



# USE YOUR ENERGY

Project  
Report

2019-2024



action  
together





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## Introduction

**This report aims to highlight the impact of Action Together's Use Your Energy community investment programme.**

Action Together CIO is the infrastructure organisation for the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector in Oldham, Rochdale, and Tameside. We connect people with what's happening in their community, develop community ideas into action, strengthen local organisations, and provide strategic influence for the charity and voluntary sector.

Use Your Energy is Action Together's community grassroots funding programme to encourage children and young people (5-18 years) to be more active, more often and is part of the Tameside Local Delivery Pilot (LDP).

In order to fully meet the requirements of the LDP, Tameside formed the Active Alliance. The Active Alliance Executive is a cross-sector partnership with a shared interest in physical activity. The group is responsible for systems leadership across a programme of work to support and encourage more people in Tameside to move more, every day. Its aim is to support improved health outcomes, better physical and mental health, and benefit communities and the economy.

The Alliance includes Tameside organisations and stakeholders such as TMBC, Active Tameside, Action Together, The Bureau, Greater Sport, GM Moving, and local housing and education providers among others.



**In Tameside, 55.7% of children and young people are not achieving an average of 60 active minutes per day, which means that just under half are doing enough activity to stay healthy.**  
(GM Moving 2018/2019)



## Use Your Energy

**Use Your Energy** is Action Together's community investment programme to encourage children and young people (CYP) aged 5-18 years to become more active, and forms part of Tameside LDP. Our aim was to co-produce the programme with young people, and local groups who work with young people, who do not engage in physical activity.

### Objectives

- Increase activity levels for CYP living in Tameside.
- Provide organisational development support to VCFSE Groups.
- Understand and design out inequality in access and opportunities for CYP.
- Develop new relationships between sports and physical activity providers and wider public agencies and the VCFSE and CYP.
- Share learning and insight that has a lasting effect in Tameside.
- Manage and provide access to an investment scheme that will support participation in activities.
- Manage the allocation of investments and financial processing.

### Goals

- Enable CYP to co-design and co-produce the Use Your Energy programme.
- Create more opportunities for CYP to participate in local and user led physical activity.



**We have gone from strength to strength. From 10 per session, to 30 with new arrivals every week! It is great to see the development of the girls under the watchful eyes of our dedicated coaches who all give their time freely for the benefit of our Community.**

**It is great to see the smile on their faces as the sessions are fun, enjoyable and in a safe environment.**

Wildcats - Droylsden Youth Centre.

- Create more opportunities for constituted and non-constituted groups to become more sustainable in terms of their governance and finance, increase group membership and become more connected within their community.

## Methodology

**Use Your Energy adopted the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) model. ABCD builds on harnessing assets and existing strengths within the community to create stronger, more sustainable and connected communities.**

It became apparent that the ABCD model was going to be crucial in reaching groups who were currently “under the radar”- groups who were offering physical activities for children and young people but who were operating in isolation of the wider Tameside communities.

Using this model enabled engagement from Acton Together’s networks, TMBC Youth Provision, Active Tameside, Active Communities and others. Over the first year this role was further strengthened and supported by our Community Wellbeing Team, who are based in local venues and hubs across Tameside.

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This model has contributed to groups feeling:

- More inclusive e.g. CYP involved in co-producing the programme from marketing, governance and deciding investments.
- More connected to their wider communities.
- More linked in to the wider physical and sporting offer for children and young people in Tameside through networks such as Active Tameside Sports and Physical Activities Network.
- More aware of funding opportunities which relate to physical activities for children and young people.



At the outset of Use Your Energy we held discussions about using a participatory budgeting (PB) approach.

One of the positive aspects of the PB process is to let the community know what’s going on locally. We feel that we were still able to offer this knowledge through our place based Community Wellbeing Team, and more recently for the larger £10,000 grants through our neighbourhood panels who became part of our decision making process.

Given that Use Your Energy is aimed at children and young people and that their involvement in the application process was key for us, we felt using the PB model, especially for small or newly formed groups, could produce additional barriers and make the application process less engaging.

We felt the use of the ABCD model in preference to the PB model has created more resilient and unified outcomes and a more accessible application process for groups.





