



**Sport and Physical
Activity Matters**
in South Yorkshire

**A Kada
Research
Report**
for Yorkshire
Sport Foundation
April 2024

Foreword

We often say that sport and being active is in the DNA of Yorkshire.

Most people in the region are regarded as active; we have a rich sporting heritage of professional and local sports clubs; our classically green landscape is home to active pursuits every day; communities are vibrant with local organisation of opportunities to participate and our health systems are increasingly seeing physical activity as a crucial element of healthy places and healthy lives.

But we know this is not the case for everyone. Deep and long-standing inequalities remain; inequalities that mean it is much harder for some people to access the benefits of being active and playing sport due to an array of things that get in the way. The mature partnerships that are in place in each of our four districts are leading the work in addressing these challenges.

We intuitively know that playing sport, being active or simply moving more can make a hugely positive contribution to people's lives and in turn to communities and to the region. But our intuition isn't enough for policy and decision makers to take seriously the contribution that sport and physical activity can make when developing their plans.

Impacts on health of being active is well grounded and there is growing evidence coming forth on a day-to-day basis to support this as referenced in this document.

We also need to demonstrate better our contribution to the economy. In areas such as workforce productivity, supporting people to be closer to the workforce, the visitor economy, the effects of sporting events, the value of volunteering, the development of a broad skills base and others, all have a role to play in growing South Yorkshire's economy.

We have commissioned this document to bring together the evidence and data we currently hold to build a narrative of the sector's contribution to wider strategic plans. Where possible we have drawn upon South Yorkshire specific data and, where not, we will use the national data that is available.

This document provides a snapshot of the huge amount of work taking place in our local areas which is being evaluated on a regular basis. As a result, we will be regularly reviewing the document so that we show a full and current picture of the vital role of sport and physical activity in the region.

Thank you to our partners who have contributed to this document and to Kada for pulling it together.

Nigel Harrison
Yorkshire Sport Foundation

The importance of sport and physical activity for South Yorkshire

Movement, physical activity and sport have the power to improve and transform lives in South Yorkshire. They can help meet the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) Plan for Good Growth and Skills Strategy ambitions to transform the local economy and society for people, businesses, and places. In parallel sport, physical activity and movement makes a valuable contribution towards the South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board's (ICB) plans to keep people healthy for longer. The South Yorkshire Mayor is the only mayor that chairs an Integrated Care Partnership providing a unique opportunity to bring health and the economy together.



Whilst people throughout South Yorkshire enjoy the benefits of an active life, many face challenges to build physical activity and movement into their daily lives.

As well as the fundamental role it plays in supporting the ICBs ambitions to support people to live longer, better, and healthier lives, it can help residents feel happier and more connected within their communities.

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Physical activity and sport have the power to improve and transform lives in South Yorkshire.”

Moving more to address inequalities in South Yorkshire

Collective, sub-regional, strategic priorities

The new 'Plan for Good Growth'¹ for South Yorkshire, alongside the region's first Skills Strategy² are designed to put the region on the path towards a bigger and a better economy supporting an overarching vision to develop its economic strength.

The Skills Strategy includes a mission (1 of 3) to move those far from the labour market into work or to be ready for work. This study shows the role that sport and physical activity can play a key role in achieving this.

The Plan for Good Growth notes that a healthy economy needs a healthy population and a Health Equity Advisory Panel has been set up to help to combat some of the persistent health inequalities.

There is recognition of the role of the health sector and health tech businesses. The region will harness its health assets to use data to improve population health and reduce healthy life inequalities before they become acute. The following map summarises the physical activity plans for each South Yorkshire authority and how they are each supporting their local communities to embed sport and physical activity into daily lives and address those inequalities. ³⁴⁵⁶



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The Plan for Good Growth notes that a healthy economy needs a healthy population and a Health Equity Advisory Panel has been set up to help to combat some of the persistent health inequalities. ”





Active in Barnsley

By enabling people to be more physically active in their daily lives, residents will be able to live healthily and independently for as long as possible. The borough will work collaboratively to understand the issues affecting communities, using data and insight to prioritise and embed actions, sport, physical activity, and movement into daily life.

This strategy targets 18-25-year-olds, older people, and those with a health condition and/or low income. This will reduce local inequalities, improve health and lead to increased local investment in sport and physical activity.

