

Local Pilot Process Evaluation Summary

March 2021



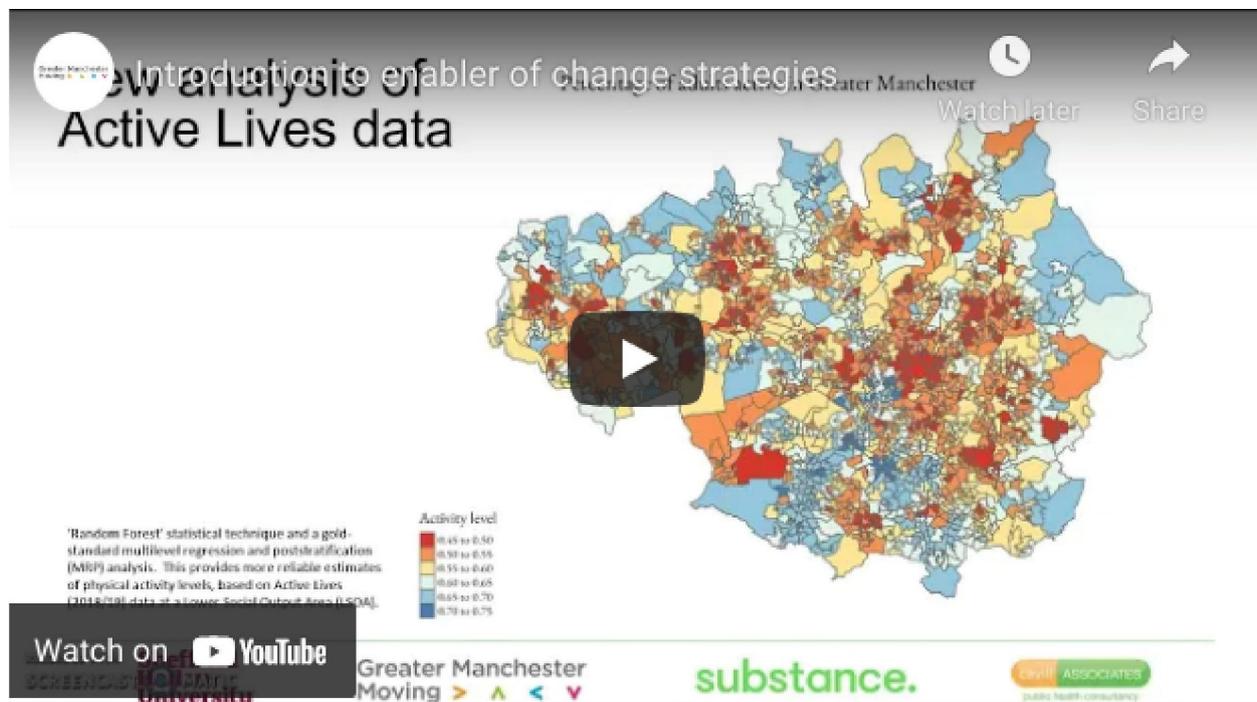
This report relates to the process learnings gathered between September 2020 and March 2021, during the Covid-19 pandemic. Since March 2020, Greater Manchester has been free of lockdown restrictions for only 25 days.

Many of the local pilot officers have been redeployed to support with the Covid-19 response within their local area.

This evaluation seeks to understand how the system might be nudged to provide conditions enable active lives.

Link with inequalities

It is well established that physical activity levels are linked to inequalities. It is suggested that there are two complementary and interlinking strategies to tackle inactivity. The video below gives an explanation of the Active Lives data analysis and introduces the two strategies.



Recommendations for each of the enablers of change will be described in terms of the two potential strategies.

Strategy A)

- To take place-based action to promote physical activity with populations at need, despite inherent challenges associated with structural disadvantage.
 - Following lines of enquiry suggested by the new analysis and local knowledge.

Strategy B)

- To contribute to efforts in Greater Manchester to tackle inequalities in health, wellbeing and social justice.
 - Working across organisational and hierarchical boundaries for this common goal.

Involving local people and growing assets

Summary findings

- The autumn-winter period, with tier 3 restrictions, followed by lockdown, has challenged everyone. This has not been a helpful context for the energy, creativity, and persistence needed to develop new relationships with the community and/or community organisations. This has been particularly true of those in NHS, public health and adult care roles who are most affected by the competing pressures and fatigue.
- Dedicated capacity built into locality teams to undertake community engagement has proven essential for any progress in this area.
- Flexible funding pots alone, such as Community Investment Funds, are not sufficient to support the development of new community assets for physical activity, particularly at a time when there are many competing streams.
- GM Moving In Action engagement events have shown there is a passion in the community to be involved, advocate for physical activity and reduce systemic inequalities. This not currently linked into opportunities and work in localities.



