Active Essex 2024-2025 Implementation Plan

# Introduction

Active Essex's Implementation Plan, delivery plan and performance metrics all serve to advance our contribution to the five Fit for the Future Strategic Priorities, while also aligning with Sport England's Uniting the Movement initiative and Essex County Council's Everyone's Essex strategy.

This document delineates the actions Active Essex will undertake in the coming year to execute the five strategic priorities as outlined in Fit for the Future.

We know the Fit for the Future vision and mission cannot be achieved in silo and we emphasise the importance of using a place-based approach to drive meaningful change within our communities. By fostering trust and collaboration with local partners, we aim to address local needs effectively, and promote sustainable behaviour change. Placing significance on our priority neighbourhoods, we will adopt a proportionate universalism approach to create an active Essex for everyone's health and wellbeing.

At the core of our strategic endeavours is a commitment to place-based collaboration. As we transition from the Essex Local Delivery Pilot to Place Partnerships, we anticipate a deeper understanding of and engagement with our local places, supporting communities to be active in a way that suits them.

Additionally, this document outlines our portfolio projects, that underpin the work delivered across our Strategic Priorities:

* Find Your Active
* Place Partnership
* Essex ActivAte
* Active Essex Foundation

These projects enable us to exert influence within the sectors we operate in and foster relationships across the Essex ecosystem, thereby contributing significantly to the Fit for the Future strategy. Through collaborative efforts with a diverse array of partners spanning multiple systems and sectors, we aim to address key issues such as climate change and support Essex's economic growth.

# Our values

In addition to our external work in the sector, we are prioritising our internal development, by embracing the People Culture Skills framework. This commitment underpins our dedication to embodying consistency, cohesion, and purposeful action, thereby setting a compelling example of organisational excellence.

At our core, we rally around four guiding values, that shape our collective ethos.

We are COLLABORATIVE

We are committed to working with others to achieve our vision, and know we cannot do it alone. We can achieve so much more when we work together and support each other. We believe in building strong and lasting partnerships based on honesty and a shared purpose.

We are INCLUSIVE

We believe profoundly that everyone should have the right to benefit from physical activity and sport regardless of age, gender, sexuality, ethnic background or ability. By being more inclusive we will reduce the inequalities in physical activity and sport.

We are INNOVATIVE

We are adventurous and forward-thinking, committed to continuously learning from our past, our partners and each other. We value a spirit of innovation to inspire the creation of new ideas and new approaches that are share with our partners.

We are PASSIONATE

We are passionate about transforming lives and communities through physical activity and sport. We have the energy, enthusiasm and commitment to succeed using innovative methods whilst staying focused on our vision.

# How will we measure impact?

Our ways of working, success factors and metrics will demonstrate the impact we are making, as part of complex systems, in order to hardwire physical activity and increase activity levels.

With a range of local indicators including participation data, community and audience insight, behaviour change, strong relationships, a place-based and asset driven approach, will combine to make a contribution to moving the dial on our set of high level metrics, and ultimately improve outcomes for residents.

Our four main indicators:

1. **Increasing physical activity**. We aim to increase the levels of adults participating in 150+ minutes of physical activity a week.
2. **Reducing physical inactivity.** We aim to reduce the levels of inactivity among adults (participating in less than 30 minutes of physical activity a week.
3. **Narrowing Inequalities.** We aim to narrow the inequalities faced by underrepresented groups, reducing the gap between the average number of active adults overall, and average number of active adults belonging to underrepresented groups.
4. **Improving children’s attitudes to physical activity.** We aim to increase physical activity levels of children and young people and increase their positive attitudes towards physical activity.

# Our contribution to Active Environments

## Vision: To work collectively to develop and provide well connected, accessible places and spaces that encourage people to be active

### Active travel

We will continue to support schools to encourage pupils to travel actively. Supporting schools to adopt Active Travel Plans, endorse the Living Streets WOW programme, and utilise events such as Ford RideLondon-Essex and Paris 2024 to inspire activity.

* Active travel plans for schools will increase by 10%
* 50% of schools on Ford RideLondon-Essex route engaged
* 1,000 young people engaged in Path to Paris

We will continue to drive gamification. Working with Go Jauntly, Beat the streets, Street Tag, Love2Ride and Step Challenge in Essex, will help us reach more residents.