Move More Sheffield

Move More Sheffield puts communities at the heart of everything. Education, health and social care, active travel, sport, and the environment are each a part of a complex and interconnected system. Collaborating with partner organisations, this strategy will encourage and enable those in areas with the lowest of physical activity to move more each day.

Schools will be supported to deliver 60 minutes of physical activity daily for pupils; people and places connected to green spaces; social prescribing initiatives will embed physical activity into personalised healthcare; and large and grassroots sports events will embed sport within each individual community.

Get Doncaster Moving

Doncaster wants to see everybody be a little bit more physically active every day in a way that suits their individual needs. School children will be encouraged to be more physically active with new opportunities to be active throughout the school day. Workplaces which will encourage active travel and movement.

Green spaces will be safer and inclusive for all, and opportunities for participation in major sporting and cultural events will be offered. Working very locally level to specific local needs, Doncaster will build on the strengths of individual communities to help raise awareness of the benefits and opportunities around physical activity and sport.

Moving Rotherham

By 2025, Rotherham will implement a 'whole system' approach to improving health and wellbeing with a focus on preventative care, inclusivity, equality, education, and awareness.

Collaborating with partners and stakeholders, it will increase the physical activity of all people, resulting in improved physical and mental health; longer and healthier life expectancy; and safer, happier communities. Collaborating with individuals and communities it will address loneliness, improve children's wellbeing, and help people make healthier, more informed life choices.



Rotherham as the first Children's Capital of Culture in 2025

As part of the run up to Rotherham becoming Children's Capital of Culture (2025) the annual Rotherham Skate and Art Festival involved a series of events spread-out across the town centre over three days.

Key activities included: a younger and older BMX/skate area, an actual reality arcade, dance performances, and roller-skating sessions. The 2023 event saw 4,750 people visit generating nearly £200,000 net well-being benefits from participation in arts, culture, and sport⁷.

The project turned Rotherham into an “urban playground.” Building on a manifesto made by local children, the Children's Capital of Culture will see communities come together, improve skills/employment opportunities, showcasing culture and creativity⁸.

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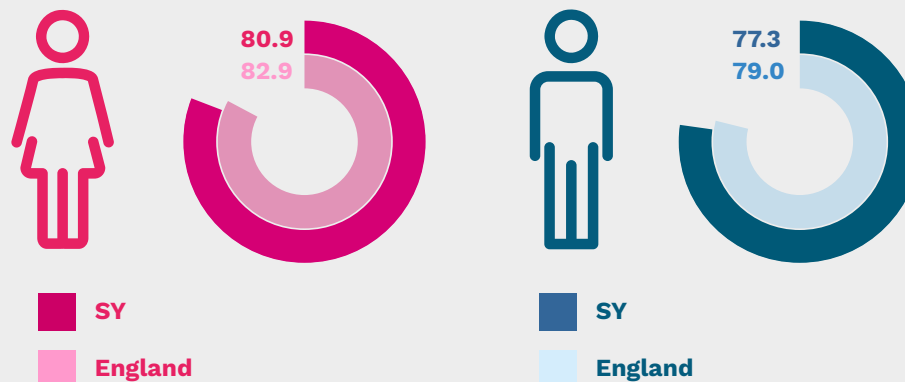
Inequalities in sport and physical activity across South Yorkshire

Local physical activity strategies have the potential to reduce the stark and persistent inequalities between wealthy and deprived areas. **Those in the most deprived areas have much shorter lives and tend to live those years in poorer health⁹.** Life expectancy is lower in South Yorkshire than England; with the number of years lived in good health also lower (59.5 for males and 60.2 for females)¹⁰.

Women in South Yorkshire are more likely to be physically inactive than men (28.1% compared to 26.5%) and Black residents are significantly more likely to be physically inactive than Asian and White residents (41%, 27% and 27% respectively)¹¹. There is a link between wealth inequalities, inactivity, and ill-health.

Approximately 21.9% of houses in South Yorkshire experience two or more dimensions of deprivation¹². Those who are most deprived are least likely to be physically active, which contributes to poorer health outcomes. **Physical inactivity and inequality can put people at a greater risk of heart attacks, strokes, type 2 diabetes, and depression¹³.**

Average life expectancy



People leading active lives in South Yorkshire¹⁴

6 in 10 people in South Yorkshire are active and benefit from sport and physical activity. However we know this is not the case for everyone. Deep and long-standing inequalities remain; inequalities that mean it is much harder for some people to access the benefits of being active and playing sport. There are still around 1 in 4 people who are doing less than 30 minutes a week.

