Empowerment: building community, capacity, and leadership
This series is all about people. People make change happen. People turn policy into practice and strategy into a movement. This episode deep dives into building capacity within communities, focussing on leadership development and community empowerment. Real stories and methods that drive successful systemic change.

“The main thing for success, is local people leading a movement for the change they want to see.”

Sumir Vaid
Why is it important?

To enable self-supporting change in communities that meets the needs of local people, involving them in the design and delivery of the opportunities is central to a place-based, whole system approach.

This cannot be done in isolation. The wider system needs to be able and willing to lean into the work, to respond to local issues and support communities to develop their own solutions to enabling inactive people to move more.

Empowerment is about giving individuals the tools, knowledge, and confidence to make meaningful changes in their lives and communities.

“People come together to solve issues; it should never be about one person.”

Libby Cotter
The speakers

Sumir Vaid
Cycle Lead for Let’s Go Southall

Sumir is currently working as a Cycle lead within the Social Movement and part of the Southall Place Partnership – Let’s Go Southall. Initially starting out in IT, Sumir went on to discover passion for people engagement and embarked into a career within sports development. Sumir puts listening and involvement skills at the front and centre of the work within Southall.

Libby Cotter
Project Development Officer for Get Set Leeds Local Project from the Active Leeds Team

Libby is currently working as a Project Development Officer for the Active Leeds Team. The Get Set Leeds Local project focusses on using Place Based Systemic working to find different ways to move and helps communities build strong and meaningful connections that enable physical activity.

“Success is taking partners on the journey.”

Sumir Vaid
Skills, mindsets and behaviours that are important

**Listening** – what do people want? What have been their life experiences?

- Develop your own people – with and by, rather than to and for
- Empathy – about the challenges people face
- Positivity and resilience to keep going

**Creating opportunities** that are **Fast** and **Easy** to access, **Attractive**, **Social** and **Timely** (**FEAST**)

- Do what you say
- Agile and responsive

**Inspire others and use ‘people like me’ as role models**

- Influencing skills to get the wider system (organisations) to lean into and support the work

**Taking the challenges how they come**

- Authentic – create genuine relationships, build trust by being open and honest
- **Social media** skills to connect people and sustain interest and involvement
In every area, success looks different.

Have open conversations.

Build connections with and within the community.

Take other people on the journey – share the learning.

Don’t rush, go at the pace of the community.

Acknowledge it’s OK for things to fail, if so, fail quickly and learn from it.

Every day is a school day.
Co-production toolkit
This ‘Toolkit’ highlights best practice in participatory research at the University of Leeds, and identifies key priorities for innovative interdisciplinary methods development. There are FOUR AIMS for this toolkit: 1. Provide case studies and exploration of research findings; 2. Identify emerging and innovative research areas; 3. Identify opportunities for new partnerships; 4. Build an evidence base to support the LSSI Co-production Network’s future work.

Community panel
The Leeds Citizens’ Panel is a large group of adults of different ages and backgrounds from across the city of Leeds. The panel help us to measure public opinion by taking part in different types of consultation and engagement activity, like surveys or focus groups. It is a way local people can get involved to help us understand their views, ideas and opinions.

Influencer framework – Leeds Beckett

Community chest pot – small fund – supports local good ideas
Get Set Leeds Local has a Community Chest Pot (up to £300) which can support community good ideas, which supports places to move more in some way. Any group or resident can apply. If it’s just an idea, bring it to us and we can see how we can work together to make it happen.

10 Conditions for tackling inequalities in physical activity:
Take a look at the learning and resources developed by Sport England’s National Evaluation & Learning Partner and people working in local place partnerships. Access the recordings from the ‘conditions for change’ learning series. Episodes of interest include:

Capacity and capability across the workforce, volunteers and in communities

Putting It Into Practice:
Check out the Sport England resource ‘Putting it into practice’ which brings to life some of the approaches, models, and tools used by places taking a place-based, whole system approach. Content you might be interested in includes;

Understanding the lived experience

“Don’t rush, go at the pace of the community.”
Libby Cotter