## Acting Together

We held online consultations with children and young people via Action Together's Children and Young People's Network and TMBC's Youth Council, to create the guidance, application form and marketing materials for Use Your Energy.

### Consultation included:

- Name and design of marketing materials.
- Creation of the application form which included recommendations for a CYP to directly input to the application either via quote, video, voice note, illustrations etc.
- Development of a CYP panel to make decisions and offer feedback on applications.
- A Neighbourhood panel was recruited to work in conjunction with CYP panel to make decisions on the larger £10,000 funding applications.

### 84 groups applied\*

*\*1 Group withdrew their application and 2 groups did not meet the funding criteria.*

**56 applications were successful.**

### Through Use Your Energy we were able to:

- Increase in the range of opportunities for CYP to engage in physical activity (e.g. include "taster sessions" across a range of sports, fencing, inclusive football for CYP with disabilities, creation of youth coaching pathways and volunteering, stunt work and physical theatre).

- Create/re-purpose community assets e.g. equipping church halls, sensory pod for CYP with SEND, interactive walking trails.
- Refer groups into networks such as the Tameside Sports and Activity Network.
- Build relations with new groups working with our Development Team and registering as members of Action Together.
- Groups accessing further funding opportunities in addition to UYE.

### Use Your Energy promoted through:

- Action Together's place based Community Development Teams.
- Our partners and networks.
- Initial run of 5,000 A5 Flyers and posters and through Action Together's social media platforms.
- Action Together's Tameside Community News which has a reach of 696 VCFSE groups and organisations.

Prior to Pride...only 2% of our LGBTQ+ community participated in extra curricular activities. We have 54 LGBTQ+ students who are 100% actively engaged with after school clubs. So, by offering different physical activities we have increased participation of these students and raised self-esteem and confidence.

Friends of Denton Community College



## Acting Together

### Governance

It was considered vital that groups had the correct policies and procedures in place prior to receiving funds to deliver a service for young people. Therefore, we:

- Formalised documentation that fit into the Action Together grants governance framework.
- Ensured that continuous development support was provided to ensure that groups have the right governance in place when considering provision for young people and making an application.
- Extended our offer of free training and development e.g. safeguarding training to those groups who did not own a safeguarding policy.

### Learning

A key piece of learning was that groups weren't answering the questions posed on the application form correctly and comprehensively - often missing questions out or not fully demonstrating they met the funding criteria. The team resolved this by producing an example application form for groups to read prior to making an application. This was supported by our development offer. Groups were encouraged to resubmit their application to ensure that opportunities weren't missed.

We also felt that there was a gap in engaging CYP to directly apply for funding. Although a section of the application needed to be completed by a CYP and submissions could be made via a number of methods we didn't receive applications solely from groups of CYP .



“I'm here today (at Yew Tree Community Centre) because I enjoy the activities, I enjoy socialising with everyone and it's good fun, good vibes, good energy!

Participant - Denton



As part of the Use Your Energy monitoring, groups were asked to tell us about one key piece of learning which they would use to deliver projects differently in the future.

**“Never underestimate the power of a word of mouth recommendation... it has been one of the key ways in which the project has grown.”**  
Reach Church

**“Organisation of events of this nature is difficult due to weather issues and therefore it is important to have a second event organised indoors to ensure continuous engagement.”**  
Stalybridge Scouts

**“To have related activities for younger and older children because of the physical abilities and based on their preferred preferences.”**  
West African Development

**“The assistance we get when applying for grants is extremely helpful.”**  
Ashton Fencing Club

**“We have learned from this to aim to work in partnership with local schools. One parent recommended that young people return to school with leaflets for the project in their school bags.”**  
Mountain of the Lord’s House (Yew Tree Community Centre)

**“The project went really well and showed the benefits of partnership working and having expertise and skills allowed this project to thrive.”**  
Friends of Sunnybank Vale

**“I would make it more obvious what areas we are looking to target and use more evidence from our junior players to help emphasise what values we are trying to push.”**  
Hollingworth Cricket Club

**We launched the permanent Duck trail in July... Since then the map has been downloaded over 750 times... It has been a big success and seemed to be accessed by the local community and beyond with great feedback.**

Friends of Sunnybank Vale.