Those who are physically active are less likely to be lonely than physically inactive people in South Yorkshire. They are also even less likely to experience loneliness than those who are physically active across England.



27.3%

people in SY and **25.8%** of England do under 30 mins of physical activity weekly.



74.8%

people in SY and **76.7%** of England participated in physical activity at least twice over 28 days.



76.5%

of people who are physically inactive in SY feel they do have the opportunity to be active.



31.3%

of people in SY engaged in sport at least twice in 28 days, compared to **33.3%** of England.



Locally, physically active people are **5%** less likely to be lonely than those who are inactive.



Physically active people score **7.1** out of 10 for life satisfaction, compared to **6.29** for those who are inactive.



The transformational effects of sport and physical activity in South Yorkshire

Whatever your age, there's strong scientific evidence that being physically active can help you lead a healthier and happier life with potentially transformative outcomes that can address some of the most entrenched and severe economic and societal challenges in South Yorkshire¹⁶.

Physical and mental health dividend of keeping moving



Children that engage with physical activity make **more informed health decisions**.



Physically active children form more **pro-social relationships** and exhibit **better behaviour** in the classroom.



Pupils participating in development activities like sport perform **10-20%** better in their GCSE's

This infographic shows how physical activity and sport can benefit children and young people¹⁷¹⁸¹⁹²⁰

Choosing more healthy lifestyle habits can improve mental health and help prevent diseases and obesity. Obesity is a local concern given the large number of children nationally and locally classed as 'unhealthily overweight' when they finish primary school²¹.

Sport is good for children's development, developing important life and employability skills like conflict management, self-control, and teamwork²².

This supports children and young people to have a positive relationship with sport and physical activity and helps them to enjoy being active and embed healthy lifestyle habits which will benefit them in later life.

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Physical and mental health dividend of keeping moving.



£245pp is spent on mental health in SY compared to £210pp in England. **5.8%** of SY accessed IAPT (talking therapy), compared to 4.9% in England.



The economic cost of dementia in SY is **£720m**, rising to over **£1.1bn** by 2030.



26 per 100,000 people in SY finished an admission episode with a primary diagnosis of obesity, higher than the 20 per 100,000 in England.



SY sees **180,000** cases of circulatory disease, **215,000** cases of high blood pressure and **300** deaths per month (1 in 4) linked to heart disease.

This infographic shows health statistics for SY and England²⁶.

Sport and physical activity is linked to a range of biological and physiological benefits with the increased release of “happy chemicals” such as endorphins, relieving stress and helping to manage pain. This can alleviate negative psychological effects such as anxiety, depression, and anger²⁷.

Aerobic sports such as running can improve self-esteem and life satisfaction²⁸. **Mental health concerns cost the UK approximately £118bn each year; some 5% of GDP is lost from productivity and as a result of the costs of unpaid, informal carers for people living with a mental health condition²⁹.**

12,044 people over the age of 65 in South Yorkshire are diagnosed with dementia with many more living with the disease. The mean emergency admission rate for dementia is 4,540 per 100,000 (29% higher than in England)³⁰. **Whilst dementia does not have a cure at present, participation in physical activity and sport has been shown to act as a preventative measure against 5 neurodegenerative diseases. An estimated 2% of dementia cases could be eliminated by an uptake in physical activity³¹.**

For those living with dementia, sport and physical activity is associated with enhanced cognitive function and reduced social isolation^{32,33}.

In South Yorkshire 33% of adults are obese and 35% do not meet physical activity recommendations³⁴. This increases the risk of heart and circulatory disease. Whilst strokes can occur for lots of reasons, obesity and low physical activity can greatly increase their likelihood. South Yorkshire has a stroke rate of 2.2% which is higher than the English rate (1.8%)³⁵.

Obesity costs the NHS £6.5 billion a year and is the second biggest preventable cause of cancer³⁶.

