

# Impact Report 2018-19





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# Message from the Chair

Welcome to Activity Alliance's 2018-19 Impact Report. We have had a busy year making an impact on many fronts. Here, we revisit an exciting and positive 12 months for the charity.

Since joining as Chair in October 2018, it has been great to see the passion our staff and Members have for making active lives possible. There is more work to do to achieve parity in activity for disabled people. Collaboration with our membership and partner network has been key to our successes this year.

In this report, you will find details of new resources that empower organisations to include disabled people. Take in our powerful insight that aims to bring about transformational change. Read about the direct impact our programmes, events and engagement days are having on growing disabled people's activity levels. It was wonderful to witness this impact first-hand at our swimming and athletics championships.

Thank you to everyone who has supported Activity Alliance this year. This support is paramount for a future where disabled people are as active as non-disabled people.

**Sam Orde, Chair**



# Chief Executive's review

Pride and passion are at the heart of everything we do at Activity Alliance. I hope readers get a real sense of this, as they take in some of our successes this year.

It is now indisputable that taking part in sport and active recreation is an essential component of individual wellbeing. Yet, disabled people are still twice as likely as non-disabled people to be physically inactive. We cannot and will not accept this.

Despite evidence of marginal improvement, participation figures remain stubbornly resistant to significant growth. It seems we need to do even more to persuade the sport, leisure and health sectors to embrace new approaches, which work for disabled people. Activity Alliance will step up to the plate and identify what we can do differently to have the greatest impact.

Our refreshed vision will focus on achieving parity for disabled people in sport to give greater clarity about the position we are determined to achieve. We will test our progress against that goal and encourage our partners to do the same. We will take responsibility for seeing year-on-year improvements in disabled people's activity levels, as measured by Sport England's Active Lives survey. We know only too well that significant progress also requires a shift in society's perceptions and attitudes.

Whilst happy to celebrate our achievements along the way, Activity Alliance will not rest until disabled people are as active as non-disabled people.

**Barry Horne, Chief Executive**



# Rising to the challenge of inactivity

Our Get Out Get Active (GOGA) programme provides fun activities for disabled and non-disabled people to enjoy together. Funded by Spirit of 2012, Activity Alliance and GOGA partners are improving the wellbeing and lifestyles of some of the UK's least active communities. This year, we have engaged more than 10,000 first-timers in GOGA activities and proved the life changing benefits of being active.

Our priority has been to share our extensive evidence of exciting new ways to support people to move from inactive to active. Our third annual GOGA conference helped spread our learning to new audiences. Partners told us that they learned how to engage people through non-traditional approaches. The importance of having a diverse (paid and unpaid) workforce who local people can relate to was clear to all. Similarly, staying local and using community based venues has a powerful impact on participation.



“The Tai Chi class has literally changed my life. I have polyarthritis but my range of movement and general wellbeing has improved tremendously since joining Ryan’s class. I would urge anyone, well or not so well, to take up Tai Chi and get involved in the GOGA programme. They will experience a holistic benefit to their health.”

**Mary, GOGA Tai Chi for health participant**

**10,000 people felt the benefits of getting active through GOGA:**

- Increased life satisfaction - from below to above the national average.
- Significantly reduced anxiety levels - to below the national average.
- Wider circle of friends - 90 per cent felt more connected to their community.

After six months of taking part, on average GOGA participants are active an extra 15-18 minutes per day.





# Supporting engagement

Our dedicated Engagement team has provided expert support to organisations across many sectors on effective ways to engage with disabled people. Key strategic partners include Active Partnerships, National Governing Bodies of sport (NGBs) and leisure operators.

## **New resources strengthen provider knowledge**

In early 2019, we bottled engagement expertise to produce a set of informative factsheets for providers. Covering ten key topics, they encourage those who plan and deliver opportunities to think about the ways they include disabled people. Supported by Sport England, the resources empower organisations with the right support, connections and insight.