## Community Investment Fund Breakdown

The Community Investment Fund (CIF) was broken down into three funds.

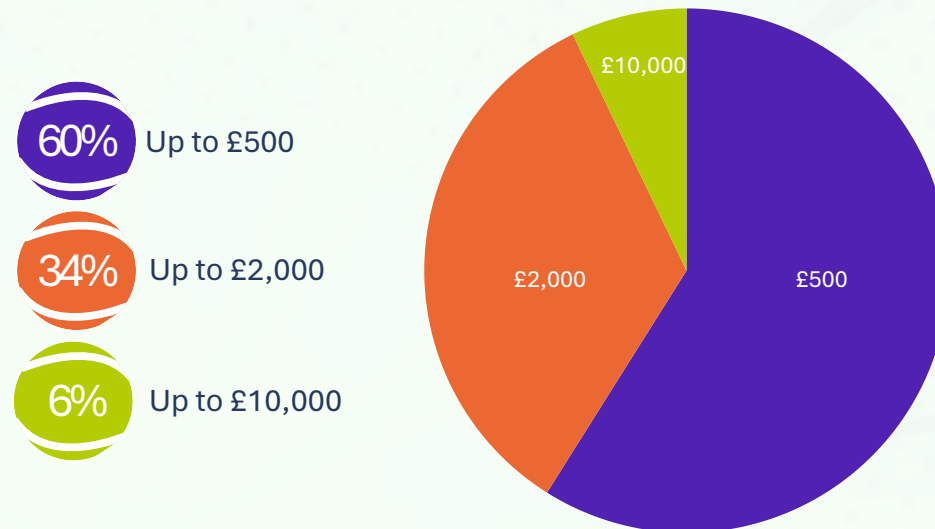
**April 2021** - groups were invited to apply for up to £500 to get their active idea off the ground.

**April 2022** - Groups could apply for a larger investment or groups could develop their active idea by applying for up to £2,000.

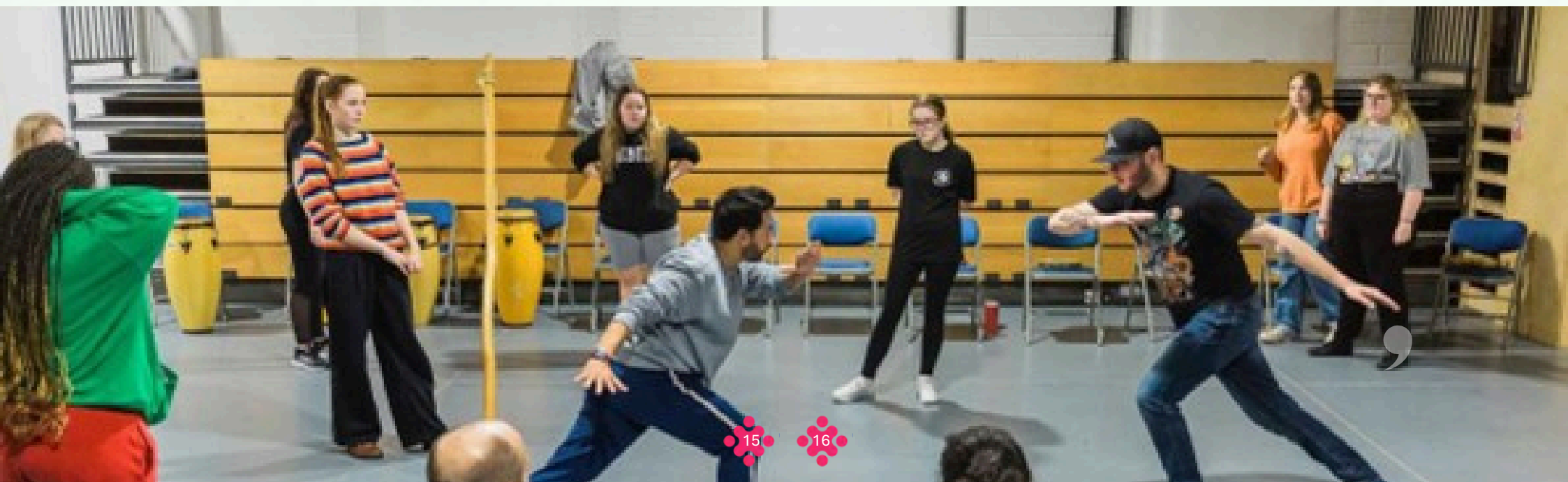
**September 2022** - Groups were encouraged to work in community partnerships to submit a larger bid of up to £10,000.