Exercise is a crucial part of any treatment plan for patients with obesity. It can increase well-being and quality of life, lead to fewer future complications including cancers, type 2 diabetes and musculoskeletal problems and increase the potential to lose weight and maintain weight loss³⁷.

The benefits include reduced admissions, drug costs, appointments, and visits.

Remaining active throughout life maintains strength, mobility, and stamina, improves life satisfaction, and can reduce medication use³⁸. With half of GP appointments and 70% of the primary care budget spent on preventable health conditions³⁹ physical activity engagement could reduce the risk of falls, hypertension, poor bone health, hip fractures (by 68%) and some cancers by 40%^{40,41}. Physical activity and exercise can also provide a non-invasive means for added chronic disease prevention and treatment⁴². For instance, physical activity can play an important role in cancer prevention, treatment, recovery, and survivorship⁴³.

Dance On Doncaster.

With an average age of 76, Dance On groups aim to keep people mobile in an accessible and human centred way. With weekly classes held across the city and no need to book, anyone over the age of 50 is able to turn up on the day and dance as much or as little as they feel comfortable. A cost effectiveness analysis showed that Dance On Doncaster was 94% effective for those aged 60-80.

Professional dance instructors tailor classes to all abilities, targeting balance, strength, cardio, and creativity. Participants saw increased physical activity, reduced risk of falls, decreased frailty, and more opportunities to socialise and connect with others⁴⁴. One participant said “I feel I can walk upstairs easier since coming here. I don’t stop halfway.”

Economic, social and community benefits

The level of physical activity, and the availability of physical activity facilities generally declines with the level of deprivation⁴⁵. This is a policy challenge for South Yorkshire where nearly a quarter of lower super output areas are in the most deprived 10% nationally⁴⁶.



20.6% of those who live in the least deprived areas are physically inactive, compared to **33.8%** of those in the most deprived areas.



82.8% of those in the least deprived areas participated in sport at least twice in 28 days, compared to **67.5%** in the most deprived areas.

This infographic shows the link between deprivation and participation⁴⁷.

NICE states "greenspace should be used whenever possible to support people of all ages and abilities to move more, improving their health and wellbeing and reducing the need for direct, more costly interventions"⁴⁸.

Access to greenspace is linked to better physical and mental outcomes, including improved cognition, improved resilience, healthy weight maintenance, reduced stress, reduced risk of stroke, better birth weight of newborns and improved life satisfaction⁴⁹.

For example individuals experience improved feelings of wellbeing as a result of accessing social support through walking and being close to nature. **Those who are active in South Yorkshire are more likely to report having a higher level of social trust (3.25) than those who are inactive (3.11)**⁵⁰.

The benefits of parks are not always accessible for all, for example two-thirds of women and girls experience abuse while running and this can put young women off for life⁵¹.

Making sure that women, those who identify as LGBTQ+ and those from ethnically diverse backgrounds feel safe in parks is vital to increase their usage and usability.

Using active design to create spaces where all people feel safe and welcome is a vital way to boost engagement in sport and physical activity. Implementing good lighting, restricting road traffic in some areas, decreasing anti-social behaviour, and taking a firm stance on harassment in public spaces are measures that can be taken to improve everyone's experience of using the park⁵².

Sport for Change

Starting in 2015, Sport for Change in South Yorkshire ran 523 sports sessions for 1,482 young people at risk of engaging in antisocial and criminal behaviour. For the £42,500 invested, the project saw a £373,175 return on investment, equating to only £295 per participant (a low unit cost). The project led to a 14% reduction in crime and an 18% reduction in the risk of substance abuse. Young people felt that the project gave them employability skills, helped them feel more in control of their behaviour and better connected to their local community. 100% of the young people asked reported that they were less likely to be involved in nuisance behaviour in the future⁵³.

Loneliness can be linked to early death and is associated with depression, increased risk of coronary heart disease and sedentary behaviour.

Physical activity and sport can be key to tackling this issue, as group exercise provides opportunities for social interaction, strengthens social networks, and increases personal motivation and confidence. In fact, sports club membership has a positive effect on life satisfaction, happiness, and well-being.

Barnsley Game Changer

Targeting the areas of Kendray and Worsborough, this project focused on bringing the community together, with a focus on health, wellbeing, food security and employability. Football sessions, walking groups and 'chairobics' are examples of activities offered.

