively participating (a 6%-point increase). Similarly, at baseline, 75% agreed or strongly agreed that they find physical activity enjoyable and satisfying (an indicator of motivation) compared to 82% of those actively participating (a 7%-point increase). It is worth noting the possibility that, for these measures, the baseline scores are not true baseline due to participants already being aware of and signing up to the LDP project; therefore the effect of LDP projects on perceived opportunity and motivation may be greater than suggested here.

Increased Capability, Opportunity and Motivation for Physical Activity

The Essex LDP intends to increase activity levels, particularly for those who are inactive (less than 30 minutes physical activity per week). Data from our projects suggests that there has been some success in reaching this group. At baseline 14% of participants reported that in the last 7 days they had done less than 30 minutes physical activity and 78% reported that they had done 30 minutes of physical activity on less than 5 days of the week, suggesting that they were not meeting the Chief Medical Officer's Guidelines of 150 minutes of physical activity per week.

There have been changes observed in the levels of activity among those taking part in LDP projects. The average number of days doing 30 minutes or more of physical activity raised from 2.75 days at baseline to 3.73 for those participating: an increase of almost 1 day. Only 6% of those actively involved in LDP projects reported doing less than 30 minutes of physical activity in the previous week (an 8%-point decrease compared to baseline). 63% of project participants reported doing 30 minutes of physical activity on less than 5 a week; the proportion of those not meeting the CMOs guidelines is still high but this is 15%-points lower than those about to start. It is also important to consider that to move from a lifestyle of inactivity to achieving 150 minutes of physical activity per week is a big shift.

Positive changes have also been seen among LDP project participants across all 4 wellbeing indicators; life satisfaction, happiness, feelings of worthwhile and anxiety. For life satisfaction, average scores increased from 6.4 at baseline to 7.6 (a 19% increase); for happiness, average scores increased from 6.5 to 7.5 (a 15% increase); for worthwhile, average scores increased from 7.0 to 7.8

(an 11% increase); and for anxiety, there was an observed reduction with average scores dropping from 4.4 at baseline to 3.9 (an 11% reduction). This suggests that wellbeing improves as a result of attending LDP projects.



Figure 10. Average Days Per Week Active for LDP Participants



Figure 11. Average Wellbeing Scores Over Time for LDP Participants

Increased Community Resilience and Cohesion

As well as improved wellbeing, levels of loneliness appear to decrease with participation in LDP projects. At baseline, 61% reported feeling lonely some of the time or often with 14% saying that they often felt lonely. For those actively taking part in LDP projects, 53% reported feeling lonely some of the time or often (an 8%-point decrease) and only 8% said that they often felt lonely (a 6%-point decrease).

Feel Good Drumming

Lisa is a Senior Occupational Therapist working in the NHS within the community rehab team. She lives in Walton-on-the-Naze, a seaside town in Essex, where a high proportion of the population are elderly residents with complex medical conditions. In addition, there are high rates of unemployment and mental health conditions in the local area. Lisa runs a community choir and a drumming group and enjoys using her occupational therapy skills in an alternative way to benefit the surrounding community.

With the support of an LDP Microgrant, Lisa started her "Feel Good Drumming C.I.C" group to get people active, help them learn about cognition and physical movement coordination, increase their energy and regulate heart, stress and anxiety levels. However, the main goal was to bring people together through a unique medium. This was particularly important for the area because transport links are lacking and accessing services is a challenge for those who live here.

"I've got a gentleman that's got Parkinson's, who's nearly 75-80 years old, and he's met this builder bloke that comes up to the drumming. Just a really lovely gift of the gab type 'alright

mate' type bloke and two men who don't know each other, never would have met, have come together for drumming. And this guy with Parkinson's is getting such a lot out of that because that was him only 20 years ago and now he can't really communicate very well. But this other guy is just chatting away to him. He's retired now as well, but he's not got any kind of impairments, but just seeing them together. Two men together interacting and now he gives him a lift to drumming. They've become friends, they go out together."

The connections made in the group are very important to Lisa because she feels that mental health and the health of the community is ingrained in social connectivity.

Reduced Health Inequalities

There is a well-known link between deprivation and poor health outcomes; one of the reasons that the Essex LDP focuses on areas of deprivation, specifically IMD 1-4. Data from project participants shows that the Essex LDP has effectively reached this target group with 78% of participants who provided postcodes living in IMD 1-4 and over half (54%) living in IMD 1-2.

