

System Maturity Matrix : Anchor examples of conditions in practice
October 2025



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About this document

This document is a working draft which we will continue to refine. The purpose is to support Place representatives and partners in assessing the level of maturity within their Place in relation to the [NELP System Maturity Matrix](#) (SMM), and it is recommended that the guidance provided with the SMM is used alongside this document too.

This document draws primarily on the evaluation data provided by partners involved in delivering Place-based systemic approaches to physical activity inequalities, as part of the NELP evaluation programme, along with a few examples drawn from elsewhere. We are grateful for the openness of Place partners in describing the work taking place and the challenges encountered, and we have anonymised the extracts used in order to respect their confidence.

Note: we have identified some examples that help to illustrate how a particular point on the SMM scale for a condition might be seen in practice. These are not definitive, and there may be quite different examples in the Place you are working that represent a similar level of maturity. We have aligned these examples as illustrative of a particular level, but in practice there could be examples of differing maturity levels within a Place. We advise considering the range of examples in a Place, to take an overall view of the maturity level. Therefore, the citing of an example of practice at the specified level does not necessarily mean the overall system maturity for that Place was assessed to be at the same level.

If you have any questions, please visit the [Evaluating Complexity](#) website where you will find a range of information and guidance. We welcome feedback and suggestions for improvement on this and our other resources. If you have further questions or comments, please contact us at NELP@shu.ac.uk

System Maturity scale

| No change | Emerging in practice | | Establishing in practice | | Embedded in practice | |
|-----------|----------------------|---|--------------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Data sources note: The number or letter in brackets enables the NELP team to identify Place from which the anonymised example is sourced. New examples added in 2025 are in blue font where taken from 2024 CCA survey responses, and green where taken from Evaluation and Learning reports

| 1. Processes for identifying the barriers and enablers of physical activity | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------|--|--|
| There is process for developing a deep understanding and (shared) knowledge of what supports and/or prevents people being physically active, within the local context. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| Sector integration of physical activity | Effective capture of data and insight | 1 | <p>People do not gather, share, and use information on what supports or prevents people being physically active <i>in the local context</i>.</p> <p>Demographic data identifying personal characteristics <i>is not collected</i>.</p> | |
| | | 2-3 | <p>There are plans for, or isolated examples of gathering and sharing information, data and insight on the practical, social and cultural factors that support or prevent people being physically active within the local context.</p> <p>Data on inequalities is sometimes collected and analysed to inform policy and practice.</p> <p>Some people may be starting to build this understanding, but these insights are not widely valued or used to inform policy and/or practice.</p> | <p>Example of 2 (53)¹</p> <p>There are pockets of this work happening, but the next Phase of our work aims to address partners' understanding of the barriers and enablers as part of shifting from individual behaviour change to a whole system approach. We feel there is more of a willingness in this space now than at any time in the last few years to gather, share and use information regarding the barriers and enablers. For example, as partners are brought together, there will be an opportunity to share information. The [project] is also demonstrating deeper understanding of communities, though the engagement methodologies (Including how 'who to talk to' was established) feels less clear.</p> |
| | | 4-5 | <p>Information, data and insight on the practical, social and cultural factors that support or prevent people being physically active within the local context is often gathered and interpreted, using existing evidence and relevant theories to understand what is working and why.</p> <p>Data on inequalities is routinely collected and analysed.</p> | <p>Example of 4 (82)</p> <p>Information is gathered across the sector in many ways at a place-based level. Across the borough there are a range of activities/ sessions that take place to gather insight, data and asset mapping such as 'Planning for Real' sessions, active lives data sessions, community council meetings. This is at different stages on the journey across our different ward/ districts currently, so gaps are still being recognised across the areas. This is highlighting that we have key pockets in which we are sharing learning to support this long term across the full system.</p> <p>Example of 5 (56)</p> <p>The Annual Local Active Lives survey produces data and insight that can be analysed and provide real time analytics for peoples PA levels. This is focussed at unearthing the insight</p> |

¹ The numbers or letters attached to each example are used in our case reference system to enable the NELP team to identify the source of the anonymised examples
System Maturity Anchor Examples 2025.docx

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|--|--|-------|--|--|
| There is process for developing a deep understanding and (shared) knowledge of what supports and/or prevents people being physically active, within the local context. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | <p>However, there are gaps in the data and/or in terms of who is involved and/or how it is used to inform policy and/or practice.</p> <p>Data and insight is only shared between partners and interested parties occasionally.</p> | <p>into inequalities, the enhanced local fieldwork is delivered in the 20 LSOAs with the highest inactivity levels within [place]. We have the ‘Wellbeing [place]’ model - our frontline team of Community Builders and Community Physical Activity Organisers are provided constant feedback loops into the operations team and the evaluation team highlighting the barriers and potential solutions to overcoming inactivity in everyday life.</p> <p>These tools/programmes are generating a deeper understanding of the barriers to being active in the communities suffering the poorest health outcomes, which is demonstrating that choice to be active is integral to big system knotty issues</p> |
| | | 6-7 | <p>I Information, data and insight on the practical, social and cultural factors that support or prevent people being physically active within the local context is routinely gathered and interpreted using existing evidence and relevant theories to understand what is working and why.</p> <p>This highlights diverse perspectives and is interpreted to inform policy and/or practice.</p> <p>This data and insight is regularly shared between partners and interested parties in meaningful and relevant ways.</p> | <p>Example of a 6 (5) We have an expansive evidence base of PA barriers, enablers & assets that is published on [programme] site. Our evidence is readily shared, e.g. at [programme] events and we are constantly adding to it via Appreciative Inquiry; Community Engagement; Well [place] Community Profiles; COM-B. [name] website is a growing resource of community assets. [Programme] focus is on tackling the stubborn inequalities in participation guides decision-making.</p> <p>Example of a 6 (21) We use our data to determine where to focus our work using intelligence team data, as well as Active Lives and [subregional schools survey] data, which provides detailed information on young people’s wellbeing, on multiple dimensions. Used this in targeting five ways to wellbeing work with schools – really on its way to being embedded in curriculum now across [Place]. Our focus is how we’re using this on the ground, and also capturing live data from meeting people face to face – put out ways of collecting data through registers, forms, consultations too. Been doing work around new leisure contract, drawing on usage date but also qualitative and in-depth understanding on people’s feelings, behaviours and barriers. Using insight to shape next contract.</p> |
| Strengthening community & individual capacities | Community perspectives on challenges, strengths and priorities are valued and underpin | 1 | Barriers and enablers of physical activity and strengths that support physical activity in the local context, are <i>defined by organisations and are incongruous with community perceptions</i> of assets and barriers | |

1. Processes for identifying the barriers and enablers of physical activity

There is process for developing a deep understanding and (shared) knowledge of what supports and/or prevents people being physically active, within the local context.

| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
|----------------|---------------------------|-------|--|---|
| | place-based working on PA | 2-3 | <p>There are isolated examples of working with local people* and/or organisations and networks that represent those with lived experience of inequality, to develop a deep understanding of what supports or prevents people being physically active.</p> <p>This is not widely valued or used to inform policy and/or practice.</p> | <p>Example of 3 (9) Officers across the local place are working in an asset-based way, but there is restricted engagement with this often restricted to the “usual suspects”. Some decisions around facilities or activities, are impacted by political decision making rather than insight which has been captured and demonstrated. Some of this is due to apathy amongst place due to lack of action historically.</p> |
| | | 4-5 | <p>There is some engagement with local people and/or organisations and networks that represent those with lived experience of inequality in processes for developing and sharing understanding of what supports or prevents people being physically active.</p> <p>These may be only partially representative of the diversity of experiences of inequalities.</p> <p>This is gaining support and there are clear plans for it to inform policy or practice.</p> | <p>Example of a 5 (56) On the ground our frontline team of Community Builders and Community Physical Activity Organisers are providing constant feedback loops into the [name] team and the [name] evaluation team highlighting the barriers and potential solutions to overcoming inactivity in everyday life. These tools/programmes are generating a deeper understanding of the barriers to being active in the communities suffering the poorest health outcomes, which is demonstrating that choice to be active is integral to big system knotty issues.</p> |
| | | 6-7 | <p>Common understandings of local strengths, challenges and priorities emerge from regular communication and strong relationships between local people and/or organisations and networks which represent those with lived experience of inequalities.</p> <p>This insight is routinely used to shape the work of all sectors to promote PA and wellbeing.</p> | <p>Example of a 6 [73] In [Place], local engagement emphasised the importance of lived experience in reshaping institutional perspectives. Parish councillors noted that “through direct engagement with community members... such was the powerful testimony from Rachel at the [Place] Parish South [Place] Protection Group meeting in February, Councillors I feel now better understand the real-life barriers to activity faced by inactive or underrepresented groups.” These insights filled previous gaps “from a lack of public participation in our meetings,” prompting reflection and “a more empathetic, person-centred approach.” Deep listening “helped the council develop a more nuanced understanding of how physical activity must be accessible physically, emotionally and socially.” This has encouraged councillors to “critically question where and how activities are delivered... and who may be excluded unintentionally.” The partnership’s “bottom-up intelligence should now feed into council priorities, helping shift the focus from ‘programmes’ to ‘people.’” Tools like “Community</p> |

1. Processes for identifying the barriers and enablers of physical activity

There is process for developing a deep understanding and (shared) knowledge of what supports and/or prevents people being physically active, within the local context.

| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
|----------------------------------|--|-------|--|---|
| | | | | <p>Connectors video journeys... along with data mapping have stimulated richer conversations among councillors about where investment is most needed, and how to ensure inclusivity.”</p> <p>Example of a 6 (95) Connect a lot with existing groups in the area, we get involved in community events. As a team we are always building connections and building strong relationships. We set up our own events (women’s weekender event) 100 women across our areas have come along and the event is about conversations on barriers. Everything we do, we take a step back to ensure the community are on the journey with us. Community panel/toolkit and other projects that are coproduced. The insight from the community is genuinely actioned. E.g. the toolkit came from community panel, their perspective around resources. All of their ideas have been fed in. The core focus of this project is about us taking a co-productive approach, this is why we feel there is a strength here. Other sectors we work with are now talking about co-production, there is a direction of travel for this project.</p> |
| Tackling structural inequalities | Consistent understanding of how social, cultural, and economic constraints may affect physical activity levels | 1 | <p>There is limited understanding that choices are constrained by social, cultural, and economic factors and discrimination.</p> <p>There is little or no consideration of power dynamics and perceptions/stereotypes which disadvantage people with particular characteristics, identities and/or lived experiences, in the local context.</p> | |
| | | 2-3 | <p>There is emerging understanding that choices are constrained by social, cultural, and economic factors and discrimination.</p> <p>People in positions of responsibility are beginning to recognise that policies and practices should consider and explore the power dynamics and perceptions/stereotypes which disadvantage people with particular characteristics, identities and/or lived experiences, in their local context.</p> | |

1. Processes for identifying the barriers and enablers of physical activity

There is process for developing a deep understanding and (shared) knowledge of what supports and/or prevents people being physically active, within the local context.

| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
|----------------|------------|-------|---|--|
| | | 4-5 | <p>There is a growing understanding that choices are constrained by social, cultural, and economic factors and discrimination.</p> <p>Organisations can demonstrate how they consider and explore the power dynamics and perceptions/stereotypes which disadvantage people with particular characteristics, identities and/or lived experiences, in their local context.</p> | <p>Example of a 5 (90)</p> <p>The programme has maintained the opportunity to invest in community insight and engagement, alongside the programme and evaluation teams from the start. Focus has remained on developing an understanding of lived experience, and the barriers and enablers of physical activity, to shape programme delivery. Through outreach and hosting a regular weekly drop in, regular feedback has been received from local people - including themes around community safety, the importance of green spaces, health concerns linked to being active, the significant impact of caring responsibilities and over the last year, significant concerns around debt, mental health and housing issues linked to the cost of living. This feedback has helped the [programme] to influence work beyond the remit of the LDP with the aim of addressing specific issues.</p> |
| | | 6-7 | <p>There is widespread and consistent understanding of the ways in choices are constrained by social, cultural, and economic factors, and discrimination. This includes power dynamics and perceptions/stereotypes which disadvantage people with particular characteristics, identities and/or lived experiences.</p> <p>This is routinely used to inform wider responses to these determinants.</p> | <p>Example of a 6 (73)</p> <p>Critical thinking around inequality has “sharpened,” with discussions in [Place] Parish South Protection Group meetings showing that councillors “reinforced the need to understand layered disadvantage, including health, transport, gender, age, and income.” One councillor reflected that this represents “a marked change from earlier approaches which may have treated physical activity as a standalone issue.” Councillors are now “increasingly aware that addressing inequality means listening differently, analysing differently, and planning differently.” For example, conversations about transport access to [name] Hub led to recognition that “venue location can itself exclude many residents,” influencing future planning decisions. The [name] Place project, supported by the LGA Training Days, has “encouraged the Parish and partner organisations to question why we take the approaches we have in the past” and “encouraged deeper thinking about approaches we should take in the future.” This marks “a move away from seeing physical activity/inactivity as a standalone issue,” towards one understood as “layered as a result of health, transport, gender, age and income.”</p> |

2. Organisational policies, processes and structures that enable place-based working

Administrative systems, policies, structures and processes effectively enable and encourage place-based ways of working to address inequalities.

| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
|---|--|-------|--|---|
| Sector integration of physical activity | Partners implement practices, policies, and organisational structures to enable place-based systemic working | 1 | <p>Organisational structures, policies, decision-making and administrative processes drive siload, transactional working.</p> <p>Processes are rigid and often exclude partners who could support the work. Risk aversion leads to widespread reluctance to try new ways of working.</p> | <p>Example of a 1 (52) [Project] was experiencing administrative issues, due to difficulties in the NHS host organisation's finance procedures and staff turnover resulting in some slow payment of commissioned organisations and providers. One LTO remarked that they had considered applying directly to deliver [project], but instead partnered with [voluntary organisation] as they felt this would provide them with more financial stability. However, in practice, [voluntary organisation] did not pay LTOs until they had been paid by [project] which resulted in financial difficulties for the LTOs. Challenges with payment of contracts resulted in one organisation having to make difficult decisions regarding their finances, essentially being forced to choose between paying themselves, or paying the young leaders.</p> |
| | | 2-3 | <p>There is growing recognition of the need to change organisational structures, policies, decision-making and administrative processes.</p> <p>Some short-term 'workarounds' are established to support place-based working, within and across organisations but with limited line of sight to longer term change.</p> <p>People are beginning to highlight unhelpful or restrictive processes and/or to challenge risk averse ways of working, where they are disproportionate.</p> | <p>Example of a 2 (90) [Place] Council has levers of power that it can use to change rules and processes. It has the capacity to convene the local system and can access funding (if local stakeholders are willing to engage). At the same time – in a programme about changing the system, having to operate within the existing structures of local government can make it hard to quickly change the existing power dynamics and perceptions that exist within the community and local organisations. In [programme]'s case, this dynamic was baked into the way the programme was developed. For example, there can be challenges around meaningfully sharing power as the council is still the accountable body, and may default to existing governance and ways of working, typically linked (without devolving funding decisions to the community) to traditional risk and financial management processes.</p> <p>Example of a 3 (B) When it comes to reflecting and focusing on strengths, individual and organisational intentions are reported as high; however, individuals express a pain point in their agency and commitment to strengths-based working in the long term, based on the cultures they currently sit with. They report "it needs a complete change of thinking from the top."</p> <p>Example of a 3 (11). Due diligence requirements for [funder] to approve all projects that are funded by the LDP has also presented some challenges within the Community Panel (CP) process. There is a risk that the decision of the CP appears to be undermined if they are in favour of approving a project that [the funder] are not willing to fund. To avoid this [officers] review applications before they go to the CP to ensure that they meet the [Place partnership] requirements for example, targeted to priority groups, collaborative etc. The CP are then responsible for determining whether the project meets the needs of the local community. [...] The number of live CLA areas and proposals being submitted means that</p> |

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|----------------|------------|-------|--|--|
| | | | | <p>review of every project by [the funder] is becoming more difficult, and it is not feasible to have in-person presence of [funder] at all CP discussions.</p> |
| | | 4-5 | <p>New organisational structures, policies, decision-making and administrative processes (including team structures, job descriptions, commissioning & funding) are developed and adopted to promote place-based systemic working.</p> <p>Funders and organisations are proportionate in their attitude to risk and can demonstrate how they consider and address unhelpful or restrictive processes, to create collaborative ways of working.</p> | <p>Example of a 5 (B)</p> <p>In 2019, as Primary Care Networks (PCNs) were established, the PCNs were given funding towards additional workforce capacity. They built on the common purpose and vision by significant investment into nonclinical roles. They were brave despite pressures to prioritize more clinical appointment taking. To get the most out of these additional community-focused roles, we integrated health, the volunteer sector, and Leisure to really good effect by embedding health coaching in the Leisure service and social prescribers in the voluntary service. This wasn't easy, and at first, we didn't get the most out of this new team. We spent a year building relationships, sharing information, communicating the opportunity and the benefits, and educating patients.</p> <p>It created relationships and connections between health coaches and health activators, meaning we could improve service design and provide wraparound support to patients throughout their journey. This has acted as a consistent bridge between PCN and Leisure that's continued to flourish in shared work and further investment. It has created greater flexibility about how we deploy staff in shared roles as well as how we coordinated projects with the community and surfaced learning that would not have been possible if employed directly with the NHS.</p> <p>Over time, we've been able to build trust, awareness, and the strength of relationships across all of our local GP practices. Referrals started to come through thick and fast. [...]</p> <p>Example of a 5 (C)</p> <p>From the evaluation and learning report in March 2023, observations highlighted that a lack of explicit targets was liberating. Importantly, it encouraged many of the locality leads, central team and (backbone organisation) staff to think more clearly about how they could work differently with communities and partners, for more sustainable changes in culture and structure, without the immediate pressure of having to 'deliver' sport and physical activity events. Observations over the years highlight a transition from competitive behaviour between stakeholders coming from different boroughs in [sub-region] where only good news would be shared, to more honest discussion and collective problem solving, where relationships were built organically.</p> |
| | | 6-7 | <p>Organisational structures, policies, decision-making and administrative processes have been redesigned to</p> | |

| 2. Organisational policies, processes and structures that enable place-based working | | | | |
|--|--|-------|---|--|
| Administrative systems, policies, structures and processes effectively enable and encourage place-based ways of working to address inequalities. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | <p>promote place-based systemic working. e.g., team structures, job roles, information flow, sharing resources.</p> <p>Redesigned commissioning and funding processes build sustainable long-term capacity and collaborative ways of working</p> <p>Attitudes to risk are proportionate.</p> | |
| Sector integration of physical activity | Partner organisations adapt communications to align and engage with diverse cultures | 1 | <p>Strategies, practices, and communications are not responsive to traditions, values, beliefs, language, and accessibility needs of groups who are less likely to be active.</p> <p>Assumptions or stereotypes held by local people or staff are not challenged.</p> | |
| | | 2-3 | <p>Strategies, practices, and communications occasionally consider traditions, values, beliefs, language, and accessibility needs, of groups who are less likely to be active.</p> <p>Assumptions or stereotypes held by local people or staff may be occasionally challenged.</p> | <p>Example of a 2 (19) It has been important to recognise the differences in community needs across locations [...]. For instance, the community needs at one location [name] mean that staff ensure they had additional signposting information to emergency financial support. Demographics of the local community can also influence the equipment that is displayed to engage local people.</p> <p>Example of a 2 (56) In order to increase awareness of the project within hard-to-reach communities, Inclusive [Place]/Communities had a presence at several public and community events including [places and events]. It was hoped that through this kind of promotion, these activities would be able to reach more residents – not only those from a BAME community – and help to build more inclusive and cohesive communities across [Place].</p> |
| | | 4-5 | <p>Strategies, practices, and communications often align and engage</p> | Example of a 5 (91) |

2. Organisational policies, processes and structures that enable place-based working

Administrative systems, policies, structures and processes effectively enable and encourage place-based ways of working to address inequalities.

| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
|----------------|------------|-------|---|---|
| | | | <p>in a two-way dialogue with traditions, values, beliefs, language, and accessibility needs, of groups who are less likely to be active. Language and accessibility needs are usually proactively addressed. Assumptions held by communities or staff are often actively challenged.</p> | <p>Comms embedded around PA across system and influencing wider – moving from universal comms to granular for communities, subject to capacity – tested in [priority area] – learned from what hasn't worked - less granular approach didn't really work now focusing as locally as one tower block – co-design – mentors – word of mouth is stronger than marketing – building from ground up campaigns across Stockport but also flexible for specific communities. Place demographics would determine the ethnic profile and approach. Building from ground up approach to tailor wider campaigns to hyperlocal – universal offer covered by national campaigns etc.</p> <p>Example of a 5 (9) Reflection sessions and steering group meetings in early 2025 showed how inclusive communication can support place-based working. Partners “removed jargon from role descriptions vacancies which could potentially deter local, enthusiastic, influential community members” changing the title from Community Development Manager to Active Communities Engagement Lead: “Everything that we took to [partnership], they did take it on board and did make changes to the job profile and stuff as we went along.” The process was described as “very thoughtful,” aiming to “recognise the different experiences that people might have had to date and how that could be applied in the role.” Involving multiple agencies strengthened collaboration and brought diverse perspectives: “The inviting in of an external perspective really reflected that collaborative approach,” and “it [...] was very much a partnership approach... with all kinds of different backgrounds and hats on.”</p> <p>Equitable recruitment practices, such as sharing interview questions 24 hours in advance, reduced stress and supported performance: “[There is] a lot of stigma around how an interview should be... so I think [partnership] has] dismantled that and they're reshaping what that even looks like,” and “I was so excited when [the email containing the interview questions] did come... I was able to just do some actual focused work on the questions, so I think on a health and well-being perspective it was really positive.”</p> |
| | | 6-7 | <p>Strategies, practices, and communications routinely and systematically align and engage in a two-way dialogue with traditions, values, beliefs, language, and accessibility needs, of groups who are less likely to be active, in ways that are appropriate and effective. Language and accessibility needs are proactively</p> | |

| 2. Organisational policies, processes and structures that enable place-based working | | | | |
|--|--|-------|--|---|
| Administrative systems, policies, structures and processes effectively enable and encourage place-based ways of working to address inequalities. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | addressed in this. Assumptions held by communities or staff are actively surfaced and always challenged. | |
| Tackling structural inequalities | Administrative systems, policies, structures and processes enable more equitable sharing of power and resources to address inequalities and their underlying drivers | 1 | <p>Organisational structures, decision-making and administrative processes reflect and reproduce the inequalities embedded in the organisations involved, which reflect those in the wider society.</p> <p>Discrimination and prejudices that contribute to poor working and living conditions are not explored.</p> <p>The distribution of resources tends not to take account of inequalities.</p> | |
| | | 2-3 | <p>There is emerging insight into the ways in which prejudices and power differentials are reinforced in organisational structures, decision-making and administrative processes, maintaining inequalities and failing to address discrimination.</p> <p>Some resources are allocated to support disadvantaged groups and communities.</p> | <p>Example of a 3 (97)</p> <p>There is a recognition of power imbalances between individuals and community groups and institutions. There is an appetite to address these imbalances via meaningful consultation and engagement with various groups and organisations; however, there is recognition that this may not yet result in distributed decision making</p> |
| | | 4-5 | <p>New organisational structures, policies, decision-making and administrative processes are being adopted or developed to enable sharing of power with people and communities and to tackle structural inequalities.</p> | <p>Example of a 4 (90)</p> <p>Whilst the adoption of short-term workaround solutions [...] have been key processes which have enabled activity in [place], it is difficult to see how and where these approaches will sustain longer term. [...] Yet, this is beginning to emerge. Recommendations to be taken forward by [Place] Council offer mechanisms through which processes to support collaborative governance can be ingrained as longer-term processes. These recommendations include the need to create tools for strategic communication to shape discussions on future resources and priorities, and more formalised</p> |

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| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
|----------------|------------|-------|---|---|
| | | | <p>Discrimination and prejudice are explored, often meaningfully, with some disadvantaged groups.</p> <p>Significant resources are focused on disadvantaged groups and communities.</p> | <p>processes through which innovative and “different” ways of working can be piloted to develop a best practice approach to supporting the needs of community organisations. An example of an approach to “different” ways of working is the cross-departmental approach to improving economic and community wellbeing in [place], which is designed to break down silos, problem solve and use the collective resource available to respond to priorities informed by community insight.</p> <p>Example of a 5 (5) [Place partnership] is part of interrelated [Place] work to tackle health inequalities (HI) and wider structural inequalities, and regional work (e.g. ICB, Mayoral Combined Authority and Sport Foundation). Cross-partnership work to tackle HI is led by the ICB and [Place partnership] has a strong working relationship with [Place]’s HI lead who is very supportive advocate of [Place partnership]'s work - as a contributor to reducing health inequalities, and a beneficiary of it. This includes identifying mutually beneficial opportunities and interventions and supporting [Place partnership]'s connectivity into health and care system.</p> <p>[Place partnership] takes a proportionate universalism approach to reducing inequalities in physical inactivity, health and wellbeing, but with focused resource within geographical communities of greatest need, in line with the health inequalities work. The importance of health inequalities and focusing on [Place]'s core20plus communities has been included in commissioning of services e.g. the refresh of the diabetes and dementia strategies.</p> <p>Positive progress is being made in developing collaborative, place-based ways of working to address inequalities. However, it is still early days and there is more to be done within a complex whole system to enable the NHS, local authorities and other partners to collectively and effectively improve health outcomes, reduce inequalities, deliver better value for money, and drive local social and economic development.</p> |
| | | 6-7 | <p>New organisational structures, policies, decision-making and administrative processes are embedded widely in the local system. These enable sharing of power with people and communities to tackle structural inequalities.</p> | |

| 2. Organisational policies, processes and structures that enable place-based working | | | | |
|--|------------|-------|---|-------------------|
| Administrative systems, policies, structures and processes effectively enable and encourage place-based ways of working to address inequalities. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | <p>There is systematic cross-policy consideration of discrimination and prejudice, including the unrecognised assumptions, biases and practices of organisations.</p> <p>Mainstream resources are deliberately and fairly directed toward people and communities experiencing greater disadvantages.</p> | |

| 3. Capacity and capability across the workforce, volunteers and in communities | | | | |
|---|---|-------|--|--|
| Action to develop capacity and capability across the workforce, volunteers, and communities to work in a place-based systemic approach to enable physical activity. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| Sector integration of physical activity | Partners are investing in building capacity and capability for place-based systemic working | 1 | <p>There are no capacity and capability building strategies in planning for place-based systemic working.</p> <p>There is no agreed/or supported, dedicated time, for employees to work in a place-based systemic way.</p> | <p>Example of a 1 (5)</p> <p>There are no active capacity or capability strategies that are felt to be effective where staff don't feel equipped to tackle physical inactivity in their work, indicating some challenges operationalising the capacity building remit of the network meetings.</p> |
| | | 2-3 | <p>Partner organisations are developing plans to invest resources (including employees' time) in capacity and capability building for place-based systemic working. This may include recruiting for the skills, knowledge, and attributes required.</p> <p><i>OR</i></p> | <p>Example of a 3 (90)</p> <p>[Place] deliver capability building sessions to build skills and knowledge for community partners. Whilst sessions have been offered to a range of community partners across place, uptake has varied depending on sessions with community partner lacking capacity to attend leading to limited or low uptake.</p> <p>Example of a 3 (11)</p> <p>[Place] have set up initiatives such as recruiting and training [PA Champions] and setting up Community Panels are enabling individuals in the community to increase capacity and capability to support the physical activity agenda across localities ... However, there are</p> |