* 2 new areas to launch Beat the Street initiative
* 50% of cycle initiatives supported using Love2Ride

We will collaborate and champion the use of active travel. We will utilise our strong system collaboration work with Essex County Council Sustainable Travel team. 6000 individuals supported through the Essex Cycle Grant funded initiatives. We will continue to champion improved local cycle infrastructure, supporting the join up of local cycle networks, and the instalment of new cycle parking across Essex.

We will address the lack of opportunity for residents living with a disability or long term health condition to engage in cycling. Supporting, shaping and promoting disability cycling projects across Essex. We will increase disability cycling engagement to 500+ residents.

We will reduce the barriers to cycling. Essex Pedal Power will explore all investment opportunities for the sustainability of the programme, as well as use the E-Bike loan scheme and be advocates for funding to support Learn to Ride training for EYFS.

* 2000 bikes will be awarded to residents in levelling up areas: Clacton, Harwich and Dovercourt, Colchester, Basildon and Canvey Island this year
* 50 electric bikes on long-term (6 month) loans.

We will evidence our contribution to the climate change agenda, and lead the work to ensure the sector adopt this. We will encourage cycling initiatives to track/measure C02 saved, inspire organisations to sign up to our climate change commitment pledge, alongside the launch of our own climate change policy.

* 50 organisations signed up to our climate change commitment
* 50% of cycle projects measuring CO2 saved.

### Planning and infrastructure

We will continue to work with planning and design colleagues to help shape existing and future developments. Embedding physical activity into planning policy, infrastructure and urban design, will help us encourage system partners to apply Sport England's Active Design Principles and utilise the Essex Design Guide.

We will continue to work with local authority and sustainable travel colleagues to support the implementation of local cycling and walking infrastructure plans (LCWIPS) in every local authority. Helping to identify cycling and walking improvements required at a local district level, through 14 (LCWIPS).

We will play an avid role in local authority Playing Pitch Strategy meetings. Ensuring the strategy links with local development plans, guiding ongoing/future investment decisions. Target is to have 13 active Playing Pitch Strategy Steering groups across the county.

We will continue to support the creation of outstanding facilities and space in Essex, with a focus on tackling inequalities. Supporting Football Foundation investments into Essex through their Playzone programme. Utilise London Marathon Foundation funding to ensure places and spaces support accessible and inclusive opportunities.

* 3 Playzone investment programmes
* 23 Places and Spaces projects will have been funded between March 2023-March 2025.

### Active outdoors

We will continue to promote free/low-cost activities using green and blue spaces, which are accessible, attractive and socially inclusive. Encouraging community use of blue and green spaces for formal and informal activities and the use of outdoor gyms, as well as continuing to support ParkPlay and parkrun.

We will continue to work collaboratively with the Port of London Authority, London Sport and Active Kent and Medway, through the Active Thames Partnership. Utilising Active Thames funding to encourage new activities and initiatives on or near blue space to take place, we will continue to strive towards a healthy return on investment into the funding we contribute to this pot.

* 2024 saw every £1 we spent, we gained a further £2.60 investment from other partners contribution.

We will encourage the delivery of Find Your Active festivals through our Find Your Active Networks. With a total of 5 targeted to be delivered. Encouraging come and try events, and community engagement events to inspire inactive residents to find an activity that's right for them.

### Mass participation event RideLondon-Essex

We will successfully deliver a 2024 Ford RideLondon-Essex event. Supporting London Marathon Events we will deliver a comprehensive engagement plan. Developing the relationship with London Marathon Foundation will provide new funding opportunities to inspire activity across Essex, and work closely across the organisation to ensure benefits of the London Marathon Foundation are directly linked to the communities impacted by the event.

We will build our network of partners and stakeholders to support the delivery of RideLondon. The benefits of the event will be understood and capitalised on across our communities. Working with partners, we will help to raise our profile of a sporting county, showcasing the benefits of holding mass participation events that inspire residents to get involved, and boost the Essex economy.