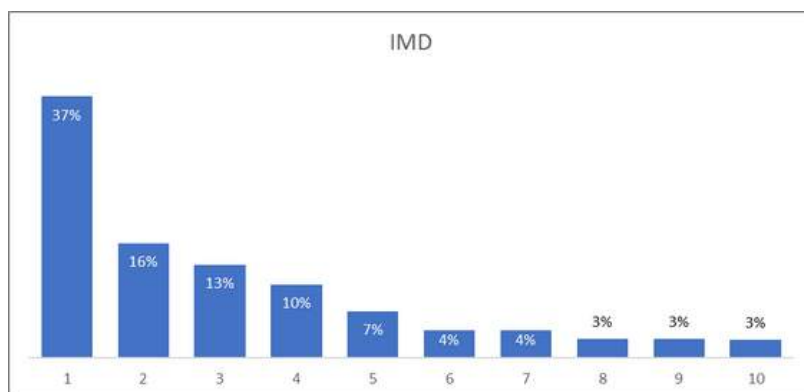


Figure 12. IMD Decile of LDP Participants

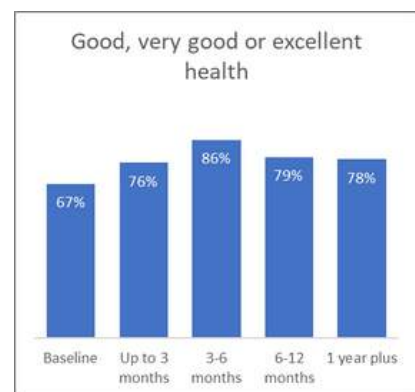


Figure 13. Self-Reported Good, Very Good or Excellent Health Over time of LDP Participants

Similarly, there is evidence that the Essex LDP has been successful in reaching those in poor health and with long-term health conditions. 30% of all participants reported that they have a long-term health condition; lower than the national average of 54% but still a considerable proportion. Furthermore, at baseline, a third of participants (33%) reported that they were in fair or poor health. The proportion of participants reporting good, very good or excellent health increased with participation in LDP projects; from 67% at baseline to 79% for those taking part in projects.

Summary

The evidence above demonstrates that through its projects and programmes, the Essex LDP is achieving a number of the intended outcomes cited in the LDP On a Page. Assessing each project for their likelihood of increasing capability, opportunity and/or motivation has showed that the majority of LDP projects focus on increasing opportunity for physical activity but there are good proportion that also seek to increase capability and motivation. Data collected from LDP project participants suggests

that the LDP is effectively reaching those facing inequalities and that these are having a positive impact on a range of outcomes including physical activity, wellbeing and loneliness.

3. Population Level Change

The Active Lives Survey is commissioned on an annual basis by Sport England and asks questions around engagement in sport and physical activity as well as other topics such as health & wellbeing and volunteering. This data can be broken down to local authority level. The Essex Residents Survey is also an annual survey which is issued to Essex residents by Essex County Council. This seeks to further understand the characteristics, attitudes and beliefs of the Essex population and includes the Short Active Lives question which assessed physical activity. The Essex LDP contributed to this work to ensure that adequate surveys were collected from LDP areas (IMD 1-4 of Basildon, Colchester and Tendring) to allow for meaningful analysis.

Analysis of these two data sets has been conducted and this section explores the findings relating to:

- Reduced physical inactivity
- Improved health & wellbeing
- Increased Community Resilience and Cohesion
- Reduced health inequalities

Reduce Physical Inactivity

As the chart shows below, between Nov 2015 and Nov 2019, there was a decrease in the number of people that were physically inactivity across wider Essex, as well as in the LDP areas of Colchester and Tendring. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, physical inactivity levels increased,