| 3. Capacity and capability across the workforce, volunteers and in communities | | | | |
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| Action to develop capacity and capability across the workforce, volunteers, and communities to work in a place-based systemic approach to enable physical activity. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | There is a recognition that some employees' time is needed to support this way of working but existing capacity and capability building strategies have limited or low uptake . | limitations on organisational capacity to work on this within the public sector which presents difficulties for projects that aim to working in a place-based systemic way. |
| | | 4-5 | <p>Partner organisations are investing resources (including employees' time) in capacity and capability building strategies and/or recruiting for the skills, knowledge, and attributes for place-based systemic working.</p> <p>Training, development and support for networks to share best practice is offered widely and has strong uptake.</p> <p>There are some employees with dedicated time to work in a place-based, systemic, and collaborative way with a focus on addressing inequalities.</p> | <p>Example of a 4 (C) In [AP], Place Partnerships invested in partner capacity by supporting organisations to make the approach their own. [Local football community programme] “focused heavily on integrating the strengths-based approach into everyday team meetings and performance reviews, with a strong focus on personal coaching for staff at all levels” and creating a “culture of strengths” through consistent reflection and ongoing team exercises. In contrast, “[Place] Council took a more structured, top-down approach, initially targeting leadership and middle management to drive the strengths-based culture”, with a phased rollout allowing “more focused engagement with key decision-makers,” although scaling across the council was limited by resources.</p> <p>At the system level, the Middle Leaders Programme aligned with the [AP] model of change, investing in individuals within the system to build “capabilities, confidence, and capacity” through skill development and protected time to engage with existing data. Middle leaders identified how best to use data to embed physical activity through practice and policy changes, leading initiatives that enabled more young people to be active during the school day. The impact of these initiatives was captured through “stories of significant change” and ripple effect mapping, providing evidence of how strengthened collaboration and networking builds skills, confidence, and a shared sense of purpose across partner organisations.</p> <p>Example of a 5 (9). In [Place] the [PP] highlighted the importance of building senior-level advocacy to support sustainable system change. Historically, gaining advocates and influencers at a senior level “hasn't been as effective as hoped,” with “a lack of understanding around the four key foundations for sustainable change [...] Although these foundations are “starting to be used more broadly,” inconsistencies in knowledge and application were perceived to negatively impact implementation.</p> <p>To address this, [PP] developed a learning journey, Agility in Complexity, designed to support senior leaders to “develop their understanding and knowledge of the four foundations for</p> |

| 3. Capacity and capability across the workforce, volunteers and in communities | | | | |
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| Action to develop capacity and capability across the workforce, volunteers, and communities to work in a place-based systemic approach to enable physical activity. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | | sustainable system change,” “change mindsets,” and “use additional tools.” By building these capabilities, [PP] expects to create a “growing, supportive network of senior leaders working individually and collectively in complexity-informed ways,” enhancing connectivity, collaboration, and capacity across the system. This network is intended to inspire leaders to create sustainable system change with a clear line of sight to [PP] vision. |
| | | 6-7 | <p>There is an established and growing workforce of people with the skills, knowledge, and attributes for systemic, place-based and collaborative working.</p> <p>This is embedded in job descriptions and priorities.</p> <p>Recruitment and continuous professional development policies prioritise these skills, knowledge, and capacities.</p> | <p>Example of a 6 (5).</p> <p>[Place partnership] works in a place-based way that continues to grow a workforce that have the capacity and capability to address inequalities. An example of this is [place partnership] staff that are embedded within local authorities to upskill the workforce becoming funded by local authorities to continue this way of working.</p> |
| Strengthening community & individual capacities | Working with communities and voluntary organisations to build capacity and capability | 1 | <p>There are no plans or strategies for capacity and capability building with local people* to work together to tackle problems of inactivity.</p> <p>Local community organisations do not share skills or ways of working, with each other.</p> | |

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| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | 2-3 | <p>There are plans or strategies in development, to work with local people to build skills and knowledge to work together to tackle problems of inactivity.</p> <p>Community organisations are beginning to recognise they can support each other to build skills and local knowledge.</p> | <p>Example of a 3 (90). Plans are in development for a [place] physical activity network to engage key partners across the [place]. Plans for this network aim to achieve wider systems change, build capacity for physical activity, and offer a space for engagement between partners and local authorities.</p> <p>Example of a 3 (52) Organisations that do not specialise in sport or physical activity are recognised to need support to facilitate increased physical activity opportunities. Some organisations have been identified and steps are being taken by [Place Partnership] to provide support to tackle challenges faced.</p> |
| | | 4-5 | <p>There are coherent, proactive partnership strategies, resources and actions in place, which work with local people to build skills and knowledge to work together to tackle problems of inactivity. These are offered widely and have broad uptake across diverse communities.</p> <p>There are short term fixes to mitigate poor working and living conditions to enable participation.</p> <p>Community organisations are starting to support each other, to share skills, or building each other's capacity to work in this way.</p> | <p>Example of a 4 (97) In, [Place] Partnerships invested in the skills and confidence of the VCSE sector and communities. Initial challenges included frustrations from long-standing members that “the pace of the work isn’t meeting their expectations,” reflecting the need to build shared understanding and confidence. Training and support helped address this. A new panel member reflected that after the second Leadership Training Day, they now “feel more knowledgeable and that this work links to what they do.” Appointing two Community Coordinators further enhanced capacity</p> <p>Example of a 5 (90) In 2022, [Place partnership] developed a new funding framework to strengthen community organisations’ capacity and foster collaboration. The framework, grounded in asset-based community development, included the Partnership, Learning and Development (PLD) grant, offering up to £20k for projects and £10k for organisational development, alongside smaller [names] grants. The aim was to support organisations “at whatever stage of their organisational development” to build skills, improve practice, and sustain physical activity offers.</p> <p>Example of a 5 (82) Increasing skills across the whole sector – supporting each other and sharing knowledge and experience, not just training– person-centred, active listening - more desire to upskill internally as its more sustainable than bringing in external support – if external funding needed, then looking at how to make sustainable – mentoring is big aspect of this - catch-ups, sharing experience and learning – more face to face meetings with lots of information being shared in conversations.</p> |

| 3. Capacity and capability across the workforce, volunteers and in communities | | | | |
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| Action to develop capacity and capability across the workforce, volunteers, and communities to work in a place-based systemic approach to enable physical activity. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | | More information being shared than ever across VCSE and other organisations - [organisation] [name] meetings bring together VCSE organisations, sharing good practice on the ground – training up residents - doing it in the community – in their spaces – people who wouldn't have previously come to an exercise class now leading it. |
| | | 6-7 | <p>A broad and representative range of local people demonstrate and continue to build the skills, strengths, and capacities to solve collective problems of inactivity and inequalities on an ongoing basis. This work includes proactive engagement to involve the people and communities who face barriers to participation.</p> <p>People are fairly rewarded for participation in capacity and capability development work.</p> <p>A network of community partners is evolving, from which collaborative work emerges (e.g. joint funding bids).</p> | |
| Tackling structural inequalities | Support and resources for communities to build the capacities and capabilities to advocate and act to address inequalities | 1 | <p>There is a high level of insecurity, poverty, poor working and living conditions and mental stress.</p> <p>This adversely affects opportunities and infrastructure for wellbeing and rewarding PA, and people tend to feel powerless to change these.</p> | |
| | | 2-3 | <p>There are plans to build the capacity and capability for local people to define and act on key factors impacting on their experiences of dignity and control in</p> | <p>Example of 3 (90) The [place partnership] has been intentional about investing in organisations with a presence or established links within the ward. This places greater emphasis on trusted relationships and a deep knowledge of the local community over expertise or experience in tackling inactivity.</p> |

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| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | <p>their lives and localities. (e.g. housing, employment issues, public services, or experiences of discrimination).</p> | |
| | | 4-5 | <p>Initiatives are in place which build the capacity and capability for local people to define and act on key factors impacting on their experiences of dignity and control in their lives and localities.</p> <p>This is inclusive of local people who have fewer opportunities, support networks and resources, who may otherwise not participate.</p> | <p>Example of a 4 (5). [Place] contribute and is part of a [programme] that seeks to support community members within the context of difficult financial circumstances. This [programme] brings together agencies (including [place partnership] and local authority to act on what can be done to best build capacity for communities facing structural inequalities.</p> <p>Example of a 4 (3) There are initiatives in place for capacity and capability building, with local people often defining what is delivered. However, further progress is possible with added resources to connect more widely and deeply. Low-cost or donation-based contributions are being used to ensure sustainability in few instances, addressing physical activity in the context of socio-economic factors and the cost of living. Programmes should have a focus on upskilling volunteers, recognising the importance of local people, with cross-sector initiatives like British Cycling projects helping to establish these practices.</p> <p>Example of a 5 (19) When staff have specialist knowledge, they can provide meaningful and responsive support. For example, the LDP Community Connect workers understood how to support participants in their challenges with alcohol, while instructors with another partner organisation who understood the needs and challenges of disabled people were able to provide adapted equipment for sessions. Having these skills and knowledge in-house can help build trust and provide meaningful and necessary solutions for many.</p> <p>Through the delivery of [project] as part of the LDP, we have learnt the importance of staff having the skills and training to handle difficult conversations with community members who may be facing a range of challenges, and for whom the [project] may be the only touch point of support e.g., housing and addiction issues. As a result, [project] staff have received de-escalation training, suicide awareness training, and have taken part in a series of reflective practice sessions led by the organisation’s Mental Health Services Advanced Practitioner.</p> <p>Through place-based projects to tackle inequalities, for example funded by [organisations], there has been funding and opportunities for members of the community to develop research skills and become community researchers. {Place partnership} providing training and skills for</p> |

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| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | | <p>community members from diverse backgrounds to be able to become community researchers in topics if digital inequality and inequalities in early deaths (in babies). Across the city we are seeing more examples of funding and organisations supporting community groups to build skills and capacity to become community researchers, and in turn be able to work with their communities to discover, and amplify their voices through research, and advocate and inform strategies and policies to tackle inequalities.</p> <p>Across the LDP there are many examples from the years where local trusted organisations have worked with their communities to increase their confidence and be front and centre of decisions made about them, as well as front and centre of their own stories, to motivate, promote and advocate for change.</p> |
| | | 6-7 | <p>Initiatives are widely embedded and sustained, throughout the place, which build the capacity and capability for local people to define and act on key factors impacting on their experiences of dignity and control in their lives and localities.</p> <p>This is inclusive of local people who have fewer opportunities, support networks and resources, who may otherwise not participate.</p> | |

| 4. Collaboration | | | | |
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| There is productive partnership working around a common purpose. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| Sector integration of physical activity | Collaborative practice within and across sectors | 1 | Organisations work in silos to tackle physical activity inequalities. There is a lack of mutual understanding and shared value of physical activity within and across organisations, and PA inequalities are | <p>Example of a 1 (21)</p> <p>“...there is a culture of self-preservation...particularly in relation to funding...” (21)</p> |

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| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | <p>widely seen as the responsibility of the PA sector alone.</p> <p>Departments or organisations compete for resources to the detriment of tackling the underlying causes of physical inactivity.</p> <p>Decision-making is not shared. Contradictions in policy and practice inhibit productive working partnerships to encourage physical activity (for example economic policies to encourage people to drive into city centres, at the cost of active travel solutions).</p> | |
| | | 2-3 | <p>Potential partners identify the benefits of working together to tackle systemic barriers to enable people to be more active. There is effective work taking place to build relationships within and across organisations.</p> <p>There is growing honesty and trust between people, and ideas around sharing resources. There is an acceptance that collaboration may involve compromises or lead to innovative solutions.</p> <p>There is recognition that decision-making should be shared between partners.</p> <p>There is recognition of where policy/practice can inhibit productive</p> | <p>Example of a 2 (37) There are pockets of examples where sectors have collaborated, however this is not commonplace and although there is a readiness, it is very early stages of trust being built between partners.</p> <p>Example of a 3 (68) Relationships with key partners (leisure trust, school, town council) have transformed from competitive and damaging to constructive and jointly purposeful. Exemplified in steering group behaviours and shared projects.</p> <p>Example of a 3 (43) Some collaborative work takes place in the borough, but at this particular moment of time, projects and activities are more organisational led than partnership led. A number of sub-groups exist in different spheres involving various partners including the Active Schools Group and Sport and Physical Activity Forum. The... development of the Sport and Physical Activity Forum has led to more partners across the town agreeing to support its promotion. The ... plan recently pitched to the 2030 board ... who agreed with the proposed concept via ... to try and encourage them to adopt a physical activity target across all council departments, boards and groups.</p> |

| 4. Collaboration | | | | |
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| There is productive partnership working around a common purpose. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | working and plans to work more in partnership. | |
| | | 4-5 | <p>There are some examples of people in organisations working together across the local place, within and across policy areas and ideas to tackle systemic barriers and/or create more comprehensive physical activity opportunities.</p> <p>There is a shared purpose across organisations, based on effective communication and growing trust among people and partners. Partners agree on how to make resources and assets work more effectively to tackle physical activity inequalities, this often drives collective decisions.</p> <p>There are examples of changes in behaviours, practice and policy which demonstrate shifts away from destructive competition and contradictions.</p> | <p>Example of a 4 (9) There is a strong collaborative approach with [locality partnership approach] that brings together different sectors with common purpose as the backbone...it is recognised that there are gaps, particularly from statutory organisations (related to capacity, not disinterest) which impacts on its effectiveness and is recognised as an area requiring improvement. This is being addressed through [a specific commission].</p> <p>Example of a 4 (35) There are examples of behaviours between partners that prioritise overall outcomes rather than competitiveness e.g. X and Y are both leisure providers but are working in partnership to enhance the leisure offer within [Locality]</p> <p>Example of a 5 (5) Our Social Network Analysis of the ...Network demonstrates the growing collaboration across sectors, including the VCSF. Quarterly ...events reinforce the shared purpose... [supplier] has led the development of Locality Plans and Ward budgets to financially support specific local issues and priorities. New...model should help to direct resources and assets to tackle PA inequalities. [Parks] programme an exemplar of improving cross-organisational collaboration (new... Investment Policy) and using Sport England funding to leverage extra resources.</p> |
| | | 6-7 | <p>There are multiple examples of organisations working together throughout the local place, within and across policy areas and ideas to tackle systemic barriers and/or create more comprehensive physical activity opportunities.</p> <p>The shared purpose is widely owned across place-based partners. Shared decision-making is routine, the process is equitable, even in cases where partners may have differences of opinions.</p> | <p>Example of a 6 (81) ...The model of the backbone support team is comprised of team members who work collaboratively and are funded partially from [research centre] and partly from partner organisations – [active partnership, hospital trust, university partner, integrated care board]... we have the formal networks (learning subgroups, coordination group, board) and informal ways of working together...We can mobilise widely across the city and know who to speak with to create PA opportunities in the city - [numerous projects at different scales given as evidence] all show this. But we have also built on wider work to look at how different areas can contribute to reducing PA inequalities through active travel/health/sport and education groups. [evidence given regarding public health and VCSE sector and co-location of health and physical activity infrastructure]. Within these groups conversations often vary between operational PA opportunities but there are also strategic discussions [evidence given re: depth and breadth of involvement].</p> |