## **Bridging the gap between the health and sport sector**

To mark World Health Day 2019, Activity Alliance released a short feature film for healthcare professionals. It was created in partnership with Public Health England. The film highlights how health and sports organisations can use physical activity as an effective clinical intervention. In the film, health sector leaders call for a change of approach. They outline how greater health outcomes can come through an active lifestyle.



## **Engaging elected mayors**

Our passion and expertise for joining up the often complex world we live in has led us to work closely with powerful elected mayors. Our active involvement has helped us to support the great steps being taken in the West Midlands, Greater Manchester and Liverpool City Region.

“I’m committed to a fully inclusive city region and I am looking forward to working with Activity Alliance to see how we can help more disabled people into sport and physical activity.

“Our aim is to provide opportunities for disabled people to take part in sporting activities. We know that, as well as its other benefits, physical activity supports disabled people to build new friendships, and maintain their health and independence.”

**Steve Rotheram, Metro Mayor  
of the Liverpool City Region**

# Using research and insight

Robust insight drives all our work at Activity Alliance. We lead the way in evidence-led insight on disabled people's inclusion in sport and active recreation. This year, we focused on ensuring the research we produce makes an impact.

## Benefits or being fit?

In October, we released a new study titled '**The Activity Trap: Disabled people's fear of being active**'. Commissioned by the Dwarf Sports Association UK, the findings revealed almost half of disabled people fear losing their benefits if they are seen to be physically active.

The report received national media attention with coverage on Sky News, the i newspaper, 5 News and HuffPost UK. We also presented the findings at the International Society for Physical Activity and Health (ISPAH) Congress.

Since then, we have been involved in a number of ministerial engagements to discuss the report's recommendations. It has opened up doors for further research-based public affairs and policy work.



## The Activity Trap report: **Key findings**

**Two thirds**  
of disabled people  
(65%) said they rely on  
benefits to be active.

**4 in 5**  
people in the  
study (83%) would  
like to be more active.

**Almost half**  
(47%) are fearful of losing their benefits  
if they are seen to be more active.

**More than half**  
(55%) said they were likely to be more active  
if benefits weren't at risk of being taken away.

"Being active means I can manage my disability better; I have more energy, am more confident and all-round I'm a lot happier in myself. Without the financial support that I received, I would never have been able to get myself to training twice a week.

There are enough financial barriers to sport as it is, especially with the high costs of adapted equipment for some disabled people, without the additional fear of losing benefits.

We need to give all disabled people the same rights to be active that everyone else enjoys – and end the activity trap now."

**Carly Tait, former British wheelchair athlete**



# Applying inclusive marketing and communications

Activity Alliance continues to influence the sport sector as chief advocate for inclusive marketing and communications. This year, our team created new resources on how to use better language and approaches to engage and influence disabled people.

## Ten principles on film

In June, supported by Sport England, we released our ten principles introduction film. It explains our successful ten principles in an accessible way. The principles help providers to engage more people in appealing activities. They are widely known across the sport sector, including positive reference in the Government's 2015 strategy, Sporting Future.

We followed this, in August, with five films called ten principles in action. They feature Shay, Anthony, TP, Tony and Hannah.

Together, all the films are immensely useful as they guide others on how they can apply our ten principles to their own activities.

## Guiding organisations to communications success

In August, we added to our bank of resources with a series of new factsheets that support organisations to be more accessible and inclusive in their communications. They provide clear guidance and practical tips on language, accessible design, marketing campaigns, social media and much more. If applied effectively, the resources can help providers to reach a wider audience, including more disabled people.

Over the year, we also delivered communications training workshops for Nottingham City Council, Street Games, Britain Thinks, Youth Sport Trust, Lawn Tennis Association (formerly Tennis Foundation), EFL Trust and England Athletics.

“We’re proud to support the creation of the ten principles films highlighting how the barriers that can deter disabled people from playing sport or being active can be removed. Everyone who works in the sport and activity sector needs to watch them and then put the simple and practical principles into action.”