Following the launch of the larger £10,000 grants the applications we received did not always fully meet the criteria. We received a total of 13 applications, of which 4 were successful. Based on outcome data we decided to reallocate monies from the £10,000 pot and redistribute to groups who could now apply for up to £2,000.

## CIF's awarded by amount

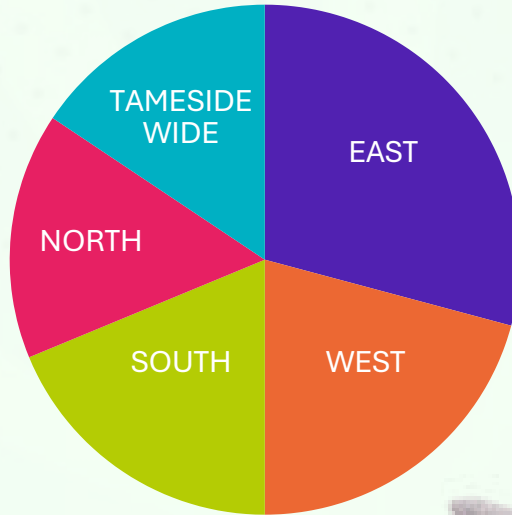
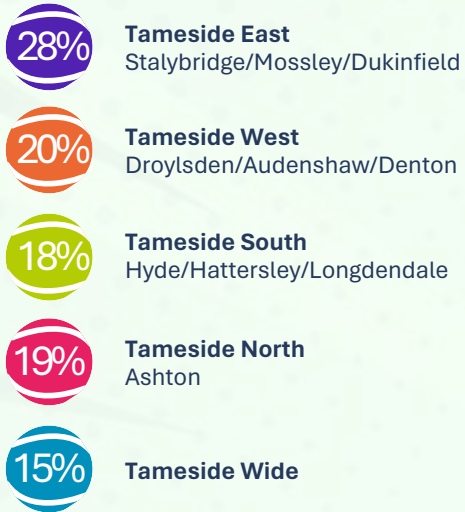


This decision proved successful as for the remaining months of the programme we were able to allocate funds to a further 10 groups.

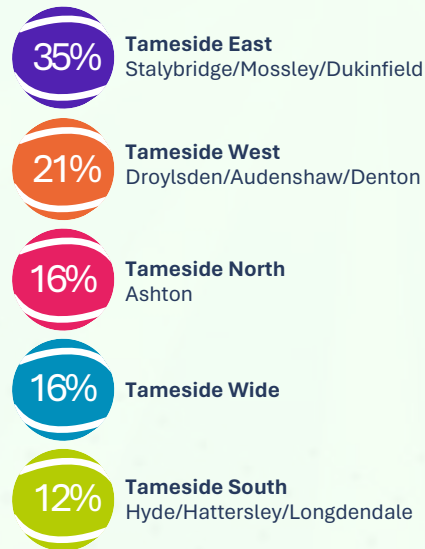
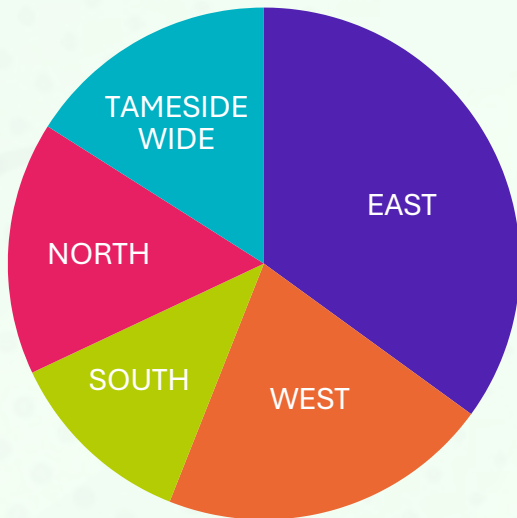




## Submitted applications by area.



## Successful applications by area.



“I like coming...because instead of being on your phone you can actually come out and do something and it helps you keep fit and healthy and improves your mental health.”