Online testimony from community champions shows the impact of the project on confidence and skills. It gave people the opportunity to come together, talk and support each other in an informal and friendly way. Resident and sports coaches felt affordable, accessible, and flexible options supported engagement and increased physical activity⁵⁴.

Worker well-being and the productivity benefits of a healthy workplace



Getting 10% of people who are economically inactive due to long-term sickness back into work would boost the economy by **£196m**.



Participating in sport at university is linked to enhanced employability and managerial skills – good news for the 45,840 physically active students in SY!



Promoting sport and leisure courses could address some local skills gaps, giving people the opportunity to train in areas like healthcare or management.



Physical activity is associated with better next-day energy levels, leading to increased productivity and GDP.

This infographic shows how physical activity and sport can benefit employees⁵⁵⁵⁶⁵⁷⁵⁸⁵⁹.

78,600 (6.9%) people were economically inactive in South Yorkshire due to long term sickness in 2023 compared to 4.7% nationally. Increasing physical activity can reduce the incidence of ill health, helping some people remain in employment meeting a key mission of the South Yorkshire Skills Strategy. With 50.6 productive days lost to ill-health employee productivity loss is at a record high.

This is often related to musculoskeletal conditions, depression, and poor sleep⁶⁰. The costs of new cases of work related ill health in 2021/22, excluding long latency illness such as cancer were £13.1 billion⁶¹. 86% of productivity days lost in the workplace is due to presenteeism; people attending work but not working productively. Increasing opportunities for activity in the workplace and during the commute could help to increase employee activity, energy, mood, satisfaction and ultimately productivity⁶².

Importance of the sport and physical activity sector in South Yorkshire



£381m

Sports and physical activity **GVA**



18,000

Sports and physical activity **businesses** in South Yorkshire



48,500 jobs

8.1% of the SY workforce **7,500** core jobs **41,000** in the wider sector



£210m

Annual sport and physical activity **volunteering well-being benefits** (2022)



£43.7m (2023)

Monthly **well-being benefits of participating in sport** (SY)

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206,000 people volunteered at least once between 2021 and 2022 in South Yorkshire.”

Every £1 spent on sport and physical activity generates almost £4 in return across health and wellbeing, strengthening communities and the national economy⁶³.

Business, employees, and productivity the value and contribution of the sector

7,500 (1.25%) of jobs in South Yorkshire can be attributed to core roles relating to sport and physical activity. These include coaching, leisure and sports managers and assistants, and physiotherapists.

Community, volunteers, and grassroots benefits

Participating in grassroots sport either as a player or supporter generates £39bn for the UK economy (2020) from equipment and kit, tickets, and memberships. Grassroots football has impressive economic benefits. With 12 million grassroots football players in the UK, the sport has been estimated to save £43.5m in reduced GP visits providing an overall social wellbeing value of £8.7bn⁶⁴. 206,000 people volunteered at least once between 2021 and 2022 locally. Of those who volunteered in South Yorkshire, the majority volunteered at least once a week (6.1%) throughout the year and a further 3.9% volunteered at least once a month but not every week. This is in line with the national figures^{65 66}. **In South Yorkshire the well-being benefits of volunteering to support sport and physical activity are estimated to be £210m at 2022 prices⁶⁷.** This includes volunteering for clubs, refereeing, coaching, marshalling.

Providing Football Opportunities for Children with Disabilities, Sheffield

This project offers weekly football sessions for children with disabilities such as cerebral palsy, visual impairment, or limb difference.

The sessions give children the opportunity to engage in their community, make friends, improve their social and emotional wellbeing and physical fitness.

This group has also linked to the England Para Pathway, giving them the chance to play for a club. Children were excited to show their skills and help other people. One parent noted that taking their child to the group was “the best thing we’ve ever really done for him.”

Wider impacts



70% of British people say attending a sporting event impacted their happiness.



Social prescribing sees a **£3.42: £1** return on investment.



The value of sport and physical activity to the nation's wellbeing, is **£42bn per year** - more than three times the total NHS spending on mental health.

This infographic shows the wider benefits of sport and physical activity⁶⁸⁶⁹⁷⁰.

