



More Active Communities for a Healthier Future

A Year of Progress: 2025 - 2026

Vale Sports Development Team

Supporting physical and mental wellbeing through Sport and Physical Activity

The Vale Council's Sports Development Team and their partners have been using the power of sport and physical activity to support our communities.

Creating an active Vale means ensuring that everyone—children, young people and adults—have the opportunity to be active in ways that are enjoyable, inclusive and suited to their needs.

Even small changes can make a big difference, helping to improve health, reduce health inequalities, build stronger communities and more sustainable futures.

Being active improves physical health, mental wellbeing and overall quality of life for people of all ages—supporting children and young people to grow and develop, and enabling adults to remain healthy, independent and socially connected. It brings people together, builds stronger and more connected communities, supports the development of important life skills and is FUN!

Throughout the year, we have continued to collaborate with our broad network of partners to advance the vision of :

“more active communities for a healthier future”

230 organisations impacted on the plan or were impacted. 31 new or renewed relationships developed	£228,174 Sport Wales Be Active and Energy Saving grants to 30 clubs	372 Golden Passes awarded (for free activities for residents aged 60+)
Over 23,900 recorded participations in Active Young People programme	KEY HEADLINES FOR 2025-2026	36 primary schools (78%), all secondary schools, special school & alternative education provision engaged
337 individuals from 54 organisations involved in leadership & volunteer training opportunities	<i>“The potential benefits of physical activity to health are huge. If a medication existed which had a similar effect, it would be regarded as a ‘wonder drug’ or ‘miracle cure’.”</i> Sir Liam Donaldson (2009), Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer	

Focusing our Work



1 - Early movement matters: building the skills, confidence and enjoyment needed for lifelong physical activity.

There are lots of ways to get involved in sport and physical activity across the Vale—but we know that not everyone has the same opportunities to take part. Some people face real barriers, and this can lead to differences in health and wellbeing across our communities.

That's why many of our projects are focused on making physical activity more inclusive and accessible. While we continue to support access for everyone, we are also working hard with our partners to support those who need it most. This includes:

- Boosting confidence for those who feel unsure about getting started
- Supporting families affected by the cost-of-living impacts
- Bridging the gap between male and female participation
- Reaching age groups that are less active
- Helping individuals with disabilities or additional needs
- Looking at the different types of opportunities available, from free, unstructured activities utilising the local environment to formal coached opportunities

By focusing on these areas, we are aiming to reduce inequalities and make sure everyone has the chance to enjoy the benefits of being active—no matter their background or circumstances.

ACTIVE YOUNG PEOPLE PROGRAMME

Children and young people develop the skills, motivation and confidence to be physically active throughout their life



2 - Children enjoying the basketball activity at the 'Cricket, Boccia & Basketball on the Beach' festival

Over 23,900 registered participations in sport & physical activity through the Active Young People programme working in partnership with over 148 organisations.

We have worked in partnership with a range of internal and external organisations to deliver a targeted approach aimed at increasing physical activity levels among the least active children and young people in the Vale. Partners have included schools, pre-school settings, libraries, community sports clubs, the Early Help Team, National Governing Bodies of Sport, the Vale Youth Service, the Public Health Team, uniformed groups such as Girlguiding, and many others.

This collaborative approach has been strengthened through active participation in a variety of local, regional and national networks, including the Healthy Schools and Pre-school Network, Good Food and Movement Plan implementation and action groups, Welsh Coaching Network and the newly established Foundation for Wales framework group supported through Sport Wales.

**VALE SPORT & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PLAN -
'CREATING A HEALTHIER VALE'
ACTIVE YOUNG PEOPLE IMPACT 2025-2026**

**Developing opportunities, leadership and networks in the Vale
to support more young people to be more active, more often.**

**Impact of Active Young People Programme**

Over 23,900 registered participations in sport & physical activity through opportunities created through the Active Young People Programme working in partnership with over 148 organisations, clubs, schools, national governing bodies and training partners. Targeting the least active children and young people to help overcome barriers to participation.