Participant -Ensemble Youth Theatre.



# Community Investment Fund Breakdown

## Activities funded



### Traditional Sports

31%

- Football
- Cricket
- Basketball
- Fencing
- Cycling
- Running



### Multi-Games/Fitness

25%

- Circuit Training
- Yoga
- Boxing
- Rounders
- Tumbling



### Dance & Creative Arts

19%

- Dance
- Cheer
- Leading
- Zumba
- Stunt Work



### Horticulture

13%

- Gardening
- Planting
- Restoration



### Green Spaces

12%

- Trails
- Walking
- Hiking
- Camping

## CIF's awarded to groups by area

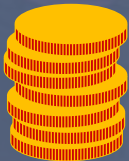
£7,233



Tameside North

Ashton

£11,416



Tameside West

Droylsden/Audenshaw/Denton

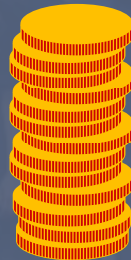
£17,323



Tameside South

Hyde/Hattersley/Longdendale

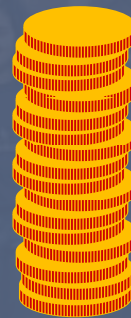
£21,476



Tameside East

Stalybridge/Mossley/Dukinfield

£31,529



Tameside Wide







Groups reported that over 2,500 children and young people aged 5 -18 years participated in Use Your Energy projects and activities.





## Case Study | Lindley Educational Trust

Lindley Education Trust (LET) are an outdoor education charity, focusing on using outdoor activity to help children grow, develop and discover their potential through challenging outdoor activities. They offer fun, exciting, challenging activities that appeal to all abilities, regardless of experience or fitness levels.

LET applied for the larger funding pot of up to £10,000 to run weekly sessions for 8-12 year olds to get children active in a fun and enjoyable way. The sessions included traditional sports, outdoor activities including hikes, multi-sports days and outdoor activity days.

The focus of their project, based in St Peter's Ward, was to get children to enjoy being active, building good habits for life, and helping them realise how much fun it can be to enjoy a healthy, active lifestyle.

LET reported that they had significantly increased the number of children and young people registering for the Fast Club project to 107 as a result of the funding. 74 males and 33 females aged 5-15 years registered.

They also recognised barriers to inactivity which they wanted to address:

- Financial Barriers
- Fitness Levels
- Positive and Relatable Role Models
- Accessibility





## Case Study | Lindley Educational Trust

### Financial Barriers

They reported that due to funding they were able to increase the range of activities they could offer to engage young people e.g. utilising existing assets such as Tameside Cycling Track. They also worked with businesses to secure sponsorship to support their outdoor walking activities. They stated:

**“Sprayway generously donated 25 sets of waterproofs, as many of the children come from families who couldn’t afford to kit the children out.”**

They also commented that due to the project more children now engage in the their HAF funded holiday activities.

As a result of the funding LET recognised the benefit of trying different approaches to engage inactive children and young people.

They commented:

**“The last 12 months have been really interesting. Children have gone from being pretty inactive... to now attending holiday activities, cricket and football. Parents are also telling us that their children want to be outside more often and go on local walks.”**

**“A number of parents have told us they never realised Daisy Nook existed and was so close and they enjoyed going to these green spaces as a family. Increasing numbers of parents are actively supportive and have signed up as volunteers. They now really value what we are doing for their children.”**

Breakdown of activities offered		Total no. of activities	Total no. of CYP	Total average attendance per activity	Total % of females attending activities	Total % of males attending activities
Walking		9	131	15	18%	72%
Sports		7	170	24	21%	79%
Swimming		7	200	29	25%	75%
Cycling		2	27	14	19%	81%
Adventure		17	285	17	13%	87%
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>813</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>81%</b>



## Recognising positive role models

**“We also have some older FAST club children who we are encouraging to move to our teenage youth provision and we have just completed a project where we did some more adventurous activities with this group – to help them recognise they were older, could do different things and take on more responsibility.”**

They also reported an increase in volunteers to support the project which included an increase of 17 parents who help out when asked and 8 regular volunteers.

