

# Big Local Community Sport and Activity Cluster

Active Partnerships and Local Trust

End of Cluster Report - November 2021

Local Trust | Big Local

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# Introduction

- Active Partnerships formed a team to design and facilitate 4 workshops that supported Big Local areas to maximise the benefits of community sport and activity.
- The team comprised: Kathryn Mudge, [Yorkshire Sport Foundation](#); Kirsty Dunleavy-Harris, [Active Gloucestershire](#); Ali Shipway, [Shipway Consulting](#); and Graeme Sinnott, [Active Partnerships national team](#).
- The 2 lead facilitators, Kathryn and Kirsty, engaged with Big Local areas interested in the cluster to shape the content. They asked what is great about your community, what are you hoping to gain from the cluster and what you are already doing around community sport that we can learn from and build on.

# Aims of the cluster

**The community sport and activity learning cluster sought to help participants to:**

- Understand how sport and activity can be tools to help communities to respond to what matters most to them.
- Understand how sport and activity can bring people from all backgrounds together.
- Share experiences and learn from real-life examples of how sport and activity has helped to transform communities.
- Stretch imagination of what community sport and activities can achieve in Big Local areas.
- Develop ideas relevant to Big Local areas on how to develop community sports and activities.
- Identify and access local and national assets, leverage partnerships and build relationships.

**Each workshop over the cluster had a specific topic to move through the curriculum and enable the achievement of these overall aims.**

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# Journey of the cluster

January 2021  
Workshop 1: Building connections



March 2021  
Workshop 2: Engaging and reaching different audiences



June 2021  
Workshop 3: Volunteers and building local capacity



September 2021  
Workshop 4: Measuring impact and sporting legacy

As a result of Covid the programme switched to online workshops. The first workshop was split into 2 parts. It focused on building connections between Big Locals, sharing what community sport activity they are working on, and understanding the power and potential of community sport and activities.

Ensuring the community has a voice was the focus of this workshop. It looked at engagement principles, methods and tools to ensure everyone has a voice in how community sport is delivered in their communities. We were joined by Chris Perks, Executive Director of Local Delivery at Sport England.

We looked at what 'workforce' means to Big Locals and the breadth of activity involved in developing volunteers across communities. As well as how resources and tips for retaining and growing an effective workforce to deliver community sport and activities. We were joined by Kate Roberts from StreetGames.

With restrictions lifting, we had our final workshop face-to-face in London. We visited Noel Park Big Local, heard from Amy Shepherd from Shephard and Moyes to help us think about how we capture our impact and tell our stories, and heard from Sab Bham from Salaam Peace about the work they are doing to use sport to bring together young people from diverse backgrounds.



# Key takeaways from each workshop

January 2021

Workshop 1: Building connections



March 2021

Workshop 2: Engaging and reaching different audiences

- Physical activity can be anything. It should engage, inspire and involve people moving more.
- There are many benefits from being active that can address social issues.
- Use the local environment and spaces creatively.
- Identify the blockages unique to your area and find people who can help.
- Ensure people have a voice and power to influence decisions.

- Find out what people are passionate about and weave physical activity into daily lives. 'Physical activity by stealth'.
- Building trust is key and integrating within existing networks when consulting and developing ideas.
- Go where the energy is and keep building on the great community sport and activity happening.
- "People are not hard-to-reach. We just often have hard-to-reach services."

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# Key takeaways from each workshop (continued)

