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# Developing inclusive leaders in Haringey

Research with activity deliverers  
and participants: increasing  
opportunities for disabled people  
to be active and take on delivery roles.

## Executive summary

February 2023

Research conducted by Activity Alliance  
through their Get Out Get Active programme  
in partnership with Haringey Council.

[getoutgetactive.org.uk](https://getoutgetactive.org.uk)

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# Introduction

**We know that both disabled and non-disabled people prefer being active together. But disabled people often have lower participation and enjoyment of physical activity.**

Disabled people are under-represented among the people working in the sport and activity sector: only 22% said they see 'people like me' working in sports and physical activity roles. However, there is strong interest from many disabled people in taking on paid and voluntary roles. In Haringey, there are many successful initiatives and individuals who have led the way in improving representation, engaging disabled people, and helping everyone be active together.

Get Out Get Active (GOGA) is a UK-wide programme that supports disabled people and non-disabled people to enjoy being active together. It was launched in 2016 and funded by Spirit of 2012 with further investment from Sport England and London Marathon Charitable Trust.

**For more information visit [getoutgetactive.co.uk](https://getoutgetactive.co.uk).**

GOGA Haringey, led by Haringey Council, work with local delivery providers to engage young people in the most deprived parts of the Borough. This research was funded by GOGA and Haringey Council. It was conducted by Activity Alliance through their GOGA programme in partnership with Haringey Council, from August to November 2022.

**The research explored how future opportunities to be active in Haringey continue to provide quality experiences for disabled people. The aims of this project were to:**

- Understand the qualities, behaviours, and attitudes of key deliverers and community leaders in Haringey.
- Explore how these, and other factors, can create an inclusive environment for disabled participants and deliverers.
- Determine how Haringey Council can encourage the development of inclusive environments, and identify, promote, and support future inclusive leaders.

**The project used qualitative and quantitative methods to capture the diverse and authentic voices of deliverers, stakeholders, disabled people and participants:**

- Desk review of previous research.
- Ten qualitative interviews with deliverers and stakeholders.
- Two surveys - 13 respondents to the deliverer survey and 111 respondents to the participant survey.
- Site visits - attended two activity sessions, to observe sessions and have informal conversations with organisers, coaches, volunteers and participants.
- Two online co-production workshops with activity deliverers, community leaders and disabled people, sharing and discussing research findings and recommendations.



This summary presents the key findings and recommendations for developing inclusive leaders in Haringey.

**The full research report is available on Activity Alliance's website.**

# Key findings

## Developing community leaders in Haringey

The most common ways that deliverers and leaders first became aware of inclusive activity were:



**Experience from previous work or volunteering in sport and the local community.** Previous experience of working with disabled people helped instil values of inclusivity, accessibility and equality.



**Experience from local communities.** Strong community connections created understanding and relatability. For example, growing up, living in and/or working within the local community, as well as shared cultural and heritage backgrounds.



**Positive experiences of sport and physical activity during education for disabled deliverers.** For non-disabled deliverers, experience of education alongside and inclusive of disabled children helped to build awareness and an understanding of inclusivity and adaptability.



**Lived experience.** Deliverers who are disabled, deliverers having family who are disabled or having a family member working with disabled people.

## Community leaders' qualities and skills in Haringey

The most important qualities according to participants and deliverers are:



Trustworthy.



Patience.



Enthusiasm and passion.



Open-minded.



Empowering and motivating.



Empathy.

The most important skills according to deliverers and participants are:



Communication.



Able to adapt to different needs and abilities.



Coaching skills.



Safeguarding.



Disability awareness.






Preparation and planning.

The ability to adapt activities effectively to suit different situations and individual needs was emphasised as the most important quality, behaviour and skill for inclusive activity deliverers and leaders. This includes disability awareness, which is being aware of types of impairments and barriers disabled people experience in physical activity. Preparation and planning are also important, including planning appropriate ways to adapt certain sports or activities, and planning support to include disabled people.









## Supporting deliverers to provide inclusive experiences for participants

Most interviewees had not received formal training or support in inclusive activity. Instead, they focused on the value of informal training and learning 'on the job'. The most preferred forms of support people delivering inclusive activity require are:

-  Support with funding and resources.
-  Connections with other sports and activity organisations.
-  Examples of good practice.






Training delivered by disabled people themselves could be more impactful, as well as training that showed clearly how to implement learning in their sessions. The most useful training topics were:

-  Adapting sports and activities for different impairments.
-  Promoting to and engaging with disabled people.
-  Disability awareness.
-  Getting funding or resources.
-  Accessible communication and formats.
-  Co-production.






## Creating inclusive environments





Inclusive activities, where disabled and non-disabled people take part together, are preferred by most people, regardless of whether the person is disabled or not. The most common barriers to providing inclusive activity were:

-  Lack of knowledge about physical activity.
-  Lack of access to facilities.
-  Lack of funding.
-  Lack of confidence about adapting physical activity.
-  Lack of training for deliverers or coaches.