**Mike Diaper OBE, Executive Director, Sport England**



# Activity Alliance events

Activity Alliance leads by example in the delivery of high quality events for disabled people.

In April, 120 swimmers aged 10-18 took part in National Junior Para Swimming Championships in Southampton. Delivered in partnership with Swim England, the event gives many young swimmers their first taste of competing at a national level.

In December, more than 220 swimmers took part in the National Para Swimming Championships at Manchester Aquatics Centre. Many World and British records tumbled during the two-day competition. It included international medallists Eleanor Simmonds, Jessica-Jane Applegate, Alice Tai and Thomas Hamer.

From April to July 2018, we held the Typhoo Regional and National Junior Athletics Championships, with support from Lions Club International. More than 1,500 disabled youngsters took part in this year's programme. 250 athletes went forward to represent their region at the National Championships. After dishing out over 500 gold, silver and bronze medals over two days, Activity Alliance crowned the North East team as National Champions 2018.



“I’m always excited to compete at Activity Alliance’s National Junior Athletics Championships.

Being active helps me to keep fit and become healthier. When I’m active, I enjoy the feelings of freedom and independence it gives me. Sport has helped me to accept living with a disability and realise I can achieve anything I put my mind to.”

**Nathan, junior wheelchair racer**



# Upskilling schools and communities

In June, Sport England awarded Activity Alliance £450,000 of National Lottery funding to launch the **Inclusive Activity Programme** with UK Coaching. It provides specialised training on engaging disabled people in physical activity. From September 2018 to March 2019, we have worked with 34 registered partners. This helped to deliver workshops for over 500 individuals, including university students, occupational therapists and National Governing Bodies of sport.

Since 2012, we have managed the **Sainsbury's Active Kids for All Inclusive PE Training Programme**. This is in partnership with our home nation counterparts, Youth Sport Trust and British Paralympic Association. It provides free inclusion training for teachers, trainee teachers and school staff.

This year, we created two new educational videos for the programme's online platform. The videos guide teachers on how to apply the STEP tool and Activity Inclusion Model to their PE lessons. From April 2018 to March 2019, the programme provided practical training to more than 2,000 teachers and school staff.

“The Inclusive Activity Programme has challenged our thinking and approach to educating coaches and officials.

The workshop provides them with the confidence and tools to deliver sessions and competition opportunities for more disabled people within our sport.”

**Charlotte Osborne, Training and Education Manager, British Dressage**

“Now that my teacher has attended a Sainsbury's Inclusive PE Training workshop, PE lessons are a lot more relaxed and everyone can just have fun. It is no longer just about being good at sport but rather about enjoying coming together and participating in physical activity with my classmates.”

**Mysti, school pupil**



# Advocacy and influencing

Activity Alliance's purpose is to make active lives possible, but we cannot do it alone. Our members bring great expertise in their own right and together we make a powerful Alliance. This year, we set out to strengthen our collective expert voice.

## **Making Active Lives Possible Summit**

In June, Activity Alliance hosted its first Making Active Lives Possible Summit at The Kia Oval in London. This unique gathering brought together leaders, key influencers and decision makers from across the sport, fitness and health sectors. Speakers included Activity Alliance Honorary President Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, Vice President John Amaechi OBE and Mike Diaper OBE, Executive Director for Sport England.

The Summit gave leaders the information and tools to take action to increase the number of active disabled people in England.

## **Celebrating 20 years as a charity**

On 5 September 2018, we came together with friends at a special event to celebrate our 20th Anniversary. The occasion allowed us to thank the many people who have supported the charity over two decades. During the evening Activity Alliance said farewell to Chair, Charles Reed MBE, who stepped down after seven years at the helm. Charles was recognised in the New Year Honours 2019 for his services to disabled people in sport.

The event coincided with the unveiling of our **2018-2021 strategy** - **Achieving Inclusion Together**.