4. Collaboration

There is productive partnership working around a common purpose.

| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
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| | | | <p>Collaborative practice across and within organisations is the norm and persists beyond individual relationships.</p> <p>Contradictions in policy and practice are routinely unravelled and resolved and competition is supported only when it drives innovation.</p> | <p>Example of a 6(91) This has a strong presence based on the governance structure within [Place]. Longer term impact is integrated into the borough’s strategic plans outlined in the Active Communities Strategy Implementation Plan – a plan now ‘owned’ by over 30 statutory, charity, voluntary & commercial organisations and groups. This integrates a restructured governance and ‘ownership’ structure that encompasses both strategic and operational elements in a coordinated way. Strong shared purpose in strategy - lot of examples provided of how this is embedded in practice, such as the implementation report to H&WB Board.</p> |
| <p>Strengthening community & individual capacities</p> | <p>Thriving community sector that works together on physical activity</p> | <p>1</p> | <p>Limited attention is given to physical activity as part of usual work for Voluntary Community Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations in the place.</p> <p>VCFSE organisations are precarious (i.e. live 'hand to mouth') and/or competitive which inhibits collaboration.</p> | |
| | | <p>2-3</p> | <p>Some VCFSE organisations recognise how PA can align with their aims and are willing to work with others to incorporate physical activity into their work and widen reach to those who may be inactive.</p> <p>These efforts tend to be time limited and/or are bound to external funding. (i.e. Efforts to incorporate physical activity is intermittent / sporadic).</p> | <p>Example of a 2 (53) As an active partnership, we are seeing relationships grow across the LA, VCSFE and other public sector partners, but much of this is ‘ad hoc’ or by chance, rather than systematic, and is often driven by passionate individuals rather than through strategic level planning. It can therefore mean that people have good, positive conversations on what work would like to be done, but are unable to commit the time/resource to that work due to competing priorities.</p> <p>Example of a 3 (90) Fostered through a (supported network), VCSE organisations have increasingly been encouraged to work together [evidence given regarding partner feedback]...The most recent funding grants programme has encouraged many organisations to pivot towards PA [examples as well as challenges given]. The majority had not offered PA prior to receiving the grant...the challenge remains how far, once funding end, these programmes will be able to continue incorporating PA delivery alongside their own programmes...many highlighted capacity challenges</p> |
| | | <p>4-5</p> | <p>Many VCFSE organisations recognise how PA can align with their aims. They are</p> | <p>Example of a 4 (82)</p> |

| 4. Collaboration | | | | |
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| There is productive partnership working around a common purpose. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | <p>collaborating with others to incorporate physical activity into their ongoing work with individuals and communities and to widen reach to those who may be inactive.</p> <p>Physical activity is becoming part of usual practice for some VCSFE organisations as a way of contributing to their core objectives.</p> | <p>We have some key pockets across the borough in which a collaborative approach is really embedded with a shared approach to support local residents - [examples given of three wards and one complementary whole system/place-based investment].</p> <p>Example of a 4 (97) VCSFE, Leisure, NGB's are working collaboratively and focused on building physical activity into usual work to reach those who are inactive, [several examples given] relating to place-based partnerships, in health and community trusts, outdoor partnerships and refugee services.</p> <p>Example of a 5 (90) Funding was complemented by the Delivery Partner Network (DPN), a bi-monthly forum providing "training, peer support, and space for bilateral learning." The DPN encouraged collaboration, shared learning, and innovation, while enabling "regular communication...supporting collaborative space-sharing." For instance, the [organisation] became a hub for other groups [...], promoting intergenerational use and wider engagement. Early feedback highlighted that many organisations "lacked internal systems for monitoring and evaluating delivery" and required hands-on support to embed physical activity into their core offer. The DPN, and its successor, the Physical Activity Network, provided this structured support while fostering trust and shared ownership, including with the Council. Reflections from [Place partnership] noted "increased collaboration, mutual support, and an emerging sense of reciprocity amongst partners."</p> |
| | | 6-7 | <p>A network of VCSFE organisations are working together, with a common purpose, and with other place-based agencies to build physical activity into their work with individuals and communities. This includes, widening reach to those who are underserved and pooling resources. This way of working is sustainable and not dependent on short-term funding.</p> <p>For example, faith-based organisations work with community development charities and local sports clubs to</p> | |

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| There is productive partnership working around a common purpose. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | encourage young people to maintain their education. | |
| Tackling structural inequalities | Collective impact on inequalities | 1 | <p>There is little interest or an absence of attention from multiple partners across policy areas to tackling structural inequalities.</p> <p>It is seen as responsibility of other agencies/local people and/or partners feel powerless to influence these factors.</p> | |
| | | 2-3 | <p>There is shared recognition that structural inequalities are at the root of many societal problems and that there is a need to collaborate across and within organisations to tackle them effectively.</p> <p>There may be conversations at strategic level about how to do this, but a way forward isn't yet agreed.</p> | <p>Example of a 2 (62) Areas of strength and weaknesses across the locality. Area Action Partnerships have helped to influence partnership working – but not consistent or effective everywhere. Some audiences ‘get it’ and others don’t. We need to focus on the audiences that don’t.</p> <p>Example of a 3 (80) As a diverse place, everyone knows the inequalities (geographies, demographics) and work hard in these areas. We have an inequalities statement, we have strategies and programmes and many people working in this area (champions, cohesion officers, programmes on the ground...it's the policy change that isn't there yet).</p> |
| | | 4-5 | <p>There is positive engagement and examples of collaborative working between policy areas to tackle common root causes.</p> <p>There may be a unified and integrated strategy for tackling structural inequalities, but roles and responsibilities and shared procedures for implementing is less visible.</p> | <p>Example of a 4 (8) We are addressing this with investment in the environments such as Green Space and Parks and working together with housing. The [place-based approach] has engagement across multiple system areas and sectors, influencing more aspects of residents’ lives. (8)</p> <p>Example of a 5 (9) [...] Research Centre has built on our approach and embedding a research culture in the LAs by building common purpose and joining policy areas up...The development of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) by public health is utilising a mission and goals approach which is engaging a wider range of partners and developing a collaborative approach to both identification of priorities and implementation.</p> <p>Example of a 5 (13)</p> |

| 4. Collaboration | | | | |
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| There is productive partnership working around a common purpose. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | | Prevention health inequalities strategies - partners involved in this - NHS trust, ICB, HWB. Multi-tiered action plan - tackle health inequalities across every level... Dashboard of monitoring inequalities - this is taken seriously . Health led space with public health rather than council - significant focus for them. Commitment on how to measure, monitor across partners . |
| | | 6-7 | There is a unified strategy across policy areas. Shared decision making about how to allocate resources to tackle underlying root causes is the norm. Roles and responsibilities are clear and there is mutual accountability. There are multiple examples of joint work that effectively addresses structural inequalities, for example, developing 'one team' across organisations to work with communities. | Example of a 6 (5) Locality Plans and Ward budgets to financially support specific local issues and priorities...[Locality] Strategy has a focus on tackling structural inequalities , supported by several high-profile strategic programmes e.g. [strategic Commission]. Example of a 6 (91) Physical activity must not exist as an isolated sector but a fundamental element of improving lives across multiple sectors, which is where impact is improved. This supports why we follow a whole systems approach and engage with key partners to co-produce provision and programmes. Links to governance – see implementation plan link and outcomes framework – not seen yet in outcomes, because need to build trend over time, but outcomes framework is how we will monitor impact on inequalities. See also neighbourhoods and prevention work to address inequalities, in which the Active Communities strategy is embedded |

| 5. Leadership | | | | |
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| Policymakers, workforce, volunteers and residents act together to build on strengths and remove barriers for tackling physical activity inequalities | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| Sector Integration of Physical Activity | Strategic leaders, across sectors, promote place-based systemic approaches to tackle physical | 1 | There is a lack of sustained, visible leadership , within the place, for tackling physical activity inequalities. Leadership for tackling physical activity inequalities is limited to the sport and leisure sector. | Example of 1 (53) While the council are increasing their engagement with residents and specific communities there is a distinct need to join this up with other strategic levers including Collaborative strategy group, ICS and the local Trust. More sectors are interested in being involved, but there is a lack of a strategic steer to support distributed leadership. Reporting into the HWB Board will provide a mandate for increasing distributed leadership. |

| 5. Leadership | | | | |
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| Policymakers, workforce, volunteers and residents act together to build on strengths and remove barriers for tackling physical activity inequalities | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | activity inequalities | 2-3 | <p>There is emerging visible leadership, within the place, for place-based systemic approaches to tackle physical activity inequalities.</p> <p>There are emerging leaders across multiple sectors, within the place, beyond sport and leisure, who are beginning to address the breadth of influences on physical activity.</p> | <p>Example of 2 (9) There is leadership emerging...A key barrier to this in our place is leaders seeking short-term fixes to complex situations which require systems thinking e.g. engaging with multiple perspectives, developing an understanding of context and environment, and ensuring that they have buy-in at different levels of the system.</p> <p>Example of 3 (90) Organisations have been supported to emerge as leaders, not only ‘championing the cause’ but using their unique positionality and influence within the ward to tackle PA inequalities. Although the community project team are influencing ways of working at a borough level, a recent report ... highlighted the need for visible and strategic leadership at the most senior level of the Council in order to achieve the transformation and systems change needed to reduce physical activity inequalities in place. This also recognises the need to move the work beyond a small programme team, with the aim of more collective ownership, responsibility and leadership.</p> |
| | | 4-5 | <p>There is sustained visible leadership, across multiple sectors, within the place, for place-based systemic approaches to tackle physical activity inequalities leading to changes in policy and practice.</p> <p>Leaders use their influence to facilitate diverse contribution to decision making and enable others to act.</p> <p>Leaders are starting to recognise, challenge and change practices and processes which are counterproductive to physical activity (e.g. economic policy to welcome cars into city centres may contradict active travel policies.)</p> | <p>Example of a 4 (5) Work is aligned to policies in the Local Plan for the Council for example: Active Travel, Green Infrastructure Strategy 2014 – 2028. However, there is a need for a stronger cascade into supporting strategies e.g. Health & Wellbeing strategy. Physical Activity Advisory Board – is chaired by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Communities, Leisure and Culture and has a small number of strategic representatives from leisure, health, sport and parks. However, we recognise that more needs to be done to diversify representation across demographics, sectors and perspectives; a governance refresh is happening. The backbone support group is embedded within Public Health, with the Director of Public Health as Senior Responsible Officer for physical activity and sport championing the value and contribution of PA to deliver broader social outcomes.</p> <p>Example of a 5 (97) There are a range of decision makers involved in physical activity in place, primarily via an alliance. Leadership is dispersed across a range of organisations as the plan is [place]’ owned, rather than driven by council. Within place there are parts of multiple sectors collaborating beyond sport and physical activity including schools/education, health, criminal justice, transport. There is more work to do to ensure the value is understood and prioritised across the full sector and not limited to parts of the sector. Policies and practice have changed to create the conditions for physical activity and</p> |