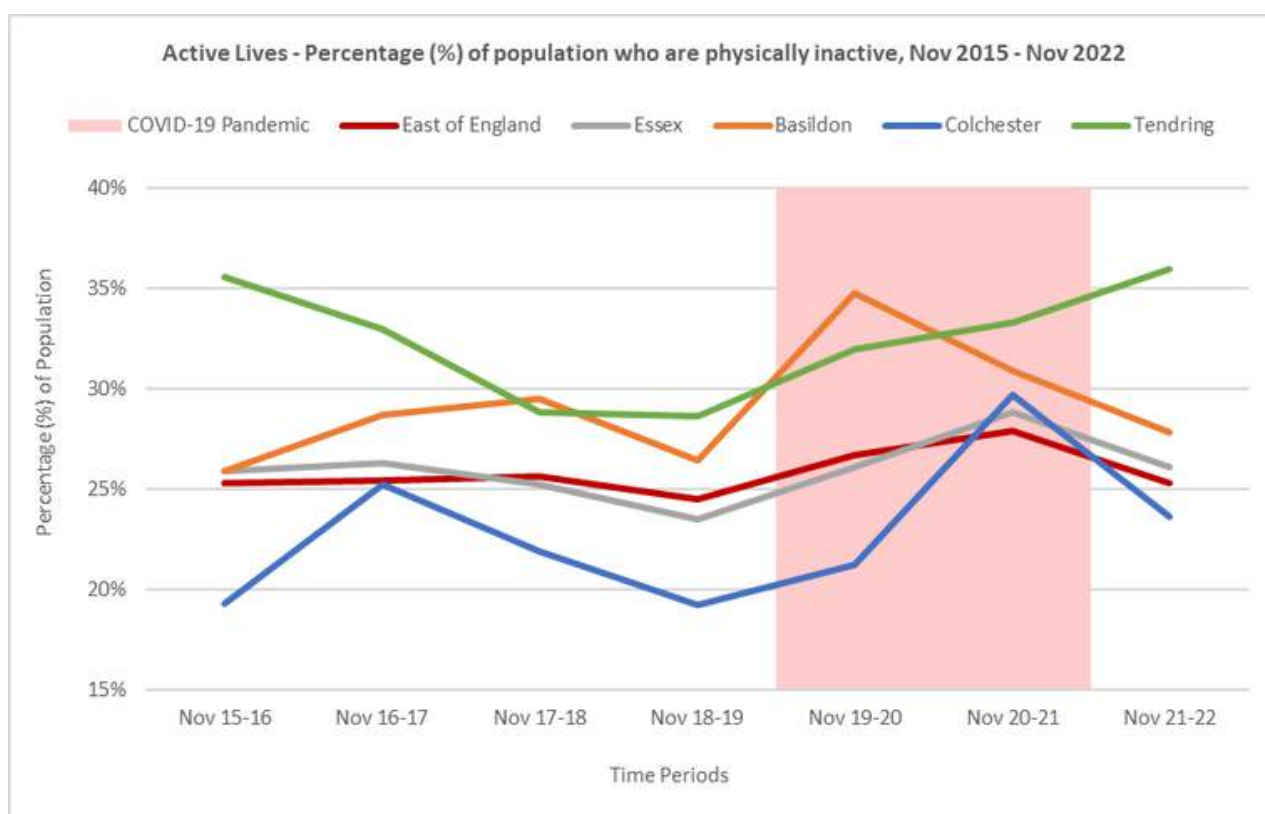


Figure 14. Population Physical Inactivity Nov 2015 - 2022

particularly in Basildon and Colchester to their highest percentage. The latest Active Lives data indicates that overall inactivity levels are decreasing (when compared to 2020/21 levels) and in some areas (Basildon and Tendring), recovering to levels seen at baseline (2015/2016) but remain higher than pre-pandemic levels. Colchester's inactivity levels have recovered since the pandemic, and lower than Essex's and the East's levels.

Essex County Council used the Short Active Lives Survey questions in the 2023 Essex Residents Survey to measure adult (aged 18 and over) physical activity levels. Despite asking the same questions, the results of this survey indicate that the percentage of people that are physically inactive in Essex and across all LDP areas is lower than is reported via Active Lives in Nov 2021/22.

The Essex Residents survey results also differ to Active Lives with regards to the percentage of the population who are fairly active vs. active. The Essex Resident's survey (2023) reported that at least 50% of residents across Essex and within the LPD areas are fairly active (average 30 - 149 minutes of activity a week) compared to 11% for Essex and up to 15% across LDP areas as reported in Active Lives recent results (see chart below).