June 2021

Workshop 3: Volunteers and building local capacity



September 2021

Workshop 4: Measuring impact and sporting legacy

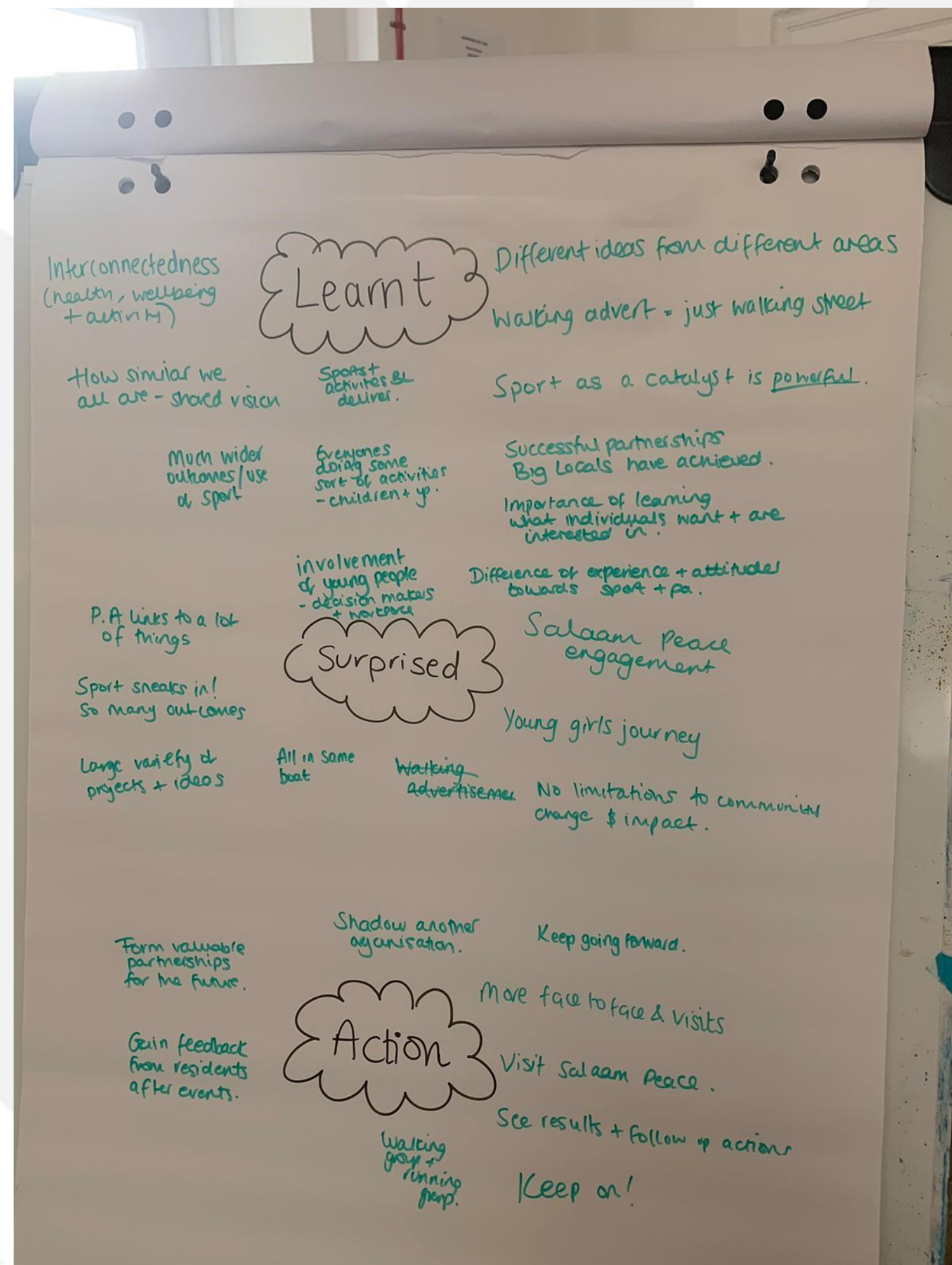
- Understand people's motivations and match that with volunteering opportunities.
- There are many more roles than direct coaching or leading.
- Volunteering is about empowering people, providing role models for communities and supporting people to be active citizens.
- Equip people local people with the skills and knowledge to deliver sport.
- Reward and recognise people's achievements.

- Theories of change help you organise your thinking.
- Evaluation is more than numbers. It is about learning, reflecting and presenting evidence.
- Stories, case studies and questionnaires are excellent tools to help you understand your impact.
- Take time to understand your audience when presenting your findings.
- Find a good structure for your reporting and stick to it.

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# Participant reflections and next steps



## Learnt:

- Sport has a big contribution to make on wider outcomes
- Importance of listening, learning and relationships

## Surprised by:

- The connections that sport helps with
- No limitation to community change and impact

## Actions:

- Reach out and understand other approaches
- Determination to keep progressing

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# What difference did the cluster make? What have we left behind through our work together?

- Increased knowledge amongst participants on the value of sport and its potential as a catalyst for change within communities, as well as building knowledge around how to do this.
- Created and strengthened relationships between Big Local areas interested in community sport and activities.
- Connected Big Local areas to their nearby Active Partnership, to build sustainability and grow connections.
- Embedded ideas, tips and tools for engaging and connecting with a range of audiences within Big Local areas to ensure opportunities to be active are equal for all.
- Increased awareness and understanding of the work of Big Local areas amongst Active Partnerships, speakers and facilitators supporting the cluster, including Sport England.

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# Resources

- [Find your local Active Partnership here](#)
- All workshop content has been uploaded to [Workplace](#)
- Sport England [‘Find the right fund’](#)



# Active Partnerships



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[www.ActivePartnerships.org](http://www.ActivePartnerships.org)

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