| 5. Leadership | | | | |
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| Policymakers, workforce, volunteers and residents act together to build on strengths and remove barriers for tackling physical activity inequalities | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | | inclusive decisions are made to further the aims of this agenda. Public Health collaborates with other departments across the council to prioritise the conditions for physical activity . |
| | | 6-7 | <p>There is widespread, sustained visible leadership and long-term commitment, within the place, for place-based systemic approaches to tackle physical activity inequalities. Policy and practice supports commitments to prioritise physical activity.</p> <p>Leaders use their influence and facilitate diverse contribution to decision making and enable others to act.</p> <p>Leaders use their positions to effectively challenge contradictory policies and practices.</p> | <p>No case study available – potential example of 6</p> <p>There is a committed group of senior leaders who use their position to shape PA broadly in the city and support others to act at more of a sector/ local level. They are creating more joined up action by starting to create ways of hearing directly from people about barriers and strengths/ supporting action and have teams/local people working in three key place areas attend an open session in alliance meetings. This is particularly strong around active travel where local areas have been listened to, given space to create local action and they have fed this up to the alliance group so there is both structural/strategic push and local action and spaces to bring these together. The work about our streets for us is an example of senior leaders supporting locally directed action- the leaders also bring in key players e.g. police, transport, housing and schools to this for more collective impact – residents may not have been able to engage all areas for coordinated action.</p> <p>Potential example of 6</p> <p>The board are representative of many areas of people’s lives – health, schools, housing, and VCSE sector. Physical activity is now included within many key policies and agendas in different spaces, and we have seen this create a widespread sense of ownership by managers to facilitate changes in ways of working to embed physical activity - and work more with local people to transfer decision-making/leading around enabling physical activity whilst offering support. Senior leaders have responded to ideas of ways to work differently from both the health and community sectors and are pooling some resources and changing processes for distribution of contracts to enable community organisations to lead on work with primary care to tackle health inequalities through physical activity.</p> |
| Sector integration of physical activity | People at all levels take on roles and responsibility to tackle physical activity inequalities and can act autonomously | 1 | People at different layers* within and across the place are unable or unwilling to make decisions or take effective action to address physical activity inequalities. | <p>e.g. people are briefly consulted on their thoughts, this may be a topic of work which is already agreed, decisions are not shared and the work is completed more centrally, people don't lead on any area of the work.</p> <p>OR e.g. there is a lack of trust between local people and organisations and people are not currently engaged in making decisions.</p> |
| | | 2-3 | There is limited distribution of decision making . | <p>Example of a 2 (PR*)</p> <p><i>Example of cross-sector influencing - good example but isolated.</i></p> <p>We asked the PCN and Practice Leads to give permission to our Active Practice Champions to consult with staff and develop ideas. The day after the Practitioner from the Surgery contacted us to say that</p> |

| 5. Leadership | | | | |
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| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | Some people take on responsibility and initiate action, but this may be compromised by context (e.g. time restrictions or lack of strategic influence). | <p>they had a good idea – to turn a clinical room into a gym. Staff were involved in developing the idea and leading on it. We are continuing to look at ways in which we can encourage the practice to keep moving forward, such as our Active Practice Springboard, and comms support to share the work they are doing and the impact it is having.</p> <p>The Practice is a great champion of the Active Practice programme sharing their progress and inspiring others to follow their lead. Activating local champions is essential to progressing change.</p> <p>Example of a 3 (9) There are local examples of people and organisations making decisions to create the conditions for people to be physically active. The [theory of change] underpins the natural evolution of backbone support group. For example, we are building shared purpose throughout the local system by building a learning culture where insight is utilised and shared (so that people can build a greater understanding of the issues and complexity, and make informed decisions and avoid ‘quick fixes’). It also focuses on collaboration, so that people can learn from others’ perspectives from different levels of the system, develop an appreciation for different worldviews while reflecting on their own, and reach a point of consent and collaborative action.</p> |
| | | 4-5 | <p>There is some distribution of decision making to people at all layers to take decisions and actions, aligned with the shared vision to address physical activity inequalities.</p> <p>They take on some roles and responsibilities within their sphere of influence (i.e. policy makers can influence workforce, residents can influence other residents and workforce they are engaged with)</p> | <p>Example of 4 (90) An example of collective decision making A cross-departmental working group involving council officers from Area Regeneration, Strategic Property, Policy and Strategic Delivery, Resident Participation has been working together over the past year to develop community assets in this Park as accessible community spaces to improve resident wellbeing, which includes activation for PA. Engaging people across different sectors and relevant expertise.</p> <p>The ‘Area’ Club development is a key aspect of this work. Development in direct and continuous collaboration with the Club staff and the Club working group. A particular strength of this approach has been the collaboration (at every stage) between Sport England, several departments at the Council and The Club. By working together in this way and distributing the process of decision making (as far as possible) trust and a more detailed understanding of processes has developed across partners.</p> <p>Across the programme organisations have been supported to emerge as leaders, not only ‘championing the cause’ but using their unique positionality and influence within the ward to tackle PA inequalities.</p> |

| 5. Leadership | | | | |
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| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | | <p>Example of a 5 (60) People over several sectors are working together and making decisions. At the root, the high trust environment gave everyone involved a greater sense of their own agency. With more people able to each do more in the knowledge decisions they made would be supported had the effect of multiplying the capacity of the team. “Understand the importance of the empathy gap and work with as many people as possible who have a close empathy with the people you are trying to reach.”</p> |
| | | 6-7 | <p>There are multiple people at all layers who take informed decisions and actions, aligned with the shared vision to address physical activity inequalities.</p> <p>They take on roles and responsibility and feel in control of what they do.</p> <p>They highlight things that are not working and there are effective ways to influence upwards/more widely to resolve systemic challenges.</p> | <p>Example of a 6 (91) The approaches have been through both organisational and community levels, where the aim is to influence, accept that change is needed in some situations, build capacity, establish trusted relationships, use existing resources and assets more effectively, facilitate community leadership and operate in an environment without fear of failure. This "new way of thinking" has been facilitated through all levels of employees, from strategic leads to operational deliverers, further developing and highlighting the importance of the collective work. This continues to be our responsibility as a collective to address where we can influence positive change and adopt our approaches to community engagement and organisational progressions when supporting communities.</p> |
| Strengthening community & individual capacities | Community voice and influence in partnership decision-making | 1 | Local people, including those who are inactive, are not included in decision making about what creates the conditions for people to be physically active. | <p>Example of 1 (68) Taking this to include all aspects of people’s lives, it is not clear what is the forum and/or mechanisms by which local people are routinely and pervasively included in these decisions beyond the democratic process, inputs to matters of planning consent and ad hoc engagement and consultation activities. This is an area of future work.</p> |
| | | 2-3 | <p>There are a few local people and advocates who make or influence decisions to create conditions for and/or lead on actions for activity.</p> <p>Community leadership is project based, only, and is not systemically and routinely supported.</p> | <p>Example of 3 (11) Our community led approach involves local people and supports them to make decisions about what services/opportunities/investments they want. Involvement of backbone support needed to support the interactions between diverse stakeholders. Encouraging community ownership of the PA agenda remains challenging, assets and individuals can look to backbone org to lead on changes. Active parks plan – community working groups driving projects (making decisions) and a community panel that consider/approve funding requests decision making, this is happening at times.</p> |

| 5. Leadership | | | | |
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| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | | <p>Friend of park group – good example of community insight data, gathered by established community asset.</p> <p>Cultivating an effective community working group – local people made some decisions.</p> <p>Example of a 3 (51) Unfortunately, there has been a lot of vandalism to the project, work has been highlighted and recognised by both elected members and the community who have been saddened and galvanised to see this. This has resulted in a shift in dynamics from both elected members and stakeholders, the perception previously was that their role was to 'ask', now they are taking more control and attempting to address issues and recently called an urgent meeting with [council] leaders. The lead for the local mosque announced at prayers to 'take it easy' on the ward members because they have the best interests in the community at heart. This is rare as prayers are not disturbed so likely it has been raised and identified as an 'important matter' for residents to respect local leaders trying to support local projects. It is important that local residents hear the voices of community champions as there is a higher chance they will take on-board what they say.</p> |
| | | 4-5 | <p>Some local people and advocates effectively represent the interests of communities participate in or influence decisions-making to create conditions for and/or lead on actions for physical activity.</p> <p>Local people's influence sometimes reaches beyond their own local community.</p> <p>This not fully representative of diverse voices in the place.</p> | <p>Example of a 4 (11) Connecting local assets to each other for more shared objectives, in more than one area. Mobilise the community to act together Collaborative space within the community Collective workshops to connect with each other Method of distributed and collective leadership, distributing to community and facilitating collective leadership Increase accountability for the work Approach is community led decision made BY and for the community not by backbone team Local org, services, residents encouraged and supported to work together to formulate investment proposals for local area.</p> <p>Example of a 5 Giving Community Panels responsibility for signing off local funding investment proposals applications ensures that decisions are being made by those with local knowledge and experience. Community partnership groups are giving local people an opportunity to influence decisions about creating the conditions for people to be physically active. The Community Led Approach (CLA) has enabled decision making by and for local people. However, this is not yet widely established or fully representative of the communities we are working with ...</p> |

| 5. Leadership | | | | |
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| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | | <p>Formal community decision making Within each geographical CLA area a Community Panel (CP) has been established. The CP is comprised of people who live in, or have a close relationship to the local area, for example members of local faith organisations residents, local Councillors, will continue to test and refine as we continue the CLA work in [place]. Informal community decision making - local people are making decisions and influencing projects to create the conditions for people to be physically active through the CLA. Through attending partnership meetings and working groups, local people are able to influence the projects that are being funded.</p> |
| | | 6-7 | <p>A diverse and representative range of local people, including those who are underserved and/or have lived experience of inactivity, participate equally in decision-making to create conditions for and/or lead on actions for physical activity.</p> <p>Local people’s influence often reaches beyond their own local community.</p> | <p>Example of a 6 (75) {Active Partnership} used an innovative community and cross-system participatory approach, called Group Model Building (GMB). By convening partners in three workshops over summer 2024, explicitly “hand[ing] power of decision-making to the collective” and allowing stakeholders to generate action ideas and establish action groups. This approach created space for diverse voices to influence decision-making, mitigating traditional power imbalances and fostering shared ownership across individuals, communities, and organisations.</p> <p>The resulting action groups are actively shaping local initiatives, including collaboratively contributing to a local facilities audit to ensure venues across sectors are fully utilised, improving access and opportunities for physical activity. By involving stakeholders in both planning and implementation, the process ensures that solutions are community-driven, contextually relevant, and sustainable. Although challenges remain - such as capacity constraints and established organisational practices - the GMB approach has strengthened networks, built trust, and promoted cross-sector problem-solving. Overall, this evidence illustrates that where local people are empowered to lead, they can influence the conditions for physical activity and contribute to long-term systemic change.</p> |

| 6. Community-led action | | | | |
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| Action is shaped and led by communities and supported by community-focused strategies. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| Sector integration of physical activity | Meaningful involvement of people with lived experience in developing sector-led PA initiatives | 1 | Local people have limited influence over decisions about local programmes and resource allocation for physical activity, even if they are occasionally consulted and/or community engagement is not equitable and inclusive of diverse perspectives. There may be historical mistrust and lack of communication between communities and local agencies. | |
| | | 2-3 | There are isolated examples in which local people who are directly affected have some involvement in development and design of sector-led programmes physical activity initiatives (e.g. patients of a cancer pathway can input into the development of an activity programme to support them during treatment). Efforts are made to ensure this is done equitably and respond to diverse perspectives within communities. Historic mistrust and communication challenges are recognised and worked on. | <p>Example of a 2 (43) Some local communities and people led initiatives do exist, but are either specific to certain projects, or ad-hoc. Examples include community walks, some of which are led by volunteers from local communities trained via the Local Authority through walk leaders.</p> <p>Example of a 2 (15) Playzones – standard model offered to residents, no real influence on plans – need to engage residents earlier.</p> <p>Example of a 3 (37) There has been a historic consult culture over a co-design culture. This has started to shift with the [<i>conversation</i>] approach and the development of the [<i>community wellbeing</i>] approach, both led by public health but involving a broad spectrum of partners, community organisations and community members...</p> |
| | | 4-5 | Local people who are directly affected, often have some involvement in designing, producing and evaluating sector-led programmes and physical activity initiatives. This happens across multiple sectors. | <p>Example of a 5 (90) There has been clear acknowledgment of historic mistrust and communication challenges which have driven ways of working. Noting the challenging journey to get [club] leaders to trust the council, the [programme] team and council colleagues have highlighted how agile ways of working and new processes were required with significant time and effort going into establishing rapport and building mechanisms for collaborative working. Initiatives to harness community power and prioritise co-production principles have remained at the heart of [place partnership] work. Collaboration with community organisations and stakeholders from across the system has been</p> |

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| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | There is evidence of progress in addressing historic mistrust and communication challenges, and disadvantaged people and communities are increasingly and equitably included in these processes. | <p>ingrained into all areas of [programme] delivery, with decisions taken based on engagement and learning rather than on instinct of the programme team.</p> <p>Example of a 5 (52) In [Place], the [Name] programme demonstrates how involving local people with lived experience can shape physical activity provision. Between September 2022 and September 2023, [programme] commissioned StreetGames to deliver the “[programme] Leads’ young leaders programme,” working with “four Local Trusted Organisations to recruit 20 young people from the local area.” Participants received “formal training (multi-skills, first aid, safeguarding, youth mental health) alongside mentorship,” while being supported to “deliver physical activity opportunities in their communities.”</p> <p>This approach increased “the agency and ownership of young people, ensuring sessions were culturally and practically relevant to the local context.” By involving leaders who were “representative of the community,” the programme encouraged greater inclusion and participation, particularly among underrepresented groups. It highlights how co-production with those who “experience physical activity inequalities” can produce locally tailored initiatives that are sustainable, responsive, and more likely to reduce inactivity.</p> |
| | | 6-7 | Local people who are directly affected, including those seldom heard and experiencing disadvantage are routinely actively involved in designing, producing and evaluating local programmes and physical activity initiatives. This runs through the culture of whole systems of organisations, which operate in equitable, transparent and accountable ways, leading to increasing levels of understanding and trust between disadvantaged communities and partner agencies. | No examples yet seen of a 6/7 across place partnerships |
| Strengthening community & | Supported community-led initiatives | 1 | There is limited resident or community-led physical activity . This may be due to living and working conditions working | |

6. Community-led action

Action is shaped and led by communities and supported by community-focused strategies.

| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
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| individual capacities | | | against the development of community-led initiatives or lack of responsivity of local agencies to community needs. | |
| | | 2-3 | <p>There are a few community-led initiatives for physical activity, with some support where needed from local agencies/partners.</p> <p>Some local people are confident to get involved in physical activity, due to familiarity and reputation of local groups/organisations and/or the individual leading them.</p> <p>Tensions between local people and communities may limit access, in some cases.</p> | <p>Example of a 2 (37) There are some community-led initiatives, but in the main, most activities in [place]’s deprived communities are instigated by paid workers or established VCSE organisations.</p> <p>Example of a 2 (43) [Name] is another example of a specific programme that involves communities in the decision-making process, NHS mental health and physical activity service considers people's views in the decision-making process</p> <p>Example of a 3 (49) There are a number of community-led outdoor activity programmes working well in the borough. However, lack of a bespoke sports development team/officer means our support to local sports clubs is limited.</p> |
| | | 4-5 | <p>Communities are developing and delivering a range of initiatives for physical activity with some involvement of people with lived experience of PA inequalities. These are often supported by local agencies and partners where needed (for example with support for equipment, venues, bid writing/marketing etc).</p> <p>Many local people are confident to get involved. They can move between initiatives and opportunities due to positive relations between groups.</p> | <p>Example of a 4 (21) Asset based mapping [with local residents] has been carried out in some of the most deprived areas. [multiple examples of community-led projects supported through an asset-based community development approach]</p> <p>Example of a 5 (90) Community Partner Networks –These face-to-face meetings will provide an opportunity for [place-based community sector] organisations which have an interest in Physical Activity, to get together on a quarterly basis. In time, the aim is for this to become a partner-led network, where the agenda and meeting format is the responsibility of network members, but initially (and for the foreseeable future), the planning and organisation will be done (in partnership with the network) by colleagues from [Place Partnership, youth voice and public health]. The sessions will offer organisations the opportunity to share, learn and network with others involved in supporting physical activity in the borough (and possibly beyond) and facilitate opportunities for collaborations to develop. Interviews with stakeholders on various sides of delivery have identified positive feelings towards the working relationship with decision making taking place evenly across multiple groups. Fieldwork has also highlighted time and energy spent on working with this group is allowing it to be developed</p> |

| 6. Community-led action | | | | |
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| Action is shaped and led by communities and supported by community-focused strategies. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | | as a model for collaborative working that can be adapted and applied to other similar contexts across the Borough. |
| | | 6-7 | <p>Communities are regularly working together to develop and deliver a wide range of initiatives for physical activity. These are made accessible and promoted accordingly with active involvement of people with lived experience of PA inequalities.</p> <p>Systemic action by local agencies and partners ensures community-led initiatives are routinely and responsively supported where needed.</p> <p>Local people and/or community-led initiatives for physical activity build confidence and connections in communities, leading to greater innovation, investment and independence from sector-led initiatives.</p> | <p>Example of a 6 (90) This is a condition where we have seen a notable change in scores due to the partnerships in place, and evidence of formal/informal collaborations across organisations, independent from the programme team.</p> <p>It has been great to see local people move between the different activities available within the [] area, as a result of relationships that have developed between organisations, and also the activation of spaces, i.e. the library.</p> <p>Word of mouth and sharing positive experiences seems to be the main method of communication, along with intergenerational experiences and links to wider wellbeing services. We are also hearing consistently about the wider benefits that are coming from people being active together, including trying new physical activities. But the wider community support for individuals and community organisations is really powerful. At a recent discussion, about raising capital funding for [community space] refurbishment, local organisations began to discuss how they could support fundraising activities for a space that they all need within the community. We have also seen evidence of shared space and use of equipment amongst organisations, so that activities are available to local people.</p> <p>At a borough level, the MUGA working group is another example of community led action which is being championed by local voluntary sector partners. The group have developed the evidence base including some test/learn activity and produced a clear set of recommendations that they are now seeking to embed at a borough level. [...] Although acknowledging the funding as a positive opportunity, the group has also highlighted the limitations of this approach for a borough like [Place], raising concerns about the risk of gentrification and exclusion from much-loved local spaces. However, following much dialogue facilitated by [Place Partnership], a prospective partnership between a VCS organisation and housing provider is moving forward. [...] This example also highlights the importance of hyper-local approaches and partnerships, which are not always possible to identify when looking at a borough level.</p> |
| Tackling structural inequalities | Local people's influence on decisions about | 1 | Priorities for development in local Places are not based on community priorities . | |

| 6. Community-led action | | | | |
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| Action is shaped and led by communities and supported by community-focused strategies. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | things that affect their lives | | Local people are not included in decision making about things that affect their living and working conditions. Communities feel powerless. | |
| | | 2-3 | Some local people and/or advocates are voicing their issues and concerns. Some local people have opportunities to influence decision making about things that affect their working and living conditions. | Example of a 3 (53) Through the Neighbourhood Networks, [name] High Streets investments and use of Place Standard Tool, the involvement of communities for strategic planning will be improved and aim to move beyond silos of good practice. |
| | | 4-5 | Local people experience real influence on priority setting and other decision making leading to increasing confidence in their ability to bring positive change. Proactive efforts are made to ensure multiple perspectives are included, but this is not yet fully representative of all people affected. Networks of friends, family, or community members share ideas, and solve problems together. | Example of a 4 (5) Community participation in design and delivery of the Future Parks Programme has evolved over the last 12 months. Community pride is a priority across all four of [place]’s locality plans and the roll out of Integrated Neighbourhood working will support the development of social capital. Example of a 5 (56) [Programme] is not a PA initiative, we are embedding PA into a community development social prescribing and health and wellbeing movement. The work is about local individual and local people making change for themselves. Inclusive [Place] and the individuals within this lead the change themselves, this is cultural and social and create a voice for the communities they represent. 3 years of resources to grow their cultural offer. [assessed as] 5 [on SMM] because local people are not routinely influencing things about the conditions that affect their lives. There is a sector (housing and employment) that we want to work with more to evidence we want to be a 6. Our examples are strong but not across the board and ‘routinely influencing decisions’. |
| | | 6-7 | Local people are driving and shaping partnership working to address underlying causes of inequalities. Local people routinely influence decisions about things that affect their working and living conditions. Diverse | No examples yet seen. |

| 6. Community-led action | | | | |
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| Action is shaped and led by communities and supported by community-focused strategies. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | <p>needs and perspectives are equitably represented in this.</p> <p>Community connections, trust and health and wellbeing of the whole community are growing stronger. Local people experience dignity and control in their lives.</p> | |

| 7. Cultures and practices | | | | |
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| There is a culturally inclusive social environment for physical activity which enables people to move more in ways that suit them. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| Sector integration of physical activity | Cultures and practices in local institutional settings and workplaces enable and motivate moving more | 1 | Physical activity and wellbeing is not widely considered as relevant for paid employees and volunteers, or other participants in institutional settings, such as education or health and care services provision. | |
| | | 2-3 | <p>There are some examples of policies and practices that promote physical activity for paid employees, volunteers or people they work with in institutional settings. These respond to diverse individual characteristics but may be limited to a few organisations or settings, or not effectively implemented.</p> | <p>Example of a 2 (9) There is a widely adopted programme, [name], which implements wellbeing programmes into the workplace. However, this programme is not effective at implementing a workplace whole system approach to supporting the workforce. For example, the Cycle to Work Scheme is widely implemented but cycle storage and culture isn't changed. There are plans to evolve the model but these are currently not being actioned due to local authority financial situations.</p> <p>Example of a 3 (68) ...the Hybrid Teacher was supported by the [organisation] the High School and Active [Place] to serve several purposes including bridge the gap between the school and the community. [...] "I developed good relationships with the [Hybrid Teacher] in the secondary school and this carried on with the school. I enjoyed it and spoke with others about it. [The Hybrid Teacher] is like a blueprint and I could see that as a way to connect schools and community in other areas" Active Communities Team Leader.</p> |

| 7. Cultures and practices | | | | |
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| There is a culturally inclusive social environment for physical activity which enables people to move more in ways that suit them. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | 4-5 | <p>Policies and practices which promote physical activity in the everyday practices of paid employees, volunteers and people they work with are being implemented in many settings. In some settings physical activity or movement is increasingly becoming established as the norm.</p> <p>These policies and practices are increasingly adaptive and responsive to the individual characteristics of their employees and volunteers, and people they work with, but some barriers remain.</p> | <p>Example of a 4 (53) [project] is run through the PH department and so seeks to support the designated team of health advocates within organisations to ensure the workforce is supported in all aspects of health and wellbeing - this work will be strengthened from light touch to meaningful, insights driven support through the Active Workplaces workstream [...]. MECC training for volunteers to support them to start conversations about the wider benefits of PA in a way that is culturally appropriate, this is reinforced through the Connected Voices cultural awareness training which is free to access [...].</p> <p>Example of a 5 In [Place], organisational practices are shifting to make physical activity part of everyday culture. [Programme] has extended its community-based learning into workplaces, helping organisations “address health, well-being, and employee retention through physical activity” by “listening, building trust, and co-producing solutions.” Through targeted initiatives - such as training “20 Mental Health Champions... on physical activity, mental health, and what’s available to them” and workplace wellbeing walks—organisations are beginning to treat movement as part of everyday culture. These efforts are supported by communications that model active lifestyles, with “social proofing videos... a key tool for inspiring others, sharing success stories, and engaging partners.” A notable example is the collaboration with a “factory on the edge of a [Place partnership] area,” where conversations with employees during shifts are informing tailored PA opportunities, reflecting a genuine understanding of workplace barriers. Similarly, co-production with residents and developers in a “high-end apartment development” integrates PA into living and working environments through “monthly meetings with residents and employees,” and by responding to safety concerns, for example introducing a “structured group run... with a dedicated run leader.”</p> |
| | | 6-7 | <p>Policies and practices which embed physical activity in everyday practices are widely and effectively implemented, making regular movement the norm, and leading to increased wellbeing for paid employees, volunteers and people they work with.</p> <p>These policies and practices are adaptive and responsive to individual characteristics, leading to inclusive</p> | No examples yet seen |

| 7. Cultures and practices | | | | |
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| There is a culturally inclusive social environment for physical activity which enables people to move more in ways that suit them. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | active cultures in workplaces and institutional settings. Most people in most settings are moving more during the day and long periods of sedentary activity are unusual. | |
| Strengthening community & individual capacities | Inclusive cultures encourage and facilitate participation in movement / physical activity | 1 | <p>Values and beliefs within many communities inhibit participation in physical activity, including concern about/experience of negative social / cultural consequences.</p> <p>PA is seen as exclusive and only for certain kinds of people, while some people may feel unsafe or that that they don't belong in PA settings and activities.</p> | |
| | | 2-3 | <p>Within some communities, values and beliefs about the role of being active in happy, healthy, connected lives, are shifting.</p> <p>There are some examples of local people who have experienced barriers to participation feeling more confident and able to be active in ways that suit them.</p> | <p>Example of a 2 (90) Nine out of ten [place] residents say that [place] is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. [place]'s diversity and multiculturalism are the main factors contributing to residents feeling proud of the borough. Whilst work is being done to test best practice and build new strategies, persistent disparities remain between PA participation dependent on socioeconomic and sociodemographic status of groups.</p> <p>Example of a 3 (11) Targeting organisations who work with specific communities is about changing the cultural and social environment. We try to get people connected, using local orgs to reach local people and promote inclusive opportunities for PA. We still have work to do for a culturally inclusive environment. We produce regular blogs/stories that showcase peoples' journeys. We have a unique park hub through our CLA, support community organizations, and [VCSE organisation] are targeting 20 organisations who support our target demographics with a strong influence.</p> |
| | | 4-5 | <p>There is evidence that physical activity is increasingly valued and enjoyed throughout the place, including within those communities with higher levels of inactivity.</p> | <p>Example of a 4 (51) Due to demand and requests from local residents, carers and partners, additional PA sessions are being delivered. LP funding has enabled time to be spent communicating with participants before attending to ensure the session is prepared in advance to meet their needs and that participants with learning disabilities have sufficient space, without pressure on numbers. It has also given</p> |

| 7. Cultures and practices | | | | |
|--|------------|-------|--|--|
| There is a culturally inclusive social environment for physical activity which enables people to move more in ways that suit them. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | There are multiple examples of local people who have experienced barriers to participation increasingly feeling confident and able to be active in ways that suit them. | <p>[leisure trust] time to build relationships with new organisations. As a result of this, the sessions are now extremely popular and [leisure trust] are constantly told by carers and partnership organisations how accommodating the sessions are, how staff are trained and specialist to support the participants and how much the participants and carers benefit.</p> <p>Example of a 5(5) Overall positive direction of travel [indicated by Sport England's Active Lives Surveys: [...] {Place partnership}'s latest 'Impact in Communities' report has many examples of physical activity being increasingly valued/enjoyed across [Place] and barriers to participation being removed: - Active Communities Grants targeting support for: people on low incomes; children and families; Inactive people - Community Connectors working in areas of high inactivity and high deprivation supporting a range of activities and events, including community walks, sequence dancing, sports days, 'have a go' sessions and festivals. - 28 regular walking groups supported by [Place partnership]. - 'Dance on' programme - over 21,000 total attendances since 1/1/2020 - [Place Partnership] supporting the growth of community-led sports, including Walking football, Tennis, Pickleball and Pétanque. - [Community project] - providing free community support to those affected by or experiencing the menopause transition, which includes a programme of physical activity. Initially set up in [locality] to provide a supportive group for women experiencing menopausal symptoms, the group offers physical activity opportunities alongside social activities. Through providing the supportive community, participants are supported to try being active, e.g. yoga, walking. The group has expanded to provide groups and activities across different areas of Doncaster and regular social and physical activity opportunities (e.g. hikes and longer walks in the Peak District) are organised.</p> <p>There are examples in [PP] case studies of specific barriers being overcome, rather than being community-wide. Barriers still remain (e.g. the price of leisure and the accessibility of opportunities, given the size and rural geography of [place]).</p> |
| | | 6-7 | Physical activity is widely valued and increasingly the norm throughout communities in the place. Social environments are culturally inclusive and encourage and facilitate physical activity for everyone. | |

| 7. Cultures and practices | | | | |
|--|------------|-------|--|-------------------|
| There is a culturally inclusive social environment for physical activity which enables people to move more in ways that suit them. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | Everyone in the community, including those with experience of barriers to participation , can experience the freedom and confidence to be active in ways that suit them and that they enjoy. | |

| 8. Built & natural environments that enable physical activity | | | | |
|--|--|-------|---|--|
| Local natural and built environments are attractive, accessible and safe, encouraging movement and physical activity | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| Sector integration of physical activity | Design and management of built and natural environments to promote interaction and physical activity | 1 | The physical and built aspects of the place, including housing, local amenities, travel and access to natural spaces) have evolved in ways that discourage and/or inhibit informal interaction and physical activity. | |
| | | 2-3 | There are planned improvements to the built environment. (e.g. through local plans/strategy). This might include planning for transport, house building and improved infrastructure and access to natural spaces, to be designed and managed to encourage informal interactions and physical activity. | <p>Example of a 2 (13) There are lots of green spaces which have been improved to make it safe for people such as providing lighting and working with neighbourhood teams around anti-social behaviour to help improve the use of the physical environments.</p> <p>Example of a 3 (90) Focusing on the built environment, significant work is ongoing in a local park regarding community assets. Assets work underway has focused on determining assets available for long-term community use and proposing appropriate interventions to enable access to the sites for residents. Included in this work are the community clubs/halls/a centre - all sites which can play a role in PA delivery. Additionally, focusing on planned improvements to local public green space, the green space redesign has now received final planning approval for the building of three new pathways to encourage access to the park and space for walking, running and cycling. Planning has also approved the development of a new outdoor gym. Plans are in development to provide community members with ongoing training and support to use the gym, working with community organisations to consider the possibility of community champions or trained local instructors.</p> |