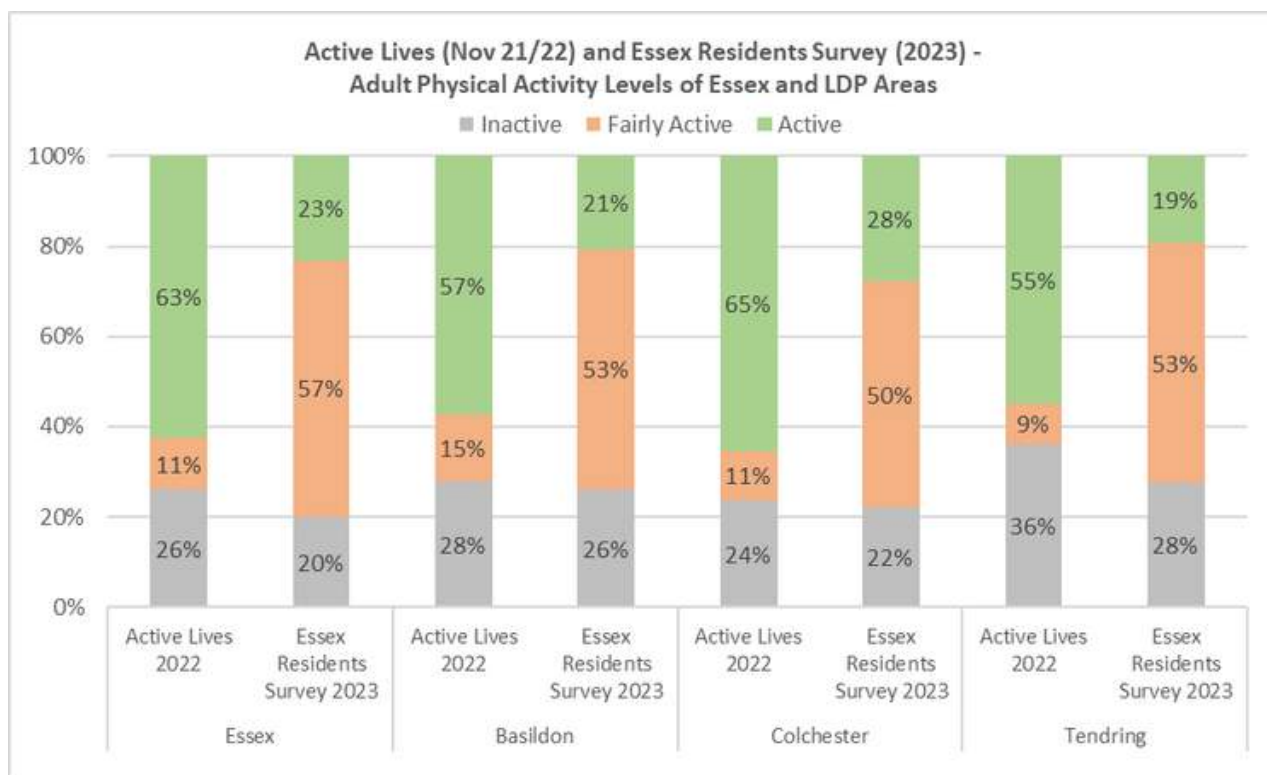


Figure 15. Physical Activity Levels in Essex and LDP Areas

The Essex Residents Survey results also indicated that the residents within the LDP areas of Basildon and Tendring are more inactive (statistically higher than the average) compared to residents in other local authority districts (see table). In Colchester, results indicated that residents are more active (higher statistical significance) compared to other districts, although the percentage that are inactive is above 20%. Furthermore, the survey results indicated that residents living in areas of high deprivation (IMD decile 1-4) within these LPD districts, particularly in Colchester, reported high levels of inactivity.

Local Authority	Inactive (%)	Fairly Active (%)	Active (%)
Basildon	26	53*	21
Braintree	21	61*	18
Brentwood	6	65	29
Castle Point	21	55	25
Chelmsford	10	62	27
Colchester	22	50	28
Epping Forest	22	52	25
Harlow	18	63	19
Maldon	24	55	21
Rochford	17	63	20
Tendring	28	53	19
Uttlesford	12	65	23

Orange shading indicates higher than expected. Blue indicates lower than expected. 95% confidence level unless *90%

Table 3. Physical Activity Levels Across Essex

Reduce Physical Inactivity

The chart below shows the overall Health Index Scores for England, the East of England region, Essex County Council's area and across the LDP areas. The Health Index is a new ONS measure to show how the health changes over time at local authority, regional and national (England) level, as well as scores for three domains (Healthy People, Healthy Lives, Healthy Places).