## Accessibility

LET have worked with young people with various needs including autism, ADHD\*, and deaf/hearing impairments and they make their sessions as inclusive as possible. This has included having additional capacity from staff, volunteers, parents and carers.

They aim to work with young people and their families to find the best possible ways to include them, giving them confidence to fully participate. They reported that two children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) had demonstrated improved confidence over the last 12 months.

\*Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a condition that affects people's behaviour. People with ADHD can seem restless, may have trouble concentrating and may act on impulse. Symptoms of ADHD tend to be noticed at an early age and may become more noticeable when a child's circumstances change, such as when they start school. Most cases are diagnosed when children are under 12 years old, but sometimes it's diagnosed later in childhood.

Source: NHS



**“Putting in more funding would create a programme with more progression so that young people stay stimulated and engaged e.g. starting off with local walks in green spaces... then progressing to hill, even mountain walks. This would give young people not only incentive to stay engaged and participate but also the chance to build their social skills, communication skills and also be able to thrive outdoors.”**

Lindley Educational Trust



## Case Study | Starling

Starling is an arts-based organisation which works with neurodivergent young people aged 13-25.

Doodle Dancing was a movement and dance based project delivered in the Hyde and Droylsden areas of Tameside. 27 neurodivergent young people aged 13-18 attended 24 workshops and one-to-one sessions.

From Journey of Change evaluation forms they found that 76% identified that they had increased their confidence in taking part in physical activities and 89% identified an increase in their wellbeing. 95% had made a new friend and had reduced their social isolation. Over 50% stated that they have started to walk more and are feeling more confident about taking part in sports.

A young person aged 14 took part in the project. Before the project the young person rarely left the house and was struggling with school avoidance due to high levels of anxiety.

The young person took a few weeks to feel comfortable and watched the activities with their carer at the side of the space. After a number of sessions, they started to engage in the physical activities.

Their carer said that this was 'amazing' as they had never seen them feel so comfortable before. The young person regularly began to participate in all activities going forward. They started to make friends with the other participants and some strong friendships were formed.

Since taking part in the project, this young person has been able to keep in touch with other participants and has started to take part in live action roleplay activities, as well as making their own movement routines at home. Their carer also says they are able to go outside and walk more often. This has increased their activity levels significantly, as they rarely left the house before this time.

They also had a number of young people 'graduate' on to other activities such as with OKE and Active Tameside.

**We hope to see more young people engage in mainstream activities in the future, but more work needs to be done around neurodiversity awareness in order for this to happen.**

Starling



## Challenges

**Covid restrictions were still in place at the start of Use Your Energy. The consequences of this included:**

- Groups were not meeting face-to-face or as frequently.
- They were often tasked with more immediate or pressing concerns.
- Securing a place on agendas proved difficult, thus pushing timescales back.
- The lack of face-to-face interaction slowed down processes and hampered our ability to create “energy” around the programme.
- The ‘funding picture’ at the time of launch saw groups in their post-pandemic rebuild and recovery stage, thus groups were focusing on bigger funding pots and keeping existing projects afloat rather than new provision.

As a direct result of the Covid restrictions we received a high proportion of gardening and or horticultural application from groups.

As restrictions lifted we began to receive an increase in applications which focused on more physically active sports and activities.

Taking part in the Future Leaders cohort, dancing workshops and Global Grooves bloco has helped me with my confidence, come out of my comfort zone and makes me want to do more.

Participant, Global Grooves





## What Went Well

Working in a collaboration with groups and CYP enabled us to create messaging that promoted a “moving more, more often” message, not only focusing on sports-related activity.

A collaborative approach was also reflected from groups, for example Infinity Initiatives commented:

**“Including the young people in designing the activities and the planning for future sessions was a really important aspect of this project. Throughout the consultation period, inclusivity and involvement were highlighted as priority areas.”**

The recruitment of our Youth Panel to assess applications gave insight into which projects felt engaging for CYP and which did not.