## Our contribution to Children and Young People

### Vision: To ensure every child has the best start in life, whereby they are active, healthy and happy.

### Stable and thriving families

We will work across the system to build capacity. Building capacity within local organisations will help engage children and families in greatest need. We will play a lead role in Health Alliance children and young people partnerships, and hardwire physical activity to local place-based work.

We will support families through our wider offer. We will support families physical and mental health, with free activities through the Essex ActivAte programme, and fund/support projects that engage children and their families through the Find Your Active small grants.

### Inclusive and supportive schools and communities

We will support teachers to be equipped with the tools to ensure young people can adopt healthy behaviours. Our contribution to the Education Task Force, along with our partnership working, will help to develop a transformational Essex, utilising a whole school approach to embed movement into everyday school life, delivering 80 Teach Active licenses and 20 Active Maths Festivals. This is alongside the launch of the Early Years Award, with 30+ settings being supported to apply.

We will ensure opportunities are created for schools and communities to adopt physical activity. Essex School Games events will be hosted throughout the year, across the county, delivered by the School Games Organisers, and the Opening Schools Facilities funding will help to support pupils and the community to get active outside of the school day. We will support 50 schools to make a pledge to ensure equal access for girls football in their school, and strive to increase the amount of schools registered for the Daily Mile.

* 40 schools supported through £450,000 DfE funding
* 40,000 attendances at Essex School Games events
* 2% increase on schools signed up to the Daily Mile

### Safe and accessible neighbourhoods

We will gain insight into the safety of Essex’s local places and spaces. Contributing to local safety partnerships and building relationships in our 14 places will ensure local assets are safe and accessible for young people to be active. Consulting with the Move With Us Board, and ambassadors, will help us understand how public places and spaces will enable more children and young people to access them. Our contribution to campaigns such as White Ribbon, will help us to work with partners to provide safer spaces for girls to be active.

We will support young people to travel actively. Children from priority neighbourhoods will be supported to move actively through Essex Pedal Power scheme. We will work with partners and schools to increase school active travel plans.

* 100 children’s bikes distributed through Essex Pedal Power
* Active travel plans for schools will increase by 10%

### Resilient children and young people

We will provide opportunities that support children’s mental and physical health. Launching a new sport and youth mental health programme will build capacity and engage the mental health system, leveraging £100,000 to support the delivery. We will champion the benefits that physical activity contributes to preventing and improving mental health, and support the overall wellbeing of children and young people in Essex. The mental wellbeing hubs at Essex ActivAte clubs, will be for children who are not comfortable in mainstream clubs.

* 50 individuals will receive training and capacity building to support young people’s mental health
* 5000 places will be provided at the Essex ActivAte wellbeing hubs

We will work with colleagues and partners to support children with barriers to accessing physical activity opportunities. Working with colleagues in Children and Families services, we will help more looked after children be able to access sport and physical activity. We will upskill 100 teachers through our physical activity module in the Essex Schools SEMH Trauma Perceptive Practice Programme.

We will ensure young people have opportunities that build their confidence and competence around physical activity. A new leadership programme linked to the Move With Us campaign, will upskill young people with leadership, resilience and life skills. As well as utilise the Find Your Active fund to support projects that aim to grow confidence and happiness in children participating in physical activity. 100 young people will be engaged in a leadership programme.

### Providing fun, safe, inclusive and positive experiences of physical activity and sport for children and young people

We will increase the number of children who are physically active for 60+ minutes a day. Building on the momentum created through the Move With Us campaign, alongside the Essex Children’s Partnership Board, we will ensure we co-design opportunities alongside young people, to ensure activities are right for the young people who engage. Partners and organisations will be asked to join the movement created by the campaign, using the research to understand the ways young people wish to be active.

* 25 Move With Us Advocates, championing children being active in a way that’s right for them
* 100 young people signed up as Move With Us ambassadors, supporting young people to be active that’s right for them

We will utilise youth voice mechanisms, and develop a youth Board. Gathering insight on how Move With Us lands will enable us to grow and develop the campaign with more young people. A youth Board will feed into the Active Essex Board and provide insight for the work undertaken by the team.