A screenshot of a video player showing a presentation slide titled "Involving Local People and Growing Assets Ma...". The slide features a flowchart with several boxes and labels. The boxes include: "Local people and groups take an active role in enabling active lives - co-production", "Community investment funds (and development work)", "Reach new people", "Identify, nurture and or connect local assets", "Work with local forums, champions, individuals", "More appealing and sustainable opportunities", "Dedicated capacity", "Ingenuity", "Persistence", "Culture change to be active", "Passion", "Watch later", and "Share". The video player interface includes a play button, a timestamp of "March 2020", and a "Watch on YouTube" button. Logos for "Greater Manchester Moving", "substance.", and "LIFE ASSOCIATES" are visible at the bottom.

Recommendations

Strategy A.

Suggestions which support people to take **place-based action to promote physical activity** with populations at need, despite inherent challenges associated with structural disadvantage.

- Prioritise relationship building with local communities.
- Build skills / capacity in locality teams to engage meaningfully and on an ongoing basis with local people.
- Invest in building individuals' and smaller community groups' capabilities in:
 - a) grant application and management;
 - b) meaningful involvement in policy or service co-design;
 - c) 'business development' e.g. support to become constituted, marketing, evaluation resources.
- Work closely across GreaterSport and localities to connect people, who have engaged in the GM Moving Strategy Refresh, into the locality pilot work.

Strategy B.

Suggestions that contribute to efforts in Greater Manchester to **tackle the structural inequalities in health, wellbeing and social justice** which, as a result, create the conditions which may favour more active lives.

- Facilitate community leadership for physical activity through significant distribution of resource to community organisations and/or people.
- Mandate for, and remunerate, lay board members in steering groups.
- Consider shifting the language of this theory area to 'Led by local people and growing local assets'.
- Engage in wider reform leadership and influence. Share evidence and learning about why tackling inequalities matters to physical activity and population health outcomes and share learning that will help the wider system and societal reform.

Reflection questions

- To what extent do we individually or collectively have the skills, opportunity and motivation to meaningfully engage with local people in this work?
- To what extent can we as individuals play our part in addressing structural inequalities within society?

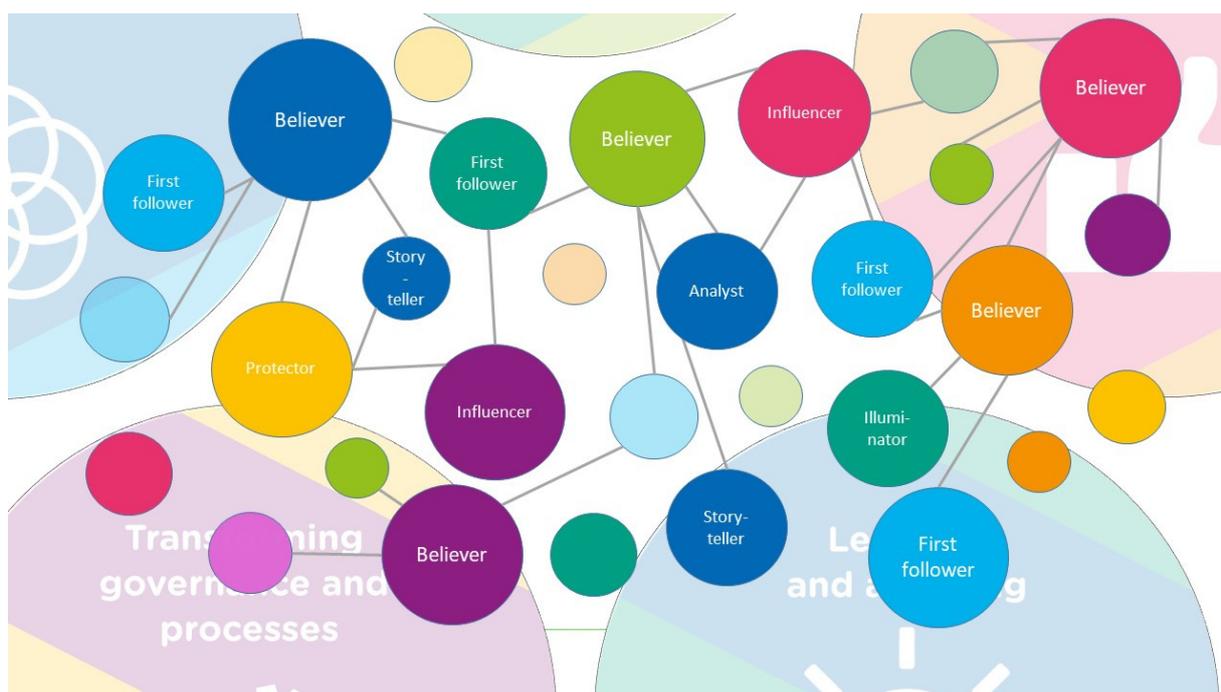
Strategic leadership enabling collective leadership