The health index scores for Essex between 2015 – 2021 are above England's scores and in line with the East of England's scores. In LDP areas, Basildon has achieved the highest health index score of 100.6 in 2021, which is close to England's score and an increase compared to 2015, despite fluctuations over the period. Note, a score of 100 represents average levels of health in England in 2015 – higher numbers mean better health and lower means worse health.

Tendring health's index score has gradually increased over period, with the largest score difference of 4.7 between 2015 and 2021 compared to the other LDP areas. Colchester's health index score decreased in 2017 (although, on average, higher than the other LDP areas), with slight increases year-on-year until 2020 but saw another decrease in 2021.

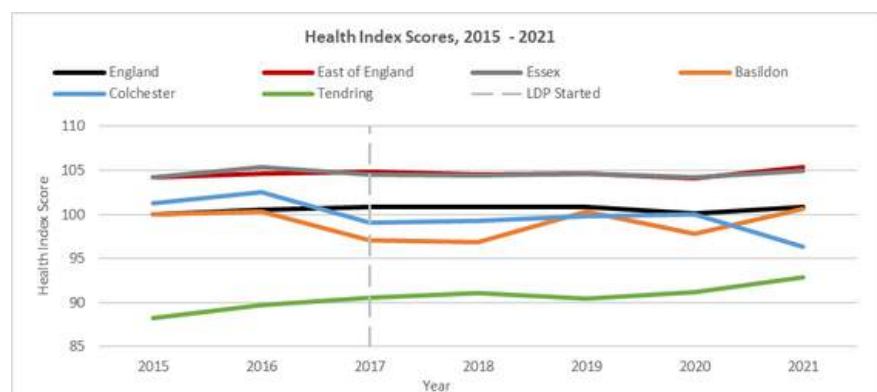


Figure 16. Health Index Scores 2015 - 2021

Personal wellbeing is one of the Health People subdomains and comprises of four indicators: life satisfaction, happiness, worthwhileness, and feelings of anxiety. The chart shows that personal wellbeing index score for Essex declined from 2015 to 2020, with fluctuating wellbeing scores across the LDP areas. In 2021, there has been a notable increase in personal wellbeing scores in Tendring

and Basildon but a decrease in Colchester, which is due to low scores across indicators but particularly happiness. The latter is shown in the infographic below the chart, where Colchester's wellbeing indicator scores (in 2021) are worse than the median local authority score (orange line) as well as the scores reported in other LDP areas.

