

Conditions for tackling inequalities in physical activity - next steps for Hackney's Place Partnership work with Sport England

Sport England Partnership (Hackney) priorities for tackling inequalities in physical activity

By continuing to work with existing places and investing in new areas, Sport England are targeting significant investment to areas with highest inactivity levels and other social need indicators, as this is where the partnerships can have the biggest impact on key outcomes, recognising that no two places are the same.

For Hackney, this cannot be brand new work and needs to be based on learning from King's Park Moving Together and strategic alignment with local/national priorities

- Sport England's *Uniting the Movement* strategy and key Council plans:
- Hackney's Strategic Plan (addressing wider determinants of health)
- Hackney's Health and Wellbeing Strategy (improving mental health/social connection)
- Hackney's Equality Plan (tackling inequality at every life stage)
- Hackney's Voluntary and Community Strategy

Physical inactivity inequalities are complex and are due to multiple interconnected factors

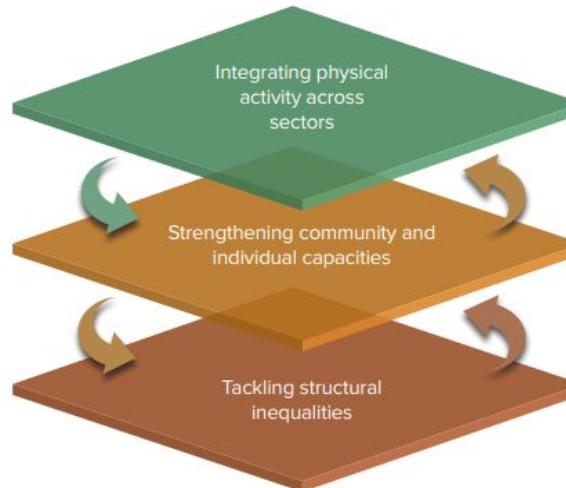
Practices and areas of action

Evidence and insights from those involved in addressing the challenge of inequalities in physical activity have revealed commonalities across places, rooted in where people choose to make interventions. These shared patterns manifest as three interlinked practices or *areas of action*:

- Integrating physical activity across sectors
- Strengthening community and individual capacities
- Tackling structural inequalities

This third area could be viewed as addressing the underlying causes of inactivity. However, whilst it is most likely to achieve sustainable impact, is often most difficult to implement. Table 1 provides a detailed description of these three areas, their definitions, and the rationale for why each is an important area for action.

Figure 1: NELP conceptual framework showing interconnected areas where action to address inequalities often takes place



1. Based on academic literature, observations and discussion with local collaborative groups who are trying to operationalise WSAs and/or PBAs.

Three interconnected practices – or areas of action – where efforts to tackle inequalities may take place

Table 1: Practices and areas of action

Area of action	Definition	Rational
Integrating physical activity across sectors	Promotion of physical activity on agendas including, but beyond, traditional sport and leisure sector providers, for example health, education, and social services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signals priorities and the value placed on being active, both as an end in itself and as a means of tackling other policy priorities. Economy and synergies of scale, by pooling resources to create more comprehensive physical activity opportunities. Individuals who experience physical inactivity inequalities may not use traditional sport and physical activity sector facilities, but may meet with other professionals, for example, in health, education, and social services. These interactions could provide teachable moments, motivation, signposting and support to be physically active.
Strengthening community and individual capacities	Enhancing and building community strengths, encompassing natural, financial, social, and human resources, to support local people in being physically active.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on a belief that communities, groups, and individuals have the skills, strengths and capacities to address collective problems of inactivity and to maintain the wellbeing of the community. Community groups and individuals may be better placed to know and understand the barriers and enablers of physical activity for them and their friends/family. Over time, higher social capital may lead to increased social cohesion, greater trust in institutions, and improved problem-solving abilities, creating reinforcing benefits
Tackling structural inequalities	Differences in power, resources and opportunities related to socio-economic, cultural, and environmental conditions bring about social gradients with more disadvantaged groups more likely to be inactive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A more challenging, but ultimately more sustainable approach would be to address/tackle systemic disadvantages relating to gender, social class, ethnicity, disability, and poverty. This will support individuals and communities to thrive, as well as be physically active. Working to alleviate these vulnerabilities is often perceived to be beyond the scope and reach of individual agencies or organisations. Taking a WSA or PBA means there may be an opportunity to align and synchronise efforts across networks and institutions, to take structural inequalities seriously and begin to tackle them.

Conditions for tackling inequalities in physical activity

Configurations of conditions will be different for different places

Developed by the National Evaluation and Learning Partnership. Further information available on www.evaluatingcomplexity.org.uk

Identifying the barriers and enablers of physical activity	Organisational policies, processes, and structures enable place-based working	Capacity and capability across the workforce, volunteers and in communities
Collaboration	Leadership	Community-led action
Cultures and practices that enable physical activity	Built & natural environments that enable physical activity	Cycles of learning and action

Sport England Partnership (Hackney) priorities for tackling inequalities in physical activity

Based on learning from King's Park Moving Together, the next phase of the partnership in Hackney is focused on:

1. **Partnerships:** a formal collaboration with **City and Hackney Talking Therapies Service** to embed physical activity into Step 2 anxiety and depression treatment pathways.
2. **Spaces:** hyper-local spaces (libraries, MUGAs), developing activation and capital improvements (MUGA only).
3. **Community Capacity:** investing in and strengthening the capacity of community organisations in target areas.
4. **Data & Learning:** improving data collection and storytelling to inform systemic change.

Shift from King's Park to a wider area of focus (MSOA areas) with lower activity rates

These will be priority areas for investment, based on Sport England's Place Needs Classification [data](#):

- Hackney Marshes
- Amhurst Road and Pembury Estate
- Homerton South
- Haggerston East
- Hackney Downs
- Woodberry Down & Manor House (high CYP inactivity)
- Stamford Hill South (high CYP inactivity)

Sport England Partnership (Hackney) priorities for tackling inequalities in physical activity

The investment is targeted at those likely to be less active and this includes:

- Older people
- Disabled people and those with long term health conditions
- Women
- People from Black and Global Majority Communities