



Accessible, Affordable, Appropriate



## Active Local- Bedwell Briefing No.2

### Background

From September 2020, the Herts Sports and Physical Activity Partnership (HSP) - based at the University of Hertfordshire – will, in line with the wishes of its principal funder, Sport England, be moving to place-based working across Hertfordshire.

Favouring an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, the Partnership is seeking to use sport and physical activity to address inactivity, social disadvantage and health inequalities within the most deprived community in each of Hertfordshire's 10 District and Borough Council areas including Bedwell in Stevenage.

### Bedwell-Stevenage

The *Active Local* programme will see the Partnership deploy 10 of its core team in each of the respective areas for up to 2.5 days each week, with a view to them undertaking a comprehensive mapping of community assets – including places and people – and facilitating extensive consultation with the local community.

The main officers working on the Bedwell project are: Shelley Woods - Project Officer (Herts Sports Partnership) and Oonagh Sherlock - Community Development Officer (Stevenage Borough Council); Paul Batterbee (Neighbourhood Warden) and Ryan Ansell (Community Development Officer)

### Active Local Sport and Physical Activity Network (ALSPAN)

In partnership with a newly formed local Active Local Sport and Physical Activity Network (ALSPAN) – a steering group consisting representatives of key local organisations which will become a sub-group to the Healthy Stevenage Partnership – each Project Officer will be responsible for creating and delivering a local Sport and Physical Activity Action Plan to best meet the needs of local people.

### Funding

Each Active Local Project Officer will have access to programmes and funding to the value of circa. £50k to be utilised within their respective *Active Local* areas, over the next 12 months. Whilst there will be some restrictions around how some of this funding is used – particularly where this involves existing externally funded programmes, such as *Fit, Fed and Read* – it will be for the local community to determine how those resources are optimally deployed for the benefit of local residents.

### Tackling Inequalities Fund

In May, Sport England allocated £80,000 from the Tackling Inequalities Fund to HSP to distribute within Active Local areas with the main aim of reducing the negative impact of COVID-19 on the widening inequalities in sport and physical activity. The main target audience for this fund to reach was: LSEG, BAME, Women and Girls and Disability.

HSP and Stevenage Borough Council hosted a webinar created to bring groups and organisations together from Bedwell to introduce the Active Local project and further highlight the funding opportunity. The following organisations were awarded funding to continue the delivery of services for Bedwell residents:

1. **Irish Network Stevenage:** Exercise and physical activity classes for older adults (INS members), **£1,929.00**
2. **Cycling UK Stevenage:** 25 volunteer-led cycle rides for Bedwell residents (including hire costs), **£950.00**
3. **Bedwell Community Association:** Exercise and physical activity classes for older adults (community centre customers), **£1,500.00**

4. **Sporting Inspirations:** Young homeless project, **£5,000.00**
5. **Breakaway Playschemes:** Equipment and instructor costs for summer holiday programme for CYP with disabilities, **£2,000.00**

There is now a further pot of Tackling Inequalities Funding available, with £6,000 nominally allocated to activities and initiatives in Bedwell. Conversations have begun with two applications already made (at 17.11.20). The second round of funding has similar criteria to the first and interested parties should contact Shelley Woods at the email address below. This second round must be allocated by 31 January 2021 and spent by the end of March 2021.

### Community Sport Ambassadors

Each Active Local area will soon be supported by a University of Hertfordshire Community Sports Ambassador for 50 volunteer hours between January and December 2021. These individuals will be mentored and supported by the Active Local Officer, and will use the year to gain a rounded understanding and experience of all aspects of Sports Development.

### Community Resilience

The impact of the current pandemic has been disproportionate for those communities with highest levels of socio-economic deprivation, leading to a widening of the inequality gap facing Hertfordshire's most vulnerable and disadvantaged residents.

Additionally, residents of those areas with higher levels of socio-economic deprivation, generally have greater levels of inactivity and this is particularly true for some BAME communities.

The Partnership firmly believes that involvement in sport and physical activity can increase community resilience and act as both a prevention and recovery tool around local health outcomes. The power of sport and physical activity as a cost-effective vehicle in helping to address some of the key social agendas - including social inclusion, community cohesion, educational attainment, crime and disorder/anti-social behaviour reduction and development of skills leading to employment and economic prosperity - is also well chronicled.

Whilst sport and physical activity cannot be the panacea for all of those problems, we believe that the design and delivery of appropriate programmes – which have at their heart a granular understanding of local people and places – can make a telling and lasting impact, in helping to address some of those issues.

### Community Consultation

The Active Local Community Consultation has been open electronically since the start of October and aims to gather insight from local residents which will inform the development of the Sport and Physical Activity Action Plan. As of mid-November, the survey will also be made available in paper form, and delivered to Fred Millard court specifically, to try and gain additional insight from older residents. The aim is to have a minimum of fifty responses from Bedwell, as soon as possible and is also online: - [https://hertsmarketing.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_eIHXRZOSL4TFLQV](https://hertsmarketing.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eIHXRZOSL4TFLQV)

### Contacts

If you would like more information about Active Local, please contact:

**Shelley Woods** – Project Officer (Herts Sports Partnership) [s.woods4@herts.ac.uk](mailto:s.woods4@herts.ac.uk)

**Oonagh Sherlock** – Community Development Officer (Stevenage Borough Council) [oonagh.sherlock@stevenage.gov.uk](mailto:oonagh.sherlock@stevenage.gov.uk)