23,000 people volunteered at major sporting events in 2022 and 12 events tracked in 2022 generated a return on investment of 6:1⁷¹. Locally 21.4% of the population attended at least two sporting events per year, compared to 17.8% in England⁷². 239,800 attended at least two live sporting events in the last year and 351,600 people locally have participated in sport at least twice in the last 28 days.

The value of sport participation is £1,490 per person per annum and team sports have a greater impact on life satisfaction, however, the impact both individual and team sports are positive, with dance and swimming have high valuation⁷³. **It is estimated that the monthly well-being benefits of participating in sport (for those who have participated at least twice in the last 28 days) could be £43.7m at 2023 prices⁷⁴.**

Community leisure in the UK contributes £3.3bn in social value when accounting for improved health, reduced crime, increased educational attainment and improved life satisfaction (subjective wellbeing)⁷⁵. Being fit and healthy also has a direct effect on economic productivity; lost productivity costs an estimated £5.5bn in time-off and £1bn in premature death of working aged people⁷⁶.

Leading an active lifestyle prevents 900,000 cases of type 2 diabetes and 93,000 cases of dementia, the leading cause of death in the UK, a combined saving of £7.1 billion to the UK economy⁷⁷.



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Leading an active lifestyle prevents 900,000 cases of type 2 diabetes and 93,000 cases of dementia. ”

Imagine South Yorkshire in the future where....



1 in 4
aged 65+ by 2037



2041
zero carbon
sport & sustainable
physical activities



South Yorkshire
leading technology
and R&D hub in
diagnosis and
treatment



Active remote
working
commonplace

“

My personal ambition is for South Yorkshire to become the healthiest region in the UK. Within a generation I'm determined our health outcomes will match anywhere in the country. Better health is essential for the thriving economy and sustainable, prosperous communities we want in South Yorkshire.⁷⁸”

Imagine a future where sport and physical activity has been prioritised by decision makers and embedded in strategy making and policy development in South Yorkshire for the positive impacts they can have on individuals and society.

Sport and physical activity for all

By 2037, one in four people locally are over 65 with more time and money for leisure and volunteering^{79 80}. Policies proactively support and encourage increased participation with inclusive and accessible activities helping residents live well, age well and thrive, preventing the onset and severity of many age-related health conditions⁸¹. South Yorkshire is a more equal society where practical, personal, and social barriers to participation are significantly reduced.

Societal attitudes, safety concerns and accessibility barriers have changed for the better through the development and implementation of innovative and insightful policies. Place-based solutions, systems-approach, and co-design of programmes are widespread and actively supported. Innovative responses have been adopted in light of continued high living costs; resources are targeted at disadvantaged and inactive groups and to support the sustainability and resilience of sports organisations⁸².

Climate change

By 2041, South Yorkshire is a fully net zero carbon region. It has taken proactive measures to promote low carbon living including incentives and a stand-out active travel network of walking and cycling routes⁸³. The South Yorkshire Active Travel Implementation Plan has ensured that there is a fully connected and integrated network of walking and cycling routes linking the sub-region, allowing people to increase their level of physical activity on a regular basis for both work and leisure.

Practical measures undertaken include reducing the flood and drought risks to sports grounds and reducing the emissions associated with sports events and competitions⁸⁴. The research community is helping to support athletes' health and performance informed by world leading data analysis and people's motivation to engage in physical activity is not reduced as a result of heatwaves and other extreme weather phenomena.

Healthcare Technology

Technology has improved prevention and early diagnosis, helping patients to live better with their conditions. Experiences of sport and physical activity continue to be transformed by digital technology including immersive fitness experiences, wearable technology, and gamified and personalised fitness. South Yorkshire continues to use its health research assets and digital sector to exploit new R&D opportunities including those linked to the universities' research capabilities and hubs of excellence within the Innovation Zone.

The Advanced Wellbeing Research Centre reimagines rehabilitation to optimise recovery and The Medical Diagnostic Centre is enhancing prevention through screening.

Healthcare pressures and prevention.

If current trends continue, those living with major illness will have increased by more than a third, affecting almost 1 in 5 by 2040⁸⁵. However, prevention and early intervention measures incorporating sport and physical activity has reduced the impact of illness and improved the quality of people's lives, helping people to live well with illness.

GPs and health professionals routinely prescribe walking, cycling and other physical activities to improve health and wellbeing^{86 87}. Volunteering and sport participation has increased, and healthcare is more inclusive and personalised⁸⁸.

