



### What has been happening?

The Manchester LP place-based approach to developing a localized physical activity offer utilises a community engagement strategy, positioning local people at the heart of idea generation to embed physical activity in the context of wider health outcomes. The Community Research project in Woodhouse Park, Wythenshawe has the central aim of creating a community led vision for a Healthy Woodhouse Park.

## What changes have we seen?

This approach is centred within the high-level programme theory strands around the **individual** and **social environment**, testing the notion that the activity allows local system practitioners to reimagine how community engagement could be embedded, using opportunities provided through the LP to support their ambitions. The project has already begun to demonstrate that the community researchers have the capability, opportunity and motivation to engage in designing increased physical activity across Woodhouse Park.



Context
Residents
not engaged
in decision
making

Intervention
Invest time and energy to engage residents in park planning

Then
Community
members readily
engage in wider
CE opportunities

Because
Community members
have the capability,
opportunity, and
motivation to engage

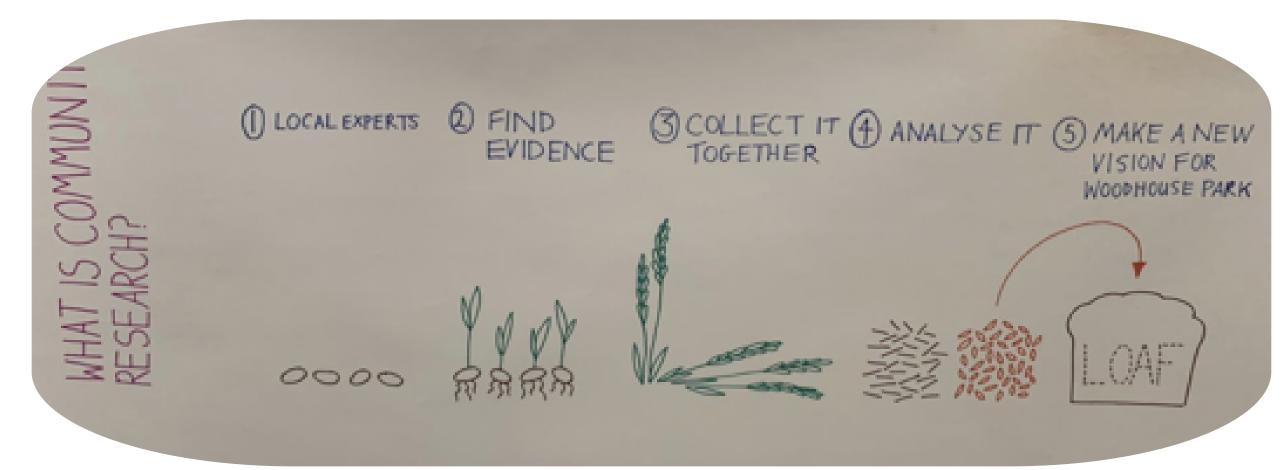
#### The action

Local residents were initially invited to contribute via a range of communication channels, notably through a local Community Champion, a newspaper article, and social media. However, recruitment success was largely attributed to the team securing a dedicated space in the local Wythenshawe forum. The team promoted the group through posters on the wall and invited people to join for refreshments, providing them with shopping vouchers to reward them for their expertise. A core group of ten community researchers now regularly contribute to the project.

## Creating a vision

The group were asked to position **what health meant to the community** as a starting point to position any response. This gathering evidence was characterized through conversation, some during walks. A total of seven health themes were identified those being

- 1. Community and connectedness
- 2. Beauty and design
- 3. Nature and environment
- 4. Healthy food
- 5. High street and jobs
- 6. Play and fitness
- 7. Ease of movement





The community researchers designed subsequently ideas improve health around each of seven strands. In total 72 ideas were generated, later condensed into 26 final ideas. The ideas ranged and include larger scale infrastructure concepts such as enhancing civic green space or creating walking and running trails; funding equipment such as functional fitness gym equipment and community bike hire; and community activity programming such as play programmes for children involving outdoor activity trails and cooking projects.

# **Next Steps**

- 1. Community research team share their vision with many more people living and working nearby, gathering feedback on which ideas are most popular and why.
- 2. Meet with local partners to bring them onboard; find groups to work with MCRactive over the coming years to help bring some of the ideas to life and make Woodhouse Park a healthier place.
- 3. MCRactive begins work with local partners to take forward new projects and begin to deliver some of the ideas
- 4. Embed the Community Researcher approach into usual practice and replicate the idea in other areas

The challenge for Manchester LP will be to **act on the ask** proposed by the Community Researchers and gather understanding of how to prioritise these without causing disaffection within the community. The LP needs to consider funding allocation where required or signposting to support across the community to ensure these ideas become a reality.