Summary findings

In some localities physical activity is not prioritised, and there is a lack of connectivity between the Local Pilot teams and senior leadership, particularly amongst elected members. It is thought that unless there is a personal interest in physical activity among elected members, it is seen as one of many competing issues and not prioritised.

To overcome this, it is suggested that physical activity is framed in a way that tackles other priorities, e.g. structural inequalities, climate change, obesity and broader wellbeing messages.

As discussed in the last process evaluation, it was highlighted that there are a range of roles required within the work. Mapping roles and functions within localities' networks was useful to identify where their own teams were well balanced, and where they may be missing particular roles/functions. It was felt there was a need for protectors and influencers at a 'middle management' level.



| Role / function | Definition: The actions we can take to fulfil the roles |
|-----------------|--|
| Believer | Having conviction in the need for physical activity, and a whole system approach, and being able to convey this message with passion. |
| First Follower | Having a willingness to join in and 'work' together in new ways to create change. First followers may become or be seen as believers within their own communities. |
| Connector | Being able to join the dots, develop and broker relationships across and between sectors and communities. |



Recommendations

Strategy A.

Suggestions which support people to take **place-based action to promote physical activity** with populations at need, despite inherent challenges associated with structural disadvantage.

- Consider the best model for collective leadership for each locality depending on the immediate, short and long-term context.
- Look for hooks to influence existing strategic leaders to consider physical activity as a priority and use this as leverage - perhaps by working within a wider population health context, or through the lens of person and community centred approaches more broadly, or through a COVID-19 recovery and resilience lens.
- Work with locality steering groups, or equivalent, to upskill the wider team in systems thinking, systems leadership and values training.
- Consider Local Pilot central team taking a more active stance in helping to influence in localities at different levels of the system.

Strategy B.

Suggestions that contribute to efforts in Greater Manchester **to tackle the structural inequalities in health, wellbeing and social justice** which, as a result, create the conditions which may favour more active lives.

- Look for hooks to influence existing strategic leaders to consider different ways of working to tackle structural and systemic inequalities...through whole system approaches, wider determinants of health, proportionate universalism, alternative governance and processes, social vs (or not) economic value .
- Work to ensure all team members are seen as equally valuable.
- Facilitate participative decision-making.
- Consider shifting the language of this theory area to “dynamic, collective leadership” recognising the fluidity of leadership models necessary to affect change.
- If in doubt, take on the role of disrupter and seek forgiveness, don't ask permission. Tap into and trust your gut instinct and intuition.

Reflection questions

- Thinking about your current context, what model of leadership is going to work best for you to adopt a place-based approach to physical activity: Spine or network, a combination of the two, or something else?
- Thinking about your current context, through which frame should you present your work – physical activity or something else? For example, COVID-19 recovery, mental wellbeing, population health, obesity, deconditioning?

Effective Work Across and Between Sectors

Summary findings

- The use of online platforms has facilitated cross-sector working, allowing people to attend meetings in other sectors and organisations. There is also the perception that hierarchies have been flattened, as a result of people dialling in from home, with more casual clothes and greater access to people's personal lives allowing more meaningful contact.
- Teams have been able to connect widely on a common theme of physical activity, either as an end, but more likely, as a means to an end. There are a wide range of overlapping interests including mental wellbeing, health promotion, community cohesion, and management/prevention of serious health conditions (including COVID-19). These opportunities have arisen through exploration of a common purpose to align priorities.
- Distilling this authentic interest down into a meaningful course of action has not always been as easy to do. There is real value in starting conversations about why moving matters to you and your work, and identifying shared priorities/goals and first small steps together.
- Opportunities to act may be months or years in the making, but a small thing (a conversation, a twitter message) can trigger a chain of events which allow individuals to connect the dots and achieve positive outcomes outside of the formal structures and hierarchies. Social Leadership like this is worth exploring further.