“I would like to thank Activity Alliance staff, Trustees and Member organisations for your commitment and contributions to making active lives possible. Our hard work is meaningless if we cannot see the impact.

We are beginning to see some great examples of positive change across a wide range of organisations and sectors. Now, it's time for us to redouble our efforts and continue to challenge perceptions and change the reality of disability, inclusion and sport.”

**Barry Horne, Chief Executive**



# Improvement, leadership and organisational development

Collaboration and inclusion are at the heart of Activity Alliance's work. Our expertise helps others to improve the experiences and activities they offer for disabled people.


## Leading the way on inclusion

This year, our Engagement team supported 14 sport and leisure organisations to complete **Lead - our inclusion improvement programme**. Each organisation undertook a self-assessment to identify areas for improvement in relation to disability equality. Key themes include leadership, strategy, community engagement, people management and facilities. With ongoing support from our Advisors, they are now on the road to becoming truly excellent organisations for disabled people. Lead is making a great impact across a broad range of sport and activity organisations in England. We now have agreements in place for its use overseas.

## Improving the leisure sector

Activity Alliance continues to work with Quest, the UK's leading quality scheme for the sport and leisure industry. In 2018-19, we delivered two briefing sessions. These provided information on how leisure operators can address inequalities and create more welcoming and accessible environments.

Since July 2017, sport and leisure operators could opt to achieve the Inclusive Fitness Initiative Mark Accreditation. This is part of their Quest Plus assessment. Inclusion of the GPlus37 Active Communities and Facility Management modules provides a single, streamlined route for operators to demonstrate their inclusive fitness credentials.



"I found Lead to be a very useful process. It helped the team consider all aspects of what we do in relation to disabled people and how we make our services accessible.

"In doing so, it helped us identify certain gaps in our provision and the services we offer, but also how we communicate our services to the target audiences. It also helped us identify a knowledge gap in certain members of the team."

**Jackie Browne, Sport and Physical Activity Manager, Northamptonshire Sport**

# Fundraising

Our individual fundraisers and corporate partners play a crucial role. They support us to transform disabled people's lives through sport and activity. 2018-19 proved another successful year, with total funds raised amounting to £131k.

Thank you to all our partners and supporters who have made this year so successful, including Lions Club International, Typhoo Tea and Nationwide Building Society.



# Finance

Activity Alliance's total income for the financial year 2018-19 amounted to £3.3m. An increase of £203k on the previous year. A generous legacy donation of £200k accounts for the main increase in income this year.

Sport England continues to be one of the charity's largest funders, investing £1.2m this year. Their contribution enables us to continue delivering research, marketing and engagement expertise to the sport sector and beyond. Spirit of 2012 provided £1.3m to fund the third year of our Get Out Get Active programme.

Several sporting partners commissioned our event management services to deliver inclusive competition opportunities for disabled children and adults. They include London Marathon Events, Swim England and British Para-Swimming.

This year, we utilised our expertise to complete a number of small consultancy projects. This new income source has enabled us to invest in some organisational developments. Activity Alliance will continue to seek new fundraising and income-generating opportunities to grow the charity.

Income Year Ended 31 March 2019		
	Spirit of 2012	1.3m
	Sport England (Exchequer)	1.2m
	Donations and legacies	268.7k
	Sainsbury's	181.5k
	Sport England (National Lottery)	131.8k
	Events management	100.4k
	Consultancy	36.1k
	Typhoo Tea	29k
	Investment income	2.6k
Total		3.3m

Expenditure Year Ended 31 March 2019		
	Get Out Get Active	1.3m
	Sport England programme delivery	1.2m
	Activity Alliance events	212.1k
	Sainsbury's Inclusive PE Training	198k
	Inclusive Activity Programme	80.2k
	Organisational development	54.6k
	Others	33.4k
Total		3.1m



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**Visit our website for more information on  
our work and our Members' achievements.**

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Please contact us if you need more support.

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Activity Alliance is the operating name for the English Federation  
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