

Southall

Local delivery pilot



Organisation responsible: Ealing Council

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Background to the pilot

Southall in Ealing, West London, is an area with a strong sense of place. Diverse communities from across the world, including India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Somalia, have settled here, making it a vibrant and culturally rich town. As well as being close to Heathrow, Southall is well connected to central London and is continuing to benefit from major infrastructure and residential developments, including Crossrail that will provide thousands of new homes and jobs. The significant regeneration of Southall will create a 20% growth in population by 2026.

With a population of just over 70,000 across five ward areas, Southall is characterised by a relatively youthful population, with higher levels of households with young children, as well as lower rates of economic activity and qualifications. Since 2010, four of the five wards in Southall have been among the most deprived nationally and there is a higher rate of conditions such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and mental health conditions than elsewhere.

What's the pilot trying to achieve?

The Health Challenges faced by people in the most deprived parts of England leads to life expectancy gaps of 10 years. Southall is no different. A survey of 700 Southall residents had confirmed that 43% were doing less than 30 minutes

exercise per week. This contrasted with a borough wide figure of 27% and national figure of 25%

Southall was one of 12 pilot areas nationally that successfully bid for multi-year funding from Sport England to deliver, test and learn (new and innovative) approaches to meet the following ambitions; big ambitions:

- To make it easy for people to get active as part of their everyday lives and as a method for meeting their wellbeing needs.
- To support people to walk and cycle when they are making short journeys instead of driving.
- To positively impact the overall social and economic wellbeing of our inactive people as well as their levels of physical activity.
- To enable people to get more active in ways that connect them to their neighbours.
- To help people make Southall a better place to live and work.
- To create a different way of working between groups within Southall and with the wider public and community and voluntary sector in Ealing and beyond.

By making a positive impact on the overall social, physical, emotional and economic wellbeing of inactive people, as well as their levels of physical activity, we believe everyone in Southall might then be able to make the choice to become happier and healthier. People in Southall cannot do this alone. Wider systemic change is essential by those people and services that currently listen to and support Southall so that active choices can be made at all levels.

Who's the target audience?

The pilot is looking to engage people in Southall who are inactive including older people, people living with disabilities, black and minority ethnic groups, women, people with long term health conditions, low income families and carers.

The pilot has been targeting residents to build connections and organise themselves to volunteer their time and support the development of a social movement.

What's happened over the past 12 months?

The collective ambition for the programme identified the strategic need to initiate the creation of a social movement for physical activity in Southall on the overwhelming evidence that the system is complex, and a normal project management intervention would be less likely to work

Looking back to November 2019; Let's Go Southall launched the review and celebration of our journey to that point; **'First Steps'** report at a stakeholder event. It was also the launch of the programme's social movement; the **'Active Communities Campaign'** (ACC).

The ACC has significantly developed local capacity and leadership with the support and learning that has been based on a Harvard School model of leading and taking action. Over 30 local organisers and super organisers have been recruited from Southall with a focus on supporting individuals from within our target groups. Before and at the outset of Covid-19, the campaign teams listened to over 250 inactive people in over 70 settings. It was important to keep the momentum going and with this came the delivery of online and safe socially distanced physical activities. From June to the present, activities have included bhangra and chair-based exercises.

Our vision is a vision that is developed and owned by Southall (it's people, politicians, faith leaders, business leaders, community leaders and school leaders)

This is not about simply wanting to provide new sports facilities, activities or services. We want to take responsibility as leaders for enabling the people in Southall to show leadership in the face of adversity - local people are dying younger because of inequalities. This will require significant change in behaviours and mindsets for us all - and learning to work together amid the fray of complex and competing dynamics. If this was easy it would be happening already.

Southall was successful in its bid to Sport England because of the commitment it had demonstrated to getting people active but also the identified scale of the challenge faced in getting large numbers of people active. It has become apparent that in addition to extremely low levels of activity, there are also very low levels of trust in between the agencies and organisations that might be expected to help to improve the situation and a lack of capacity in the system to create the change we want to see.

“Movement building is about people, power, change. A core principle of movement building is using the resources people have to create the power they need to create the change they want.” Marshall Ganz, Harvard Kennedy School

Translated into a Southall context this means that people in Southall have the resources and are best placed to build power together to get each other active.

Building power requires having leadership organised to bring change through these resources and skills to recreate ways of working with the people. A relational model was essential to the movement building way of working as is the experience of Southall these emerging leaders have brought with them.

The approach has aimed to build a movement (or several movements) of people across Southall who want to take responsibility for recruiting and inspiring people to be more active. This approach has been new to many people and it has been very time-consuming to increase understanding of how this works and why it has a far greater chance of success than running traditional publicity and marketing campaigns.

We have spent 6 months diagnosing, agitating, connecting, creating a movement, and a platform for systemic doing and learning. We are learning a lot about what's possible and what's not, where there's capacity, how it can/can't be used.