Effective cross and between sector working Mar...

Productive partnerships working around common goals

Work together on common projects

Build relationships and trust

Align values, principles and goals

Broaden and connect the network

| Survey Indicator | Average score / 7 | # Localities over 4.5/7 |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Policy and practice is changing as a result of connections across and between sectors to enable active lives | 4.5 | 5 |
| Partners agree on how to make resources and assets work more effectively to enable active lives | 4.3 | 3 |
| There is honesty between people/partners to enable active lives | 5 | 11 |
| People/partners identify shared benefits from working together to enable active lives | 5 | 10 |
| Effective work taking place to build relationships across and between sectors to enable active lives | 5.2 | 11 |

Recommendations

Strategy A.

Suggestions which support people to take **place-based action to promote physical activity** with populations at need, despite inherent challenges associated with structural disadvantage.

- Actively horizon scan, with an open-mind; the evidence, policy levers or chance circumstances that may catalyse a positive relationship and convert it to productive partnership working.
- Actively employ design-led ideas to help scope beyond authentic interest.
- Consider hyper local/mini test and learn initiatives, just to get started in some areas.
- Aim to work at both strategic and individual levels at the same time or connect with colleagues that can facilitate this flow of information and connection.
- Look for opportunities to work across localities.

Strategy B.

Suggestions that contribute to efforts in Greater Manchester **to tackle the structural inequalities in health, wellbeing and social justice** which, as a result, create the conditions which may favour more active lives.

- Invest in co-design in every aspect of work.
- Consider shifting the language of this theory area to “Working across organisational, sector and formal boundaries”.