Our focus on using existing assets - community venues, green spaces, community clubs, educational and faith venues - worked to create stronger community relationships.

Our integrated development approach for groups to access - capacity building support, training, volunteering, funding - led to stronger, more resilient, better governed groups.

Flexibility enabled us to to consult, listen, reflect and positively adapt the programme.

“Being able to purchase new equipment has made cricket more accessible to children and young people in the Longdendale area. It has also allowed us to expand and cater for the influx of numbers we have gained this year. It has allowed us to work with Hollingworth Football Juniors to try a new sport during their off season to keep them active. Use Your Energy... it is brilliant what you are doing, especially for smaller clubs like us.

Hollingworth Cricket Club



## Conclusions

Using smaller grants allowed small local provision to happen, supported groups who don't yet have the governance in place for larger grants, and helped to test pilot ideas before applications for larger pots.

Offering a range of activities to engage CYP as a pathway to traditional sports garnered positive feedback.

Place-based community development provided regular local promotion of the programme, gained unique insight into community need, created opportunities for groups to seek further funding opportunities, and increased networks and connections within communities.

Future funding needs to be secured/invested to carry the programme on as it's been highly successful.

Continuing the tiered approach allows different sized organisations and projects to be delivered.

Make sure that there is a spread of different activities across Tameside being funded.

Continue CYP panel but expand and formalise, i.e. meeting each other to discuss collectively rather than provide individual feedback. Panels could also then have sight of what was ultimately funded and spread the news to their friends.

*All images used in this report have been provided by the groups/organisations as part of the monitoring process and with the consent of the young people and/or their parents as appropriate.*



Projects like Use Your Energy fund are really important because they give us the opportunity to access funding so that we can put on such successful workshops on in our community. It really means a lot to these young people to stay more active and be more involved in their community.

It's really exciting for this community of Denton, so thank you - it means so much to us.

Ensemble Theatre and Dance



## More information.

You can find a full list of all the groups who received Use Your Energy funding at: <https://www.actiontogether.org.uk/use-your-energy-funding-tameside-awarded>



Our four young coaches enjoy passing on their knowledge to young aspiring people and this equipment means more young people will benefit from the quality training given, now and in the future.

Ashton Fencing Club



## Thank you to all the groups who applied

1st Denton Boy's Brigade  
2nd Stalybridge Scouts  
Academy HQ  
Ashton Fencing Club  
Ashton United In The Community  
Bee- Amazed Musical Theatre Group.  
Believe & Achieve Trust  
Community Revival  
Curzon Ashton in the Community  
Denton Guides  
Denton Park Social Bowling Club  
Denton West End Primary  
Droylsden Cricket Club  
Droylsden Youth Centre  
Ensemble Theatre  
Foundation 92  
Friends of Denton Community College  
Friends of Egmount  
Friends of Sunnybank Vale  
Friends of Waterloo  
Global Grooves  
Guide Bridge Theatre  
Hattersley Football Club  
Hollingworth Cricket Club  
Holy Trinity Church  
Hurst Angling Society  
Hyde Bangladesh Welfare Assoc.  
Hyde Little Theatre  
Incredible Edible  
Infinity Initiatives Football Club  
Intergenerational Music Making  
KIND  
Lancashire Cricket Foundation  
LEAP CFC  
Liberty Farm  
Lincoln Avenue Community Allotment  
Lindley Educational Trust  
Made by Mortals  
Manchester Bike Kitchen  
Mottram Parish Church  
Mountains of the Lords House  
Newton Cricket Club  
Phantasmagoria  
Priory Tennis Club  
Reach Church  
Rotary Club of Dukinfield & Stalybridge  
RSCC  
St Gabriel's Community Group  
St Thomas More RC College  
Stalybridge Cricket Club  
Stalybridge W.I  
Starling  
STAR  
Tameside Arts Ltd  
Tameside Basketball Club  
Tameside Vikings Basketball Club  
Tameside Youth Service  
The Believe and Achieve Trust  
The Mountain of the Lord's House  
The Together Centre  
Unity Stage School  
WAD  
WIFI Northwest CIC