* 16 young people will be invited to join the Move With Us youth Board
* 14 youth voice mechanisms will be engaged

We will increase the percentage of children reporting 4 positive attitudes towards physical activity. Inspiring young people through role models and ensuring stories capture relatable children, like them, encouraging them to change their behaviour.

* 12 Move Makers awarded, celebrating young people making a difference for others
* 2% increase in number of 4 positive attitudes reported by children

We will deliver the first Invincible Games. Working alongside the Multi-School Council, we will ensure their voices are actioned, improving experiences through physical activity, engaging 200 young people.

## Our contribution to Levelling up Health and Wellbeing

### Vision: To change behaviours, enabling and empowering people to do things for themselves and their local communities. Physical activity is the highest priority for good health.

### Engage and influence health and social care systems

We will strengthen our relationships across the 3 ICS’s. Active Essex will be represented across the 3 ICS’s, to help influence the health and social care systems to hardwire physical activity and movement as a preventative tool.

We will take a proportionate universalism approach to health. We will continue to support the NHS Core20Plus5 across the 5 Alliances, and support the new Neighbourhood Networks.

We will work collaboratively alongside Essex Public Health. Assisting the Essex Public Health team to ensure Essex residents can lead healthy and active lives. Supporting the vision of the Public Health team, we will promote the PHAB fund as an exciting opportunity for our locally trusted organisations.

* 20% of projects will have a primary outcome to increase physical activity
* 30% of projects will have a secondary outcome to physical activity

### Prescribing physical activity

We will upskill the network to support residents to find their active. Signposting to training and educational opportunities will help us to build confidence across the health and care network, to feel comfortable in starting conversations about physical activity. In turn, build interventions to allow them to support residents to lead a healthier, active life.

* 50 Essex health care professionals will be upskilled through physical activity clinical champions training
* 10 additional Essex GP practices will be signed up to the Active Practices scheme
* 10 Social Prescribers at Essex PCN’s, will be supported through a training course.

We will continue to champion the importance of physical activity in aiding health and wellbeing. By bringing lived experience, and new research insights in to Essex, we will be able to showcase the impact it can have on residents.

* 2 training courses to aid physical activity delivery in health and social care pathways
* 4 Essex Health Series webinars

### Hardwiring physical activity within personalised care

We will manage an early help and preventative service. ‘Reconnect’ will improve the lives of those living with a disability, learning disability and/or long term health condition, and build upon the pilot ‘Prevention and Enablement Model’.

* 8 different leisure centres/community venues utilised
* 25% increase in inactive residents to active
* 450 individuals across Essex engaged across the year

We will work collaboratively, and in partnership with health charities and health services to further embed physical activity interventions. Utilising interventions, we will be able to highlight how physical activity can be a significant part of the treatment and management of long-term health conditions. The Find Your Active fund will also allow us to support projects that provide opportunities for residents living with a long term health condition. We will work with Adult Mental health providers to pilot 1 physical activity intervention that could be scaled and replicated across Essex.

* 22 long term health condition focused activities will be supported through the fund

### Enable the reconditioning of residents

We will enable and empower people to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. Working in collaboration with health and community partners, we will build on the informative ‘Able like Mabel’ resources.

We will support Essex Public Health in the development of a new strength and balance pathway for residents to ensure falls prevention provision is fully integrated into care. In partnership with the Provider and Innovation Quality Team, we will aide care homes in the development of workforce ability to increase physical activity opportunities for residents.

* 25 care homes will be supported

We will continue to provide signposting and person-centered support through the Find Your Active Navigators. We will support them to signpost and encourage residents to physical activity opportunities across the county.

* 500 residents will be supported
* 65 free activities will be mapped

### Improving wellbeing throughout working life

We will continue to work in partnership with the Essex Working Well Scheme. Regularly consulting employers, we will support them to adopt the offer set out within the Find Your Active: Workplace Edition. Attending business engagement networks will help us to build relationships with employers and individuals who are self-employed, providing insight into embedding physical activity into their working day.

* 4 business engagement networks will be attended
* 10% increase in number of sign ups to Find Your Active Workplace Edition

We will highlight the importance of physical activity in the working day. Leading by example, we will champion physical activity as an integral part of organisations, and business employee wellbeing. We will also develop an offer for those out of work, to regain employment using physical activity, working with health professionals and DWP to initially trial a support offer using ‘fit notes’.