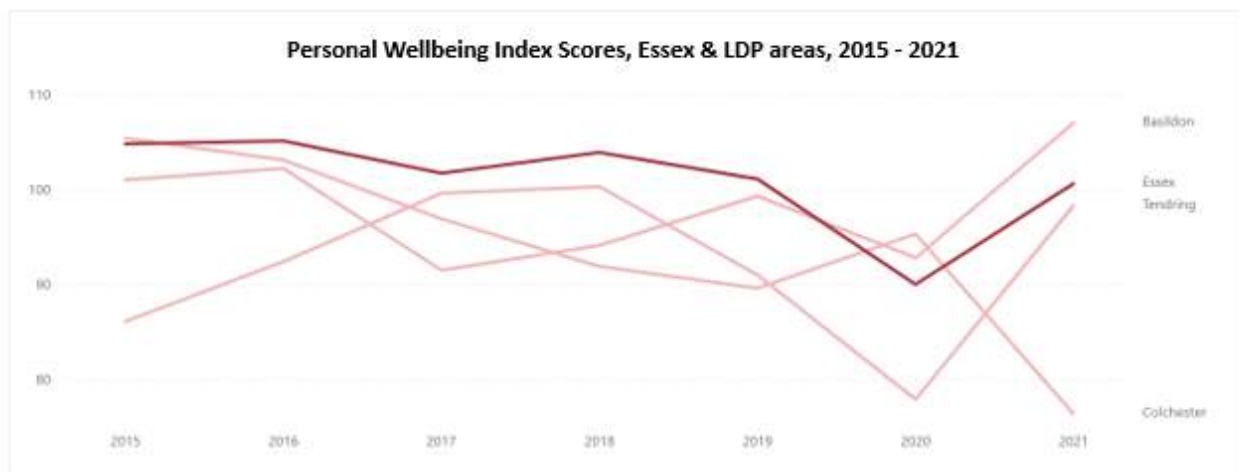


Figure 17. Personal Wellbeing Index Scores in Essex and LDP Areas 2015 - 2021

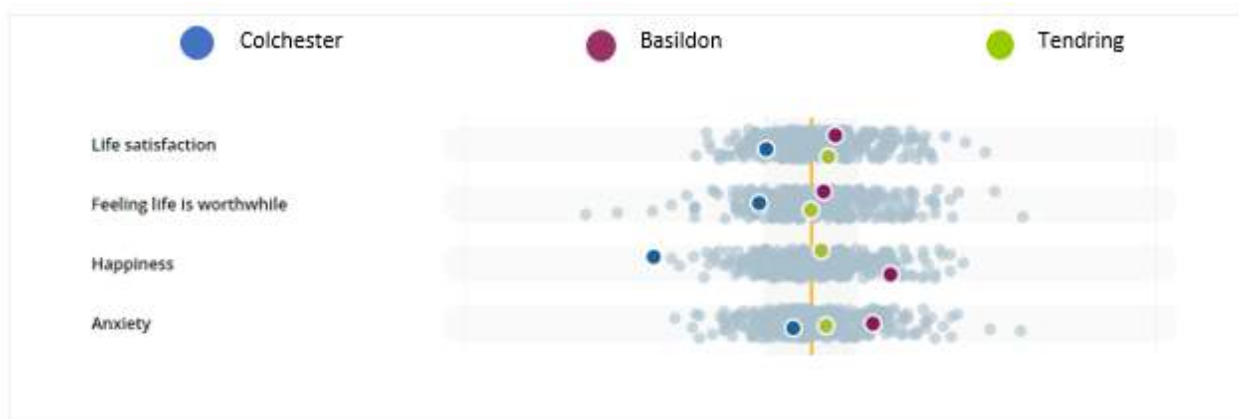


Figure 18. Personal Wellbeing Index Scores in LDP Areas 2021

The most recent Active Lives (Nov 21/22) data results indicate lower averages for life satisfaction, worthwhileness, and happiness (except in Colchester with a 0.2 increase), as well as higher averages for anxiety in the LDP areas compared to the averages in the Health Index.

LDP Areas	Wellbeing Indicator	Health Index 2021	Active Lives Nov 2021/22	Difference
Basildon	Life Satisfaction	7.7	6.8	-0.9
	Worthwhileness	7.8	7.1	-0.7
	Happiness	7.8	6.9	-0.9
	Anxiety	2.7	3.2	0.5
Colchester	Life Satisfaction	7.4	6.9	-0.5
	Worthwhileness	7.6	7.0	-0.6
	Happiness	6.8	7.0	0.2
	Anxiety	3.2	3.5	0.3
Tendring	Life Satisfaction	7.6	7.0	-0.6
	Worthwhileness	7.8	7.3	-0.5
	Happiness	7.5	7.1	-0.4
	Anxiety	3.0	3.1	0.1

Table 4. Wellbeing Scores for LDP Areas from Health Index and Active Lives

The Essex Resident's survey results indicate that over 40% of Essex respondents, as well as those within LDP areas scored highly (between 7 - 8) for life satisfaction and thought that the things they do in life were worthwhile. For happiness, just over a third of the respondents in Essex and those

within Basildon and Tendring scored highly (7 – 8), whereas in Colchester nearly two thirds of the respondents scored high or very high (7 – 10) for this indicator. The latter is of interest considering the low average scores indicated within the Health Index (2021). For anxiety, about a third of the respondents (34%) in Essex reported low scores (0 – 4, out of 10) for this indicator and just over a quarter (27%) reported high scores (6-10), where Basildon (31%) and Tendring's (33%) percentages were significantly higher than the average.

Reduce Physical Inactivity

With regards to community cohesion, the average score of community integration based on Active Lives data (Nov 21/22) for Essex was 2.9, indicating that most agreed that people from different backgrounds get on well together in a local area. The average score was slightly higher for Colchester (3.0), lower for Tendring (2.8), and Basildon score equalled Essex's (2.9).