The interviews explored what has made the inclusive activities in Haringey so successful. There were three main factors:

-  Accessibility, communication and engagement.
-  Integration and inclusion.
-  Support and involvement.

When deliverers and participants were asked what the Council and other organisations should focus on, the most chosen responses were:

-  Accessible facilities and equipment.
-  Changing attitudes about disabled people.
-  More capacity and resources.
-  Sustainable funding.

## Encouraging and supporting disabled people into the physical activity workforce

This research examined barriers preventing disabled people taking on roles in the sport and physical activity delivery workforce, and what support is needed to enable them to become part of the workforce. This section emphasises the voices of disabled people, but also includes the views of non-disabled deliverers and leaders who are experienced in working with and supporting disabled people.

### The most common barriers are:

- Physical access barriers.
- Inaccessible venues and facilities.
- Transport and travel.
- Lack of support workers, and personal assistants.

Disabled people were more likely to say a lack of support workers or personal assistants, finances/lack of money, and communication barriers prevent them from taking on roles in sport and physical activity. Disabled respondents who were interested in becoming part of the workforce gave additional reasons why they had not explored opportunities; a lack of time to take on new roles or volunteering, inadequate pay, and not knowing about training or support.

### This research identified ways to address these barriers, to support and encourage disabled people into the activity delivery workforce:

- Providing and promoting opportunities.
- Role models, peer connections and representation.
- Practical and logistical support to attend training and development opportunities, and also deliver sessions.
- Building confidence and responsibility.
- Person-centred learning styles to suit individuals.
- Pathways for delivery or leadership opportunities.

### Disabled respondents indicated that other types of support would help them take on roles:

- Access to professional training, education and qualifications.
- Access to more experiences to develop confidence and skill, e.g. work experience.
- Support with adequate funding and paid roles.
- Support with communications and advertising.



“You have got to see what is working well. Or if it is not working well, being willing to change. So, it is being able to think and adapt quickly. And anticipating what barriers might be and building that into your plan.”

**Leader, interview**

# Recommendations

We explored these findings with disabled people and deliverers in the co-production workshops. These built on suggestions and ideas from the interviews and surveys. The below are recommendations for the Council and similar organisations.

## Developing inclusive leaders

### Strategic

- Use resources and funding to expand or replicate existing successful inclusive projects. Also, improve facilities and accessibility of venues.
- An award system or system for recognition.
- When strategy planning, speak with a range of deliverers and disabled people.
- Develop a 'standard' or 'mark' for organisations or sessions that meet criteria for an inclusive organisation delivering inclusive activities.

### Promotion and marketing

- Produce and promote a step-by-step pathway, showing opportunities and benefits of being a physical activity professional.
- Campaign or support, collaboratively with providers, for more availability of paid roles for young deliverers and for higher wages that progress with experience.
- Plan public campaigns to change attitudes about disabled people, to increase positivity and disability awareness. Use ambassadors and celebrities, to motivate young people. Support community/fun events, to enhance togetherness and increase awareness of opportunities.

### Support and connectivity

- Create and/or promote central hubs for learning and sharing information and knowledge.
- Increase awareness of mailing lists and other forms of communications about inclusive delivery and opportunities.
- Administrative support, particularly for smaller groups, as well as support on bridging connectivity between different types of organisations in Haringey.

## Creating an inclusive workforce

### Provide and promote opportunities

- Increase opportunities for supported volunteering, work experience and paid roles.
- Create and communicate clear pathways for disabled people to develop from activity participant to activity deliverer, with access to opportunities and support.
- Promote opportunities through local networks, and disability employment platforms and disability websites.



## More accessible job roles and inclusive teams

- Make job roles more accessible through flexible working patterns, reasonable adjustments, general workplace practices for inclusive meetings or job reviews, and adapting instructor roles.
- Make environments more inclusive by promoting accessible training tools, to venues and people involved in your organisation.
- Support the development of accessible facilities, venues and equipment, and improving public transport and travel support in your area.

## Development and support

- Identify potential future leaders of inclusion to develop - using informal 'on the job' training and easy-to-access courses.
- Increase disabled people's confidence, through providing opportunities, support, responsibility, role models and connections with others.
- Working more with specialist organisations and people with specialist knowledge, such as special educational needs schools or impairment-specific organisations.

"An activity deliverer told me I could be an advocate for others and said I could have some training - it gave me confidence because he was given an opportunity to be a leader as a black and disabled person. It motivated and inspired me to take on bigger roles."

**Disabled person, workshop**



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**Get in touch to find out more about GOGA:**



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This document is also available in accessible Word format. Please contact us if you need more support.

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