8. Built & natural environments that enable physical activity

Local natural and built environments are attractive, accessible and safe, encouraging movement and physical activity

| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
|----------------|------------|-------|--|---|
| | | | | <p>Example of a 3 (62) Changes in policies and strategies which include amongst others, the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, and adoption and development of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan's across the County.</p> |
| | | 4-5 | <p>Some aspects of the physical and built environment, including housing environments, natural spaces and infrastructure (including amenities and travel) are designed and/or managed to promote inclusion and encourage informal interactions and physical activity.</p> <p>This addresses barriers to these resources experienced by local people experiencing disadvantage.</p> | <p>Example of a 4 (82) Many projects are ongoing. We also have areas with green space all around but other built-up areas with less access, so it's a process to understand these barriers and then actually making any changes. PA and the environment are always discussed in conversations around changes, but then the challenges come with the capacity and funding. So we might understand the gold standard of what we would want ideally, but actually knowing the funding and time required, we might be better to do short-term quick-win type of work, with those big projects on the horizon if other funding does become available. We are embarking on a regeneration to include better walking and cycling provision. Where they are looking at regeneration, we are always trying to nudge them to think about active travel rather than just cars. We are looking for external funding to make improvements.</p> <p>Example of a 5 (90) The [PP] programme shows how collaboration across councils, community groups, and the voluntary sector can reshape environments to promote active living. Guided by its <i>Active Environments Theory of Change</i>, [PP] aimed to “physically transform local spaces, widen a sense of community ownership, and increase sustainability.” By “transforming [open space], upgrading the [community venue], and activating [name] Library,” [the PP] improved access to safe, inclusive spaces for activity. “Co-design efforts at [open space],” involved councillors, schools, and residents, ensuring local voices shaped change, though tensions between “project pace and deep, inclusive engagement” highlighted the need for trust-based communication. [The PP] found that “activating non-traditional community spaces - such as libraries or community halls - has proven to be a powerful way of increasing participation in physical activity, particularly amongst groups who may not engage with traditional sporting settings.” The pilot at [name] Library, for instance, led to “a significant increase in visitor numbers over the summer, especially repeat visitors.”</p> |
| | | 6-7 | The physical and built environment, including working and housing environments, natural spaces and | <p>Example of a 6: (5)</p> |

| 8. Built & natural environments that enable physical activity | | | | |
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| Local natural and built environments are attractive, accessible and safe, encouraging movement and physical activity | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | <p>infrastructure (including amenities and travel) are sustainably designed and/or managed to encourage informal interactions and physical activity.</p> <p>This actively promotes equal accessibility for everyone in the community.</p> | <p>Building relationships – shaping policy and now in delivery mode. Sense of progress in the last year – policies starting to deliver.</p> <p>New Play Parks Infrastructure Policy (PPIP) to inform investment in parks and challenge traditional ways of thinking about parks play provision. This has been a catalyst for work to start on developing a wider Parks Policy, incorporating the PPIP and also, for example, the Greenspace Audit.</p> <p>- Active Travel (AT) - over £29m worth of improvements to 27 miles of cycleways and footways across [place...]. Embedded role with active travel – engaging local communities in design of infrastructure. Schemes have focused on ensuring that active modes of travel are more accessible, feel safer and better connect residents to the wider transport network, education and employment opportunities.</p> <p>- [Place] Local plan – [PP] has successfully embedded physical activity in the Local Plan, ensuring barriers and enablers are considered in planning applications. Longstanding piece of work that started with planning department, in 2015 – walking and cycling have own independent policies in local plan, adopted in 2021. LDP way of working helped get this through the decision-making process. Work with planning is strengthening all the time – doing work on active environments in consultation with us.</p> <p>Well [Place] has had a strong input to city centre master plan through the Appreciative Inquiry process. Live consultation that is engaging residents in different ways.</p> <p>Bringing in capital investment for infrastructure – aligned with [PP] priorities – places of deprivation. Priorities – inactivity and supporting people to work – local industrial hubs – ways of working are integrated.</p> <p>Potential for scaling up. Sustainability. More actively involved in implementation of policies across sectors, policy through to delivery more widely, shaped delivery. And how funding is allocated.</p> |
| GEN – access to natural environments and public open spaces | Parks and open spaces are enjoyed as welcoming places for being physically | 1 | <p>There is limited access to the natural environment and public open spaces, in the local context.</p> <p>The local parks, open spaces and natural environments are not regarded as a</p> | |

| 8. Built & natural environments that enable physical activity | | | | |
|--|----------------------|-------|--|--|
| Local natural and built environments are attractive, accessible and safe, encouraging movement and physical activity | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | active, for everyone | | community assets and access to open spaces is not equitable in the local context. These spaces are often regarded as unsafe or unattractive. | |
| | | 2-3 | Local parks, open spaces and natural environments are recognised and used as a community assets in some places but access to these spaces is not equitable . Spaces are sometimes regarded as unsafe or unattractive. | <p>Example of a 3 (86) As a new town [place] has issues with its design in terms of encouraging PA – There is work ongoing to change this (parks investment, town centre regeneration), however this will take a long time to realise. [Local Park] was previously found to be seen by residents as not safe and therefore not an asset for PA.</p> <p>Example of a 3 (90) Part of scoping work undertaken for the local programme identified a key issue for residents was lack of accessible community spaces. Accessibility refers to physical access, but also relates to standard of repair, level of comfort, access to utilities such as WiFi, the location of some buildings, cost and ease booking/use. This has been identified as a barrier to improving their health and wellbeing. Additionally scoping work undertaken by [evaluation partner]) found [local park] was an underused resource, with many local residents feeling unsafe using the park. This learning has underpinned the focus of [place] second ToC on active environments - paving the way for a focus on physical environments to open up physical activity to many. (11)</p> |
| | | 4-5 | There is widespread access to the natural environment and public open spaces which encourages activity, and these spaces are valued, recognised and often used as assets. Accessing these spaces is not equitable for all local people. Some groups may feel uncomfortable using these spaces or experience practical barriers to access such as distance, or lack of accessible pathways. | <p>Example of a 4 (53) This city is noticeably green, with a large amount of green space for the size of the population. Much of this is well connected through wagonways and cycle paths. The local council is working with a [local charity] focused on management/restoration/development/protection of local parks, and communities to improve the perceptions and use of green spaces by particular communities. There is significant variation in the perception and reputation of different parks across [place]. This is changing through initiatives such as [local initiative] and work done by [local initiative]. The [local scheme/funding] work (which the council is through to the second round of application for) will also improve this and will be using the Place Standard Tool as part of its engagement and consultation with residents. (53).</p> <p>Example of a 5 (56) [Place] has developed a community co-design approach for a new Community Wellbeing hub. [Local project] in place which is focused on widening access and awareness to access green space through the 12-mile circular walk. Additionally, there has been a partnership effort for landowners</p> |

| 8. Built & natural environments that enable physical activity | | | | |
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| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | | and statutory organisations to listen to communities to make meaningful change to the landscape and offer for all. |
| | | 6-7 | <p>Access to the natural environment and public open spaces is equitable and safe for all local people.</p> <p>These public open spaces are recognised, valued and well-used, as community assets for all. As attractive environments, they play a significant role in encouraging movement and social interaction, and communities feel a sense of shared ownership of such spaces.</p> | <p>Example of a 6 (5)</p> <p>The [name] programme is transforming local parks to encourage outdoor activity in deprived and historically less active areas. With £3.2 million invested across fifteen sites, the programme aims to “develop [Place]’s parks into more accessible, vibrant spaces that inspire local people to use them and enhance their physical health and wellbeing.”</p> <p>Community engagement has been central, involving “over 3,500 residents, schools, charities, and community groups” to shape park plans and understand local barriers and enablers. [programme] has strengthened collaboration across council directorates and external partners, fostering opportunities for residents to engage with parks.</p> <p>Physical improvements have been guided by “community voice and national guidance, including Sport England’s Active Design Principles and Green Flag Standards.” These efforts have been recognised through awards, with [Name] Park work being “runner up in the Green Flag ‘Best of the Best’ awards for engaging women and girls” and a Green Space Innovation Award from Keep Britain Tidy.</p> <p>[Programme] has also focused on sustainable use, hosting free, co-produced events that provide “opportunities to be active and reconnect with green space.” Responding to local insight, the programme has introduced initiatives such as “youth-led digital park trails and emerging sports like pétanque and pickleball,” making parks more inclusive spaces for the community.</p> |
| Tackling structural inequalities | Action to address structural inequalities reflected in living environments | 1 | The poor condition of the local built environment and infrastructure (including local amenities and travel) where disadvantaged local people live undermine community activity, safety, and local pride . | |
| | | 2-3 | Some work is planned/in progress to address the poor condition and safety of the local built environment and infrastructure (including local amenities | <p>Example of a 2 (62)</p> <p>There are plans and policies in place to start to tackle and address the poor condition and safety of the local built environment but possibly not explicitly enough where disadvantaged communities</p> |

| 8. Built & natural environments that enable physical activity | | | | |
|--|------------|-------|---|---|
| Local natural and built environments are attractive, accessible and safe, encouraging movement and physical activity | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | and travel) where disadvantaged local people live, facilitating community activity, safety, and local pride. | live to facilitate community activity, safety, and local pride just yet. There will be examples in some areas, but not for the whole county. This is a work in progress. Example of a 3 (90) As the only park in the local area with river access, work is also progressing regarding engagement with the local community to design interventions for increased activation of the space providing water-based activities for local residents. Given multiple and complex dynamics regarding the multiple uses of the river site, getting this intervention right has been a slow process with care taken to ensure awareness of and engagement with intersectional experiences across the ward. |
| | | 4-5 | Significant community-oriented regeneration/renewal work is in progress to improve the condition of the local built environment and infrastructure (including local amenities and travel) where disadvantaged communities live. This is guided by evidence for health promoting places, enabling increasing community activity, safety, and local pride. | Example of a 4 (97) There is significant work underway across the city to increase the opportunities for local residents to travel actively ; this includes a new scheme of e-bikes for residents to hire which have been located across the City; as well as structural changes to streets to increase dedicated cycle paths as well as opportunities for families to hire bikes via a 'penny' bike scheme which are prioritised in areas of high deprivation. A leisure centre in an area of high deprivation in the city has transferred ownership to a Community Trust organisation to create a wellbeing hub and provide opportunities for local residents to be active; this includes extensive remodelling of indoor sports hall facilities and outdoor pitches. |
| | | 6-7 | Large-scale, long-term investment in regeneration / renewal programmes is taking place. These programmes are shaped by participation of local people and respond to local priorities and needs in improving the condition of the local built environment and infrastructure (including local amenities and travel). This work is guided by evidence for health promoting places, enabling increasing community activity, safety, and local pride. | Example of a 6 (97) Where we are doing regeneration, we are using community consultation to share this. We are constrained by budget. Prospect (housing estate) is being regenerated, shaped by local people and consultation. £130million regeneration of [area] reaches historic completion. [Place] is being redesigned and changed, as a result some things are being moved, e.g. hockey pitch moved to a school – supported by England hockey in a deprived area. {Place} has got much wider reach in what it is doing. [Redevelopment Area] is a huge scheme of work that feels like it has a city wide impact. |