* 30 health care professionals upskilled with physical activity clinical champions training.

## Our contribution to Sport and Physical Activity

### Vision: To support the development and growth of our sport and physical activity sector, in order to collectively increase opportunities for all.

### Skills and employability

We will place the People Culture Skills framework at the heart of our decision making, listening and learning from our workforce. Building on momentum, we will continue to be insight led, with the ambition of making Essex, Southend and Thurrock a great place to work and volunteer in sport.

We will continue to empower our Skills Advisory Panel, and support the transition to become one of 28 Local Skills Advisory Boards (SAB) across the country. To act as the strategic leadership collaborative for Essex and support the development of a local skills plan for the sector. The SAB will offer check and challenge to the future direction, and strive to embed the Board within the Essex Employment and Skills Board structure. SAB will launch an intelligence led Local Skills Plan for the sector.

We will work with the Essex Skills Hub Manager, to influence the local skills ecosystem, through robust data and insight, to better articulate local needs. Supporting the Skills Hub Manager to build relationships with local employers and education partners, as well as launch the new CIMSPA diagnostics, which will build on previous data sets, engaging all HE and FE establishments.

We will support our future workforce, providing information, guidance and knowledge on career pathways. Attend career events, fairs and talks, producing video content to raise the profile of careers within the sector, and use this work to upskill career advisors across Essex.

* 15 education establishments will be engaged through careers IAG
* 5 spotlight video’s to be launched
* 5 ‘Careers Guidance in the Sport and Physical Activity Sector’ courses will be delivered.

We will support organisations to build a more diverse workforce. Ensure organisations develop evidence-based approaches, welcoming people from all backgrounds to play, volunteer and work. Create pathways to ensure more young people from priority neighbourhoods have the opportunities to learn and grow, creating employment opportunities through our Coach Core apprenticeship programme and Young Leaders initiative.

* 75 Young Leaders onboarded
* 10 apprentices in place
* 1 celebration residential
* 15 employers engaged.

### Inclusive and resilient organisations

We will build resilience and sustainability in our sector. Through bespoke capacity building support, we will build upon the learnings from last years’ Organisational Development programme, and focus on: organisational development, business development, fundraising, leadership and wider learning or development opportunities.

* 100 organisations supported through IAG
* 30 organisations supported through specialist consultancy support

We will ensure a learning culture is created across the sector. Lunch and Learn sessions will provide the opportunity to share bitesize challenges and successes, and our Share-Connect-Collaborate networking events will bring the Essex ecosystem together.

* 3 events
* 20 different learning opportunities

We will give seed funding to grassroot organisations to test, learn and grow. The Find Your Active small grants will offer solutions for organisations to pilot new ways of working, deliver additional opportunities for residents, and reach new audiences. £275,000 will be invested through the small grants programme.

We will play a leadership role in creating more inclusive organisations. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion framework will be disseminated across our network.

### Inclusive and safe community sport

We will support our Find Your Active Networks to ensure place-based working. We will support them to provide a platform for grassroot organisations, and local system partners to learn, collaborate and fund place-based interventions to tackle inactivity.

We will support NGB’s and local clubs through engagement and learning opportunities. The Essex NGB forums will help us support our grassroot sport and physical activity infrastructure, focusing on safeguarding, facilities and Equality Diversity and Inclusion.

* 4 forums
* New subgroups developed
* Monthly sector support newsletters distributed

We will ensure safeguarding and welfare is everyone’s business. We will strengthen and champion good safeguarding standards and practice across club and community groups, developing an effective network of well supported, better trained, and connected Club Welfare Officers. Building on best practice and integrity within clubs, will help us create safe positive environments for all.

* 2 leads recruited and embedded
* 20 clubs will be supported with improvement plans

We will enhance the offer for the Essex Future of Leisure. We will use the Essex Future of Public Leisure Partnership Board to develop and steer the public leisure sector in Essex, with a shared vision to create a sustainable future. The Board will meet twice a year, with the operational sub-group meeting quarterly.

