



Press Release

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Sport England are funding 26 projects to help people on a low income get active

- People on a low income can face many pressures that make it difficult for them to fit activity into their lives.
- Projects will focus on groups facing economic disadvantage, such as lone parents, ethnic minorities, rough sleepers and refugees.
- They all aim to improve people's health and mental wellbeing through sport and activity.

A total of 26 pioneering projects helping local people on a low income across the country become more active and healthier have won backing from Sport England.

The projects have been awarded funding of up to £10,000 each as part of Sport England's strategy to improve people's health and mental wellbeing through sport and activity.

Sport England research¹ shows that a third of people on low incomes are inactive, meaning they do less than 30 minutes of exercise that gets them slightly out of breath each week. And inactivity in people on a low income is twice that of people on a high income.

When money is a concern and making the household budget stretch is a challenge, committing to the cost of memberships or finding the time for sport and activity often isn't possible.

The projects will use varying approaches to help people to feel healthier, happier, more confident and able to cope with life's pressures, or more connected to their families and communities.

The projects include:

- **Ribble Valley Gymnastics Academy's** 'Dad Dancing' exercise, movement and fitness programme for men who may be put off by traditional format but want to exercise during the day because of work patterns, because they may be unemployed or stay at home dads.
- **West End Women and Girls Centre's** 'Get On Your Bike' project will lead women and girls in Newcastle on guided cycle rides to improve their confidence, become more active and lead healthier lives.
- **Barnet Lone Parent Centre** will add fitness classes to the benefits and debt advice services they now provide.
- **The Booth Centre Sports Programme** in Manchester will offer free sports sessions to rough sleepers, the homeless or those who have experienced homelessness.
- **Brentwood Leisure Trust** will offer Autism Friendly Gym sessions to help young people with autism become more independent.
- **Newham Community Renewal Programme** will provide fitness sessions for ethnic minority women who do not currently exercise and are either not working or in low paid jobs.
- **Notts County Football in the Community** will introduce the local refugee community to sports such as cricket, badminton and handball.

Sport England Executive Director, Mike Diaper, said:

"We know that people on a low income can face many pressures that make it difficult for them to be as active as they would like to be. So we're working with community-focused organisations across the country to find ways to help people fit physical activity into their lives in ways that work for them.

"All the groups have a strong track record of working with their local community and we're very excited by how these projects could make such a positive difference to people's lives. The lessons we learn will help to shape our work across the country."

-ENDS-

For information and to request interviews contact:

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About Sport England

Sport England is a public body and invests up to £300 million National Lottery and government money each year in projects and programmes that help people get active and play sport.

It wants everyone in England, regardless of age, background, or level of ability, to feel able to engage in sport and physical activity. That's why a lot of its work is specifically focused on helping people who do no, or very little, physical activity and groups who are typically less active - like women, disabled people and people on lower incomes.

A further £3 million funding specifically aimed at helping people on low incomes will be announced later this year. In total Sport England has pledged to invest more than £250 million over four years encouraging inactive people to become active.

The health benefits of becoming active include reducing the risk of many chronic conditions such as type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, some of the most common cancers, and many mental health conditions.

ⁱ Source: Sport England Active Lives Survey Nov 15/16.

Inactivity rate for lower income groups, such as shops assistants, waitress, long-term unemployed or never worked is 33.5%

Inactivity rate for higher income groups, such as chief executives and doctors, is 16.7%