Similar patterns were seen in the Essex Residents Survey where over 30% of respondents agreed that there is a strong sense of community in their local area, with a higher-than-average proportion of Colchester residents that strongly agreed to this statement. However, the results also indicated that there was a significantly higher than average proportion of Colchester (12%) and Basildon (14%) residents who strongly disagreed that there was a strong sense of community in their local areas. This significance was also identified in relation to whether residents thought people in their neighbourhood pull together to improve things. The survey also identified that residents who were physically active were more likely to report that there is a strong sense of community in their area compared to those who were inactive.

Trust is an enabler in well-connected, resilient communities. Active Lives data indicates that the average score of social trust in communities across Essex is 3.4 (the score for all reporting years, 2019/20 – 2021/22) or in other words, respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that most people in their local area can be trusted. Across the LPD areas, the average social trust scores were within 0.2 (+/-) Essex's score.

Within the Essex Residents survey, over a third of respondents agreed that most people in their local area can be trusted, with a further 30% that neither agreed nor disagreed. Basildon residents indicated a slightly higher than average response to neither (34%), as well as to those who strongly disagreeing with this statement (14%) when compared to other districts.

Another insight regarding trust identified from both sources, people who were physically active were more likely to report a higher perception of social trust and conversely, those who were inactive strongly disagree or neither agree nor disagree that others can be trusted.

When people do not feel connected or part of a community, they can experience isolation of loneliness, which has a negative effect on their personal health and wellbeing. Loneliness has been measured in Active Lives since 2019/20 and the latest dataset indicates that 56% of the Essex population reported that they hardly ever or never feel lonely, which is a 1% increase compared to previous year, but a 3% decrease compared to 2019/20. This is likely due to the easing of restrictions and recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Based on the latest Active Lives data, the percentage of the population within each LDP that reported that they hardly ever or never feel lonely was 54% in Basildon and Colchester, which is slightly lower than Essex's percentage. Whereas in Tendring, the percentage is slightly higher at 58% with a decreasing pattern, alongside an increase (compared to previous years) in those reporting that they feel lonely some of the time. Also, Essex follows the national pattern, that people who engage in sport and physical activity are less likely to be lonely.

The Essex Resident Survey (2023) asked the Community Life Survey questions i.e., how often do you feel that you lack companionship, feel left out and isolated from others. A key insight of the results of these questions was that people who are inactive are more likely to often feel lonely, and those that engage in sport and physical activity are more likely to hardly ever or never feel left out or isolated from others.

Reduce Physical Inactivity

In Essex, the healthy life expectancy at birth for males is 64.2 years old which is similar to England's benchmark value. Whereas for females, the healthy life expectancy is older at 65.9 years which is above England's benchmark. There is also a similar data pattern for healthy life expectancy at 65, where a male's expectancy is 10.5 years and for females is 12.1 years. This insight indicates that a gender and age-related health inequalities in Essex.

Furthermore, inequality in life expectancy is available at local authority and district level (see table below). In Essex, the inequality in life expectancy at birth and at 65 years old for both genders are better than England's' benchmark, which is positive. However, a key insight from the table is that Basildon has the highest values (years) of inequality in life expectancy across both age points and genders, compared to other LDP areas.

	Basildon	Colchester	Tendring	Essex	England
Inequality in life expectancy at birth (Male)	10.2	7.8	9.3	7.5	9.7
Inequality in life expectancy at birth (Female)	9.3	5.7	7.7	6.3	7.9
Inequality in life expectancy at 65 (Male)	6	4.5	4.8	4.3	5.2
Inequality in life expectancy at 65 (Female)	5.7	3.9	4.9	4	4.8

Table 5. Inequality in life expectancy in LDP Areas, Essex and England

There are also physical activity inequalities across populations within LDP areas and in Essex, the key insights from Actives Lives have been summarised below:

Gender

- Men (64%) are more likely to be active than females (61%) in Essex, with similar percentage split for genders across all LDPs (Active Lives Nov 2021/22).
- This is reinforced by 28% of males (significantly higher than the average) in the Essex's residents survey who reported that they were active, compared to 19% of females.
- Another insight from the Essex Residents survey was that 60% of females across Essex were fairly active, which was higher than the average compared to 55% for males.