| 9. Cycles of learning and action | | | | |
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| There are appropriate methods in place to learn from experience and, over time, improve place-based working to address physical inactivity. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| GENERAL 1 | Learning culture | 1 | <p>There is limited belief in the possibility of change.</p> <p>Learning culture, (that is an environment of asking questions, seeking new knowledge and exploring different ways of doing things), is not valued or is seen as a luxury and in competition with time for delivery.</p> <p>Simple solutions to complex problems are sought.</p> <p>People want or expect certainty in relation to the outcomes of their actions.</p> <p>There is a lack of safety in sharing information. Problems or 'failures' tend not to be spoken about – with no constructive learning taken from them.</p> | <p>Example of a 1 (11) gathering insight was a competing priority with taking action and delivering projects</p> |
| | | 2-3 | <p>There is a belief in the possibility of change within individuals and across places.</p> <p>Some within the place recognise the value of learning. People feel encouraged to be curious, to ask questions, seek out new knowledge, and explore different ways of doing things.</p> <p>People and organisations are increasingly comfortable that simple solutions, alone, will not be enough to solve complex problems.</p> | <p>Example of a 2 (68) While many organisations are engaged together there is not yet a widespread willingness to share failures and to learn from it.</p> <p>Example of a 3 (80) An area for improvement within senior Council colleagues (where there are some recruited!) and the [Place] Board. It's a tough time in the Council and colleagues are very overstretched so it's not the time to start adding physical activity to their mindset, when they're stressed and will push us away. ICB and health are very open to new approaches and learning and are joining us on our journey as a partnership, as is Chamber of Commerce. We need a senior influencer within the Council, maybe hosted by 3rd sector as they're so influential and important in [Place].</p> |

| 9. Cycles of learning and action | | | | |
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| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | While some recognise them as opportunities to learn, fear of airing unsuccessful initiatives remains the norm. | |
| | | 4-5 | <p>There is a culture that encourages continuous learning across some groups within the place. People understand that complex challenges mean developing complex solutions which need to adapt and evolve over time. There is increasing recognition of the different kinds of value that such learning can bring.</p> <p>Unsuccessful initiatives are seen by many as opportunities for learning and growth.</p> | <p>Example of a 4 (90) ...[illustrative example given]... in the right environment and with select audiences there is an openness to engaging with learning cycles and participating in the more complex and uncertain aspects of delivery. Additionally, the [Place Partnership] team has observed that partners who have a clearer focus on physical activity and are more onboard with the overall programme aims have been more positive about engaging in learning cycles / responsive to the uncertainty of working on complex challenges. Whilst a culture of learning is building across [neighbourhood], it is not yet continuous or embedded. Without the continuation of informal spaces such as the [name], there is uncertainty as to how much energy will be put in to maintain this culture – particularly given limited capacity of organisations. Although some organisations have more appetite than others, all expressed concerns during interviews that ability to continue continuous learning and to reflect on programme aims will be restricted due to capacity constraints.</p> <p>Example of a 5 (68) The Place Partnership is developing a systemic place-based approach to tackling physical inactivity, building on previous learning. Early findings from reflective workshops and interviews indicate that partners are increasingly embracing shared reflection and experimentation. One participant noted that quieter voices are now heard and able to “question the outcomes,” while another observed, “some of the activity small groups - everybody gets a chance to say something. Everybody is encouraged to take part.” [PP]’s modelling of collaborative behaviours such as listening, summarising discussions, testing understanding, and enabling distributed leadership, has begun to shape the culture among the [PA] network. As one community staff member reflected, “[Name] listens and says if she disagrees and will tell me with an example,” while another added, “we are pretty good at sharing ideas in the management group... I think the others are able to do that too.” The focus on creating psychologically safe spaces has encouraged participants to experiment and embrace uncertainty, exemplified by the ethos of being “confidently uncomfortable” and viewing failure as an opportunity for learning. However, challenges remain around inconsistent modelling and power dynamics, with some noting, “this is not happening... How do we call people out?” and “people are failure averse... fear of being shouted down.”</p> |

| 9. Cycles of learning and action | | | | |
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| There are appropriate methods in place to learn from experience and, over time, improve place-based working to address physical inactivity. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | 6-7 | <p>Continuous learning culture is established as a core part of the place-based systemic approach. This includes paying attention to the different kinds of value that this can bring to everyone engaged or affected.</p> <p>Feeling ‘uncomfortable’ and accepting uncertainty is commonly accepted. People widely see uncertainty as an opportunity for learning and are ready to learn from initiatives that have not gone to plan, and to adapt their approach accordingly.</p> | |
| GENERAL 2 | Embedded learning processes | 1 | <p>There is a lack of policies, processes, training and resources to support continuous learning (for example to reflect on practice and share ideas, knowledge, or evaluation data about effective or ineffective initiatives). Actions are disconnected from the learning processes.</p> | |
| | | 2-3 | <p>There are emerging individual and team and cross-place policies, processes, training and resources to support learning. This may be dependent on external facilitation or communities of practice.</p> <p>There are a few examples of learning process within partner organisations or local networks where learning informs decisions and continuous improvement.</p> | <p>Example of a 2 (96) [Place Investment] process learning for [Active Partnership] suggests lack of learning culture and processes at local level, but [Place Investment] demonstrating a positive example. The responses appear to fit this description, that while [Place Investment] have made some progress in embracing complexity and need for flexible learning-based approaches, “Observations suggest that this shift is fragile and undermined by existing external accountability frameworks and historical competition between partners which prioritise reporting of ‘successes’ and/or delivery of outputs”.</p> <p>Example of a 3 (83) There has been a shift around our evaluation and learning work, we encourage organisations to send in ‘what are you struggling with’, we want to hear about the problems and not just the successes. We pulled this together in a celebration event, where we shared learning between community groups and organisations on the ground. This allowed organisations to talk openly</p> |

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| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | | about challenges and we gather that information ourselves and share it with others around the table here. We have ‘thinking time’ drop-in sessions where a number of us around this table sit in a room without an agenda and talk just about what is troubling us. (We have examples of where discussions have altered our practice). |
| | | 4-5 | <p>There are established individual and team and cross-place policies processes, training and resources to support learning which informs action and decision-making. This draws on findings from other place-based systemic approaches, as well as locally captured insight.</p> <p>This way of working is increasingly adopted in a range of local organisations, as well as within some local networks and collaborations.</p> <p>Actions and decisions are increasingly informed by learning processes.</p> | <p>Example of a 5 A variety of learning processes support learning within and across teams. The team have developed a light touch process for learning with bi-weekly meetings between staff reflecting in pairs on the impact of their work.</p> <p>Insights from this process feed into team meetings to highlight areas where action needs to be adapted. This is complemented by a monthly team survey and quarterly larger events bringing together different workstreams and partners to reflect and learn together.</p> <p>Partner organisations have also adopted this approach which they see as a practical way to develop ‘habits’ for learning and reflection.</p> <p>The team regularly share accessible summaries of their learning and encourage partners organisations to do the same. There are initial steps to encourage reflection and learning in local PA networks.</p> |
| | | 6-7 | <p>Learning policies, processes, training and resources are supported and prioritised across the system as a core tool for operationalising a place based systemic approach.</p> <p>Inclusive learning processes are embedded in partnerships and individual organisations. These pay attention to local people’s experiences and wider evidence, in a continuous cycle of reviewing actions, with insights and learning leading to adaptation and improvement. This includes permission to stop doing things that are not working.</p> | <p>Example of a 6 (B) [Programme] has embedded structured learning processes across partnerships. The continually reflects through “regular informal and formal check-ins [to] allow for continuous learning and improvement throughout the development process.” One stakeholder explained, “Through ongoing reflection, learning, and adaptation, we see the cycles of more and less traction, constant change, and the challenges to keep momentum or sustainability.” “Steering groups and regular feedback sessions help assess progress, make necessary adjustments, and ensure the project stays aligned with its goals.” Community involvement is central, and the project actively engages partners, from healthcare professionals to local leaders, in co-developing solutions. “Whether through direct coaching, leadership engagement, or cultural transformation, we are seeding and sustaining a robust learning culture,” reported [Programme] lead. “A combination of Ripple Effect Mapping, Qualitative content analysis, Local Health Data and Campaign engagement data” helps identify enablers of physical activity while fostering adaptive strategies.</p> |

| 9. Cycles of learning and action | | | | |
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| There are appropriate methods in place to learn from experience and, over time, improve place-based working to address physical inactivity. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| GENERAL 3 | Evaluation uses appropriate methods for place-based working | 1 | <p>Evaluation is not valued, and/or methods used are not appropriate for place-based working. For example, there is only adherence to traditional pre-post evaluation of interventions, with little attention to the influence of local context.</p> <p>Evaluation processes are narrowly focussed on outcomes or targets defined in advance and with no regard to local definitions of what is valued.</p> <p>People tend to have fixed or expert mindsets and distrust or disregard lived experience insights.</p> | <p>Example of a 1 (11) Not all partners value evaluation, some still see it as hassle</p> <p>Example of a 1 (43) We are not yet in a process of learning and we do not yet talk around complexity sensitive evaluation. We are just getting to the point of understanding that there is complexity. We are in the early stages and this is not yet understood. This will hopefully come in time. If we talk about systems change it does not get through to everyone. We need systems leadership changing to understand people’s context in the system. We are therefore nowhere near in terms of evaluation. We have talked about network mapping around the system, we have no network maturity matrix and we haven't got capacity for this at the moment.</p> |
| | | 2-3 | <p>Those leading this work recognise that that place-based systemic working needs appropriate evaluation methods, but strategies and resources are not yet established to address this comprehensively.</p> <p>Some complexity sensitive evaluation methods (e.g. those that account for context, consider multiple ‘impacts’, including unintended outcomes, explore changes over time and seek to explain changes etc.) are being used in some parts of the system.</p> <p>There are some examples of processes for capturing and valuing local partners and</p> | <p>Example of a 2 (11) The lived experience of local stakeholders is valued and gathered: We capture lived experience of the people implementing systemic changes. Because this often stems from staff in local organisations, this highlights how we need more info about users and residents lived experiences.</p> <p>Example of a level 3 (68) Recognition of complexity leads to adoption of some evaluation methods that can address it: There is a lot of local interest in the learning and systems approaches being adopted. For example, a systems change pack is being developed in Public Health for use by practitioners. Communities of Practice have been engaged with to share network mapping approaches.</p> |

| 9. Cycles of learning and action | | | | |
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| There are appropriate methods in place to learn from experience and, over time, improve place-based working to address physical inactivity. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | local people’s experience about how things are working/changing (or not). | |
| | | 4-5 | <p>A range of complexity sensitive evaluation methods have been adopted and these are locally valued by people involved.</p> <p>Local people with lived experience of physical inactivity, those implementing PA activities or involved in agencies locally are engaged in evaluation/learning processes and providing insights into what makes a difference locally.</p> | <p>Example of a 5 (52) A variety of complexity sensitive methods are being used: Story-telling methods to capture diverse experiences, ripple effect mapping to capture unintended outcomes, and realist analysis helps to understand key mechanisms and the influence of local context.</p> <p>Example of a 5 (9) The lived experience of local residents and those implementing PA work is gathered through different processes for the insights it provides about different parts of the place: local voices are an important part of our Storytelling function, making sure we capture the resident and local stakeholder experience. Storytelling evaluations framework was co-designed with people delivering the work, to ensure local deliverer insight was built into the frameworks and to create ownership of the process. The [showing value] work, which gets people to look for the value within their work and not just the outputs, e.g. relationships that are formed and maintained, will help to build an understanding of what value, when working in a systems way, means in our context.</p> |
| | | 6-7 | <p>Evaluation methods appropriate for whole-system place-based approaches are widely understood and adopted across the place partnership and inform adaptive ways of working.</p> <p>Local people with lived experience of physical inactivity, those implementing PA activities or involved in agencies locally are contributing to the framing, design, and implementation of evaluation/learning processes and providing insights into what makes a difference locally.</p> <p>Evaluation data is shared in accessible formats and in welcoming spaces so that</p> | <p>Example of a 6 (B) [PP] has invested in a substantial research and evaluation team who have designed (with input from professional stakeholders and community members) an evaluation that is appropriate for whole-system place-based approaches; see our published protocols. We have adopted citizen science and other participatory methodologies (such as Ripple Effects Mapping) whereby local children and families and organisational stakeholders are contributing to the design and implementation of our evaluation approaches. We are working with NELP to support our processes of embedding learning in place and ensuring that evaluation data is shared in accessible formats to inform action.</p> <p>Citizen science work – year long project with 4 girls (looking at barriers and facilitators for the girls being more active), they came up with the evaluation questions, they designed the methods – walking and talking interviews, workshops were we produced mind maps, survey. Then the girls all wanted to do their own project – one girl looked at barriers to PA in school, another girl about green spaces, talked to family members about using local parks, another girl wanted to learn how the family supported her to be active. All this information was brought together, then the girls fed back the information on findings in different ways of their choice</p> |

| 9. Cycles of learning and action | | | | |
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| There are appropriate methods in place to learn from experience and, over time, improve place-based working to address physical inactivity. | | | | |
| Area of action | Definition | Score | Descriptor | Practice examples |
| | | | people can make sense of the data to inform action. | <p>PPI constantly done on what evaluation should look like, what incentives people want, online or in-person. When we do the evaluation of how [Programme] is working in a certain area, we try and get the experience for them of how the evaluation was. We get general community involved through Youth development group, someone came and did a VR session, as well as focus groups – groups are running alongside different interventions to help with decisions. Children are designed in WSA to PA [...]– focus groups with children about what they enjoyed, sent back findings as a poster to schools. Learning in Place with [NELP team member] has helped us think about local knowledge for how to translate information and findings to share back to the community.</p> <p>Our insight through PPI has come back that Urdu is most common language in [Place] (this is not a written language really) so we don't produce written outputs. Most of our comms is face to face sharing and talking, rather than a written form. On the ripple effect Map, we have looked at the different effects that have gone on in the neighbourhood as it happens, from there we produce different things, focused on 4 key ripples (4 things that need doing in your area). This has been fed back to the communities to see how it is received, finding out what is acceptable took a while to learn. [City-wide research programme has] done a lot of work with healthy urban places programme – this is more embedded across the district, developing processes for production and citizen science for the environment – PA is a big part of the environment.</p> |