Workplaces of the future

Hybrid and remote working, which increased significantly in 2020, started to change the way we think about commuting and work. In 2023, 18.7% of local workforce regularly worked at home⁸⁹. It brought flexibility with working hours to suit individuals. This provides workers with greater opportunities to engage with their local area more frequently. For example going out for short walks and runs and making use of local green and blue spaces.

Active design principles are applied to all outside spaces and developments to ensure everyone has access to safe and accessible green space.

Policy makers recognise the increasing demand for accessible green space, targeting communities who do not live within a 10-minute walk to a local park or green space. Sport and physical activity including group exercise and interactive classes are routinely used to reduce loneliness and isolation which peaked during the Covid years⁹⁰. Gentle exercises like yoga or Pilates are commonly used to support pain and stiffness due to unsuitable seating and desk set ups^{91 92}.

Future Parks - Hexthorpe Park, Doncaster

Communities near Hexthorpe Park wanted more nature walks, community events, history walks, crazy golf, and volunteering opportunities.

Sports such as rowing, football and bowling have encouraged more visitors, as has better lighting, improved footpaths, and more varied activities. Co-designing this space with residents has boosted participation in sport and physical and activity⁹³.

Creating a more level playing field for South Yorkshire

Getting South Yorkshire moving more could have incredible physical, mental and well-being benefits and help meet the ambitions of the Mayors new Plan for Good Growth. Working together to deliver a shared vision has the power to enrich South Yorkshire's communities, workplaces, places and spaces improving health outcomes, productivity, and life expectancy. By seamlessly embedding sport and physical activity into the policy making, strategies and delivery of organisations many multi-dimensional, long-lasting impacts and outcomes to benefit the lives of local people and communities.

There are strong partnerships working at district level delivering many impactful sport and physical activity projects and programmes. There is however an opportunity to add value to the work of these partnerships and identify ways to work sub-regionally to support and enhance these networks and build on work already taking place. This will ensure South Yorkshire's citizens and workers can start, live, and age well in line with the South Yorkshire Plan for Good Growth, the ICB ambitions and the new South Yorkshire Skills Strategy. There are several areas where collective action sub-regionally would help meet local priorities:

- Work with the Health Equity Advisory Panel to make sport and physical activity address South Yorkshire's **health inequalities** including lower life expectancy in poorer wards. This is a key priority for the Mayor.
- Working with the Health Equity Advisory Panel and others on better **access to existing facilities and promoting engagement** through an equality lens; targeting groups, individuals and communities wishing to move more.
- Supporting physical activity and mental well-being activities as an integral part of **clinical pathways** (from prevention to diagnosis and recovery) will encourage people to stay healthy, happy, and independent for as long as possible.
- **Investing in future generations** promoting an active school agenda providing more and higher quality sport and physical activity opportunities before, during and after school, and developing effective pathways between schools (from early years to teenagers) and local sports clubs.
- **Working better together strategically.** Considering how physical activity and sport could be much more visible and impactful sub-regionally, within the Plan for Good Growth, the Skills Strategy, clinical pathways, place-based investment plans and economic and cultural priorities.
- Making it easy for employers to promote **healthy workplaces** for instance through active travel or gentle exercise routines, and promoting schemes for local citizens to move more.
- Working to promote places and communities that are designed to encourage physical activity and sport, **active travel** and be climate resilient including high quality and distinctive accessible walking and cycling routes linking our towns and cities. Through co-design it is possible to develop and evaluate place-based physical engagement measures addressing multiple community barriers.
- Developing a **skilled, qualified and experienced** sports and leisure **workforce** with competencies including rehabilitation and health. The sector will be better equipped to support the growing number of people with complex needs wanting more physical activity.
- Physical activity is valued as a way of helping people to develop employability skills including leadership, communication and teamwork.
- Working with **police and crime organisations** to provide safe and secure, well-designed places for physical activity and sport, designed to promote inclusivity and increased confidence to participate.
- Promoting, supporting, and sharing sport and physical activity **good practice and research** focusing on key groups including children and young people and those on low incomes.
- Working alongside the **South Yorkshire Investment Zone** to tackle health challenges including support on screening and prevention capabilities and exploiting sport and well-being research and business opportunities.



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