Age

- Activity levels of the Essex population generally decreases with age, with the sharpest decrease coming at age 75 (39.9%, Active Lives Nov 2021/22).
- This is reinforced by Essex Residents survey as 33% (significantly higher than average) of respondents aged 75 and over reported that they were inactive.
- Between 2015/16 to 2021/22 (Active Lives), there has been small percentage increases in activity levels across the ages, 45 – 75 years, in Essex and within LDP areas.
- The Essex Residents survey results indicated that residents from the following age groups were more active (than the average): 18-24, 35 - 44, 45-54 and 55-64.

Disability

- Activity is less common by adults with a disability or long-term health condition than those without in Essex and across all three LDP areas. For example, in Colchester, the percentage of adults with a disability or a long-term health condition who were active was 50.8% compared to 73.5% without (Active Lives 2021/22).
- This pattern is reinforced in the results from the Essex Residents Survey where 38% (significantly higher than the average) of respondents reported a long-term health condition or illness and were also inactive, compared to 14% who were active.

Deprivation

- In Essex, people living in the most deprived areas (IMD deciles 1 – 3) are least likely to be active - 53.5% compared to 65.7% in least deprived areas (deciles 8 – 10).
- This insight is reinforced by results from the Essex Residents survey where a higher-than-average percentage of residents living in areas of high deprivation (IMD deciles 1 – 4) are inactive, compared to those living in areas of less deprivation (deciles 6-10).

Deprivation

- In Essex, those from lower socio-economic groups (N-SEC 6 – 8) are the least likely to be active - 57.8% compared to 70.5% in NSEC 1-2. This pattern in relation to lower socio-economic groups and physical activity is also seen across the three LDP areas.

Summary

While both academic and anecdotal evidence show that engaging in physical activity has a wide range of benefits for individuals and communities, analysis of population level data has not yet shown any clear impacts of the Essex LDP on outcomes for the residents of Basildon, Colchester and Tendring. In saying this, there are some encouragements in that inactivity levels in Colchester are reducing, health index scores for Basildon and Tendring have increased over the life of the LDP, and levels of loneliness in Basildon and Colchester are slightly lower than the Essex average. The data also shows that inequalities in physical activity exist in Essex, in line with national trends; this confirms the Essex LDP's position that it is important to focus on addressing these. Over future years, it is hoped that physical activity questions will continue to be included in the Essex Resident Survey and that analysis will continue to provide data for specific LDP areas (IMD 1-4 within the three target districts). This will enable longer-term tracking of population level outcomes which the LDP contributes to.

Conclusion

The Essex LDP set out in its LDP On a Page a range of intended outcomes for both system change and individual and community change. This report has gathered information from a range of sources to provide evidence for progress against these, alongside a number of case studies that further demonstrate the impact of the LDP through individual pieces of work.

In their 2023 report, Collaborate describes the Essex LDP as “a group of people working together with extraordinary effectiveness and achieving a scale of change which is uncommon”. While this is a bold claim, this report has presented evidence to demonstrate the considerable progress that has been made in creating system change and positive outcomes for those involved in LDP projects and programmes. And yet, physical inactivity levels in both LDP areas and Essex more widely remain high, particularly for those facing wider inequalities, suggesting that there is still more work to do.

1

There is considerable evidence to suggest that the Essex LDP is making good progress in creating system change. There are many examples of how the LDP has been able to align their objectives to those of different system settings, who in turn are starting to think and talk about physical activity, with some to integrating it into policy and practice, in some cases realigning budgets in order to do this. In saying this, there is still more work to do as the LDP seeks to further hardwire physical activity into the system.

2

Through its projects and programmes, the Essex LDP is achieving a number of the intended outcomes cited in the LDP On a Page. The majority of LDP projects focus on increasing opportunity for physical activity but there are good proportion that also seek to increase capability and motivation. Data collected from LDP project participants suggests that the LDP is effectively reaching those facing inequalities and that these are having a positive impact on a range of outcomes including physical activity, wellbeing and loneliness.



3

While both academic and anecdotal evidence show that engaging in physical activity has a wide range of benefits for individuals and communities, analysis of population level data has not yet shown any clear impacts of the Essex LDP on outcomes for the residents of Basildon, Colchester and Tendring. In saying this, there are some encouragements from this data. The data also shows that inequalities in physical activity exist in Essex, in line with national trends; this confirms the Essex LDP's position that it is important to focus on addressing these. Over future years, it is hoped that physical activity questions will continue to be included in the Essex Resident Survey enabling longer-term tracking of population level outcomes which the LDP contributes to.