* 6 meetings held annually
* 1 annual conference

## Our contribution to Strengthening Communities

### Vision: All communities across Essex, Southend and Thurrock use the power of physical activity and sport to build resilience, connection and wellbeing.

### Building resilience and capacity in local community organisations

We will work with locally trusted organisations to continue to develop their governance, business planning, fundraising strategies, staff and volunteers. Delivered by the Active Essex foundation, Essex ActivAte and the Capacity Building programmes.

* 250 locally trusted organisations will be worked with.

We will create share and learn environments. 20 events will bring organisations together., where they can learn, collaborate and develop.

We will work with local strategic and community partners to provide a universal offer. Through place-based working, we will offer capacity building, including training, resources and expert advice. We will work alongside Sport England to bridge the gap between local organisations, and Sport England opportunities, aligned to the Uniting the Movement strategy.

### Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)

We will ensure community voice leads our direction. By capturing community voice through a variety of methods, we will co-design and inform our practice.

We will ensure we work in hyper local settings. Each hub team will be involved in at least 1 community of practice in their area, capturing case studies to show the impact of asset-based working in communities.

We will enhance the ABCD training offer. All Active Essex Staff and project teams will be trained in ABCD.

* 100% of Active Essex and Active Essex Foundation staff will be trained in ABCD
* 5 ABCD workshops will be delivered to 125 people to train local organisations across Essex.

### Sport and youth crime prevention

We will work with our 3 key embedded roles within statutory agencies. Developing direct interventions with at risk young people, with a target of 100 direct interventions.

We will work collaboratively with the Youth Offending Service across Essex, Southend and Thurrock. Continuing the successful Sport and Life-Skills project for young people, we will engage them in opportunities to enhance their future aspirations. 100 young people supported through the Sport and Life-Skills project.

We will ensure our headline programmes are delivered in priority neighbourhoods. A focus will be on sourcing additional funding from external partners to bring BoxSmart, Girls Inspired and the Sports and Life-Skills project to additional areas. We will continue to support a network of LTOs who use sport and physical activity to work with young people who are vulnerable to exploitation and youth criminality.

* 80 local organisations supported across the county, which is an increase from previous years
* 80 children and young people will be supported through external funding
* 3000 young people will be supported through the Secondary Essex ActivAte programme.

### Hardwiring physical activity into shared community spaces

We will support recipients of the Places and Spaces fund. Working with previous recipients, they will complete their asset improvements and begin activating their community. New organisations will be able to receive Places and Spaces funding for community asset improvements.

* 23 Places and Spaces projects will have been funded between March 2023-March 2025

We will support community organisations with their ongoing development of local community hubs. Physical activity provision will be taken to the heart of communities, ensuring small grant projects will be delivered in community-based venues.

* 40% of Find Your Active small grants will be delivered in community-based venues
* 15 local community hubs supported

### Tackling inequalities in our communities

We will build physical activity provision into the programme of support for refugees and asylum seekers. Supporting Essex Public Health team and Local Authority leads to ensure this is delivered.

We will support our priority neighbourhoods to increase physical activity levels. Working alongside Sport England, local system partners and communities, we will help to drive Sport England’s Place Partnerships, and deepening. Using the Find Your Active fund we can support organisations to ensure barriers to physical activity are reduced, and address under-representation for ethnically diverse communities, through collaborative working alongside ethnically diverse umbrella organisations. We will continue to recruit diverse role models across ambassador programmes.

* 100% increase in ethnically diverse communities supported through Find Your Active funds
* 35% of ambassadors, at minimum, will be from ethnically diverse backgrounds, or live with a long term health condition or disability

We will deliver the Holiday and Food programme across Essex and Thurrock. Through the Essex ActivAte programme, we will support eligible children on benefits based free school meals, and those from low income working families, during Easter, summer and winter holidays, as well as half terms. As part of this offer, we will also support the delivery of SEND, Mental Wellbeing hubs, and secondary interventions.

* 10,000 children (85% on free school meals) will be supported across the county
* 200 clubs offering places in main holidays, and 80 at half terms
* 30 organisations will be upskilled to deliver Food Education programmes.

For more information and to read about our contribution to the Fit for the Future Strategy since its conception, head to [www.activeesseximpact.org](http://www.activeesseximpact.org).