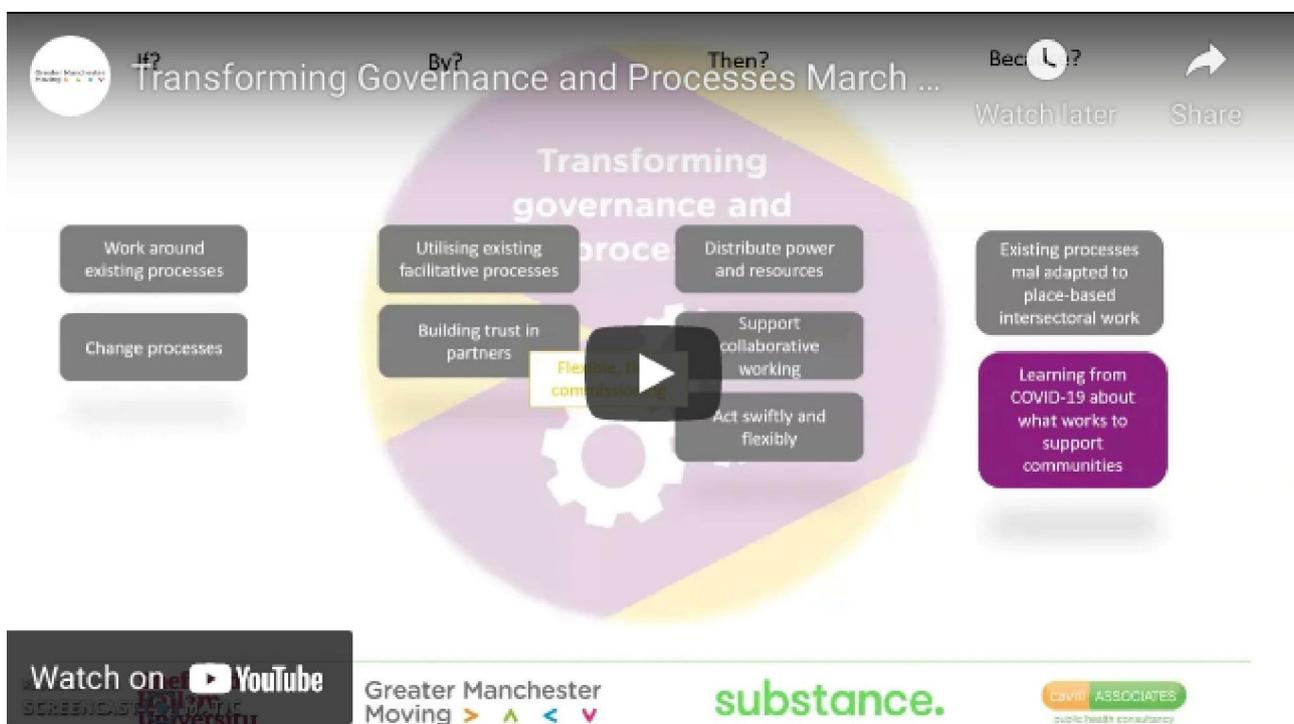
Reflection questions

- Think about one positive relationship you have made across organisational and/or hierarchical boundaries. What is that relationship built on? How can you utilise that relationship to influence system change?

Transforming Governance and Processes

Summary findings

- HR, Legal and Procurement processes are not sufficiently flexible to enable the conditions to support active lives. Governance processes that were adapted to respond to COVID-19 have not been adapted to support increasing physical activity.
- Co-commissioning provides a way for local teams to build meaningful relationships with locality partners around place-based wellbeing initiatives. It can help to influence the funding decisions of locality partners to ensure physical activity is a key aspect of projects supported and to provide supported funds which are meaningful to communities.



Recommendations

Strategy A.

Suggestions which support people to take **place-based action to promote physical activity** with populations at need, despite inherent challenges associated with structural disadvantage.

- Look for creative ways to kick start projects without disproportionate bureaucracy.
- Processes should be designed in a way that makes them accessible, particularly for new groups who may not be familiar with traditional funding models.
- Identify commissioners and administrators in place who are willing to consider flexible arrangements to support working across organisational boundaries.

Strategy B.

Suggestions that contribute to efforts in Greater Manchester to **tackle the structural inequalities in health, wellbeing and social justice** which, as a result, create the conditions which may favour more active lives.

- Work with other colleagues, including administrative staff, across the locality on new operating models to tackle health inequalities.
- Work with other colleagues, including local people and senior colleagues on new evaluation (story-telling and sense-making) models to encourage a culture and structures for accountability. This may mean changing what is valued in measurement – learning and improving vs reporting and monitoring.

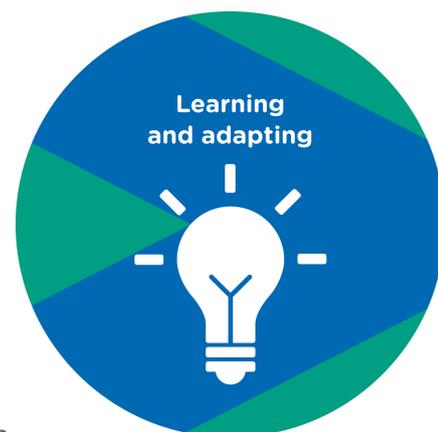
Reflection questions

- How can we collectively notice and capture the value of the processes and removal of bureaucracy from the pandemic, and build them into our future ways of working?

Learning and Adapting

Summary findings

- It takes time and effort to build relationships and the trust that enables critical reflection. This can be aided by giving localities ownership of the process and a focus on story telling.
- Spreading responsibility for facilitation of reflection sessions builds capacity and engagement with the process of learning and adapting.
- Whilst there is a continued emphasis on the importance of conventional insight and evidence, fresh examples of test and learn approaches are emerging with positive results.



Recommendations

Strategy A.

Suggestions which support people to take **place-based action to promote physical activity with populations at need**, despite inherent challenges associated with structural disadvantage.

- Continue to develop observation and critical reflection skills.
- Build skills to model and convert:
 - issues into ideas.
 - ideas into action.
 - action into opportunities to learn.
 - learning to adaptation.
 - Adaptations into ideas.
- Consider changing the title of this enabler to “Planning, Acting, Learning, Adapting”.

Strategy B.

Suggestions that contribute to efforts in Greater Manchester to **tackle the structural inequalities in health, wellbeing and social justice** which, as a result, create the conditions which may favour more active lives.

- Accept that in a complex system you will never have the perfect evidence base to justify decisions.
- Adopt a fail-fast approach and build capacity skills and confidence to act.
- Outline assumptions associated with new ideas and methods and capture data which allows you to test those assumptions.
- Adopt different evaluative models that are not designed on medicalised models - that favour traditional hierarchies, assumptions and power relations.

Key reflection questions

- How do we build confidence in non-conventional learning methods amongst commissioners and senior managers?
- How do we move from learning to adapting?