We have been establishing relationships with diverse groups of people and finding out what it would take for them to become more active. We continue to learn and adapt as we move forward. The energy and stories generated already are amazing and the reach into the community is growing.

The work involves a multi-layered approach:

- Working through a series of campaigns beginning with a 'Listening' Campaign and then moving to a 'Get Active' campaign
- Developing leadership and organising capacity through a movement building approach and including public sector leaders as part of this
- Building relationships with inactive people (our future leaders) through the connections and networks of Southall people
- Consider, address and redistribute the power operating at different levels, places, within and between organisations and people in Southall and more widely in Ealing, as the beginnings of whole systems change
- Learn and reflect about what matters to people and the resources they have to become more active AND about the change needed at all levels in

the system to achieve this. Sharing this learning will impact and influence the wider systems change that is so essential, as we start to connect the system to more of itself.

The LGS team submitted their successful Pathfinder bid in July 2020. The associated workplans will involve growing the capacity of the campaign teams and moving into other areas of the system including schools and businesses. The team are working through a transition period where there will be an increased focus on transformation, delivery, communication and health over the coming months.

There are projects that directly link to the outcomes of the programme and include the delivery of a feasibility study by the **Canal & River Trust** as well as the new revolutionary **Great Outdoor Gym** in Southall Park. Both projects are looking at sustainable ways to encourage residents to connect to their local environment, increase their physical activity levels and provide greater access to green space and parks.

Key learnings over the past 12 months?

Residents are:

- Thinking differently about the opportunities available to get active in a positive way
- Supporting one another to be active and how to incorporate opportunities locally
- Taking part in a movement that involves the community coming together to be active

Reflections from Active Communities Campaign insight includes:

- There are new leaders in the place and there are unknown networks to tap into
- There is a lot of energy within the campaign and a recognition that new behaviours are emerging
- Movement building as a whole systems approach supports change to be both bespoke and more importantly place specific.

Let's Go Southall has needed to review its capacity in light of the work emerging through the ACC. The transition can take time to bed in and there is still a lot of work to be done to engage with the wider system.

Let's Go Southall have a strong connection to the social prescribing agenda in Southall and as PCN's are evolving, there are opportunities to ensure connectivity to the work around health. A targeted approach towards the health agenda for Southall is part of the thinking for the way forward.

What to think about when trying to work within a whole system approach?

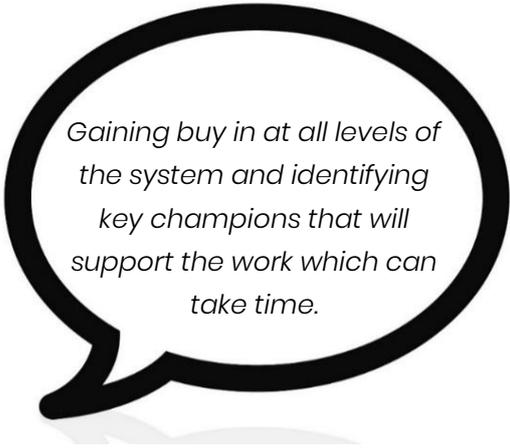
Go where the energy is to start with and where positive conversations emerge. Build on what is already going on using local assets.

The journey of creating a power shift to change the system to move closer to the place is core to create local action and shared ownership

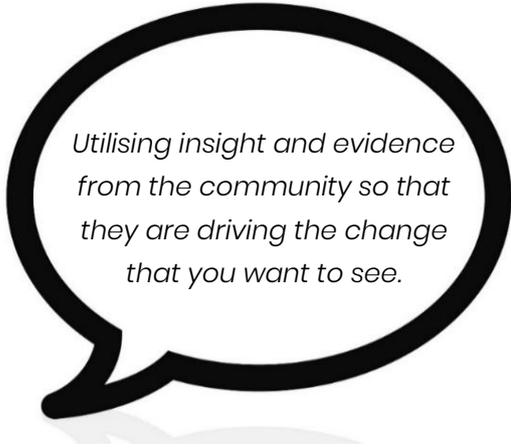
Language is key and how you communicate will vary depending on the part of the system that you are working with. Telling stories back to the system can be very powerful and work with collective values around taking action.

Listening deeply to the challenges of working in a periphery space to recreate synergy across the system

Understand where stakeholders are and what the barriers are for collective action and strengthen partnerships.

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Gaining buy in at all levels of the system and identifying key champions that will support the work which can take time.

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Utilising insight and evidence from the community so that they are driving the change that you want to see.

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Public narratives from the community are most helpful when trying to create change from the bottom

Stay connected ...

To stay connected to the work of the Southall pilot visit our website and social media channels. If you want to keep in touch with the work of all the local delivery pilots and hear about workshops and webinars, you can join the community of learning (CoL) [here](#).