**Leadership and Training**

337 individuals (adults and young people) from 54 different organisations involved in leadership & volunteer training opportunities. 704 training hours and at least 5751 volunteer hours by leaders impacting on activities to local individuals and communities. Young person involvement through Young Ambassador project with 142 YA's acting as pupil voice, delivering activities and raising awareness of opportunities.

**Best Start in Life / Foundations**

- Partnership working with Cardiff & Vale Good Food and Movement plan, Public Health Wales, Healthy Pre-schools and Cardiff & Vale University Health Board NYLO project
- Implementing the Foundations Framework for Wales
- Facilitated projects to develop fundamental skills and develop motivation to be more active

**Supporting Cost of Living Crisis for families: No cost - low cost activities**

- Holiday provision - 72 free sport sessions delivered impacting on 607 participations
- Free extra-curricular clubs and community activities delivered
- Rolled out "Borrow and Be Active" library lending bag scheme across seven libraries in partnership with library service

**You asked..... we supported to develop....**

- New opportunities and clubs for sports with demand including basketball, multi-sports, dodgeball, social football, boxing developed.
- 4 leisure centre Youth Take Overs and other 'informal' sport opportunities targeting least active young people including 2 female targeted events.
- Work with existing and new partner organisations to develop new systems / opportunities

**Targeting Inequalities**

- Projects increasing opportunities for young people with additional needs / disabilities through schools, community developments and disability health pathway
- Projects to increase physical activity for inactive young people who are accessing additional support to help wellbeing through Energise YOUTH project
- Project around Pencoedre Thriving Communities targeting children / young people most in need / Work with Community Focused schools project in areas of WIMD
- Girls only Young Ambassador network developed

Prepared by the Sports Development Team (Sports & Physical Activity)
Case studies available on specific projects@valesportswales1For further information please contact:
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You Asked/Data Showed	We Supported
Data shows us that children thrive when given the 'Best Start in Life'	We have worked with the NYLO project with Cardiff & Vale University Health Board to deliver physical activity sessions to families Holiday activities give opportunities to be active, social and thrive. We continue to work with Healthy and Sustainable Schools and Pre-schools scheme Lots of opportunities for children, young people and families to be active together
Young people have told us that they want more 'informal' and 'social' sports and more opportunities that suit them - this will attract them to be more active Data also showed Cost of Living is having an impact on children's and young peoples involvement in activities.	4 leisure centre youth take overs have been organised impacting 359 young people aged 11-18 years, including 2 girls only events Premier league Kicks football sessions run year around in partnership with Cardiff City Football in the Community impacting at least 20 young people on a weekly basis Library bag loan scheme established in 7 libraries giving opportunity for children and young people to be active where / when they want. Community and extra-curricular sessions were delivered targeting those not already part of sports clubs and delivered as more social / informal activities Holiday activities programme developed to be more child / young person led - 621 participations through 71 different sessions A suite of videos created - "Streetfit" to guide young people to be more active in their own homes and support them using 'free to access' local community facilities
Data showed us that young people / children with disabilities were less active than peers	Activities supported in three autism resource bases and specialist resource base to increase opportunities An emphasis on inclusive practice and promotion of the inclusive nature of provision, alongside dedicated work within the resource bases, has supported an increase in children and young people with disabilities and additional needs engaging in community provision Continued to implement Disability Health pathway supporting children / young people with disabilities to identify appropriate community activities Supported delivery of sport and physical activity within inclusive playschemes and youth club.
Data showed us that girls are less active than boys in the Vale	Girls leisure centre Youth Take Overs delivered in response to lower participation of girls in mixed take overs Targeted activities for girls delivered Girls Young Ambassador network developed



3 - Skateboarding afterschool sessions at St Richard Gwyn are always popular

Extra-curricular and Community sessions

Targeted extra-curricular provision was delivered in 6 of the 8 High Schools. The 892 sessions were delivered, either with the support of Young Ambassadors, casual coaches or in partnership with local community clubs to promote sustainable participation pathways. These clubs successfully engaged pupils who may not normally participate in extra-curricular sport, provided routes into community-based opportunities, and created enjoyable and inclusive environments that supported physical fitness, confidence, and social wellbeing.

The targeted programme was developed following local consultation and successfully increased participation, promoted local community clubs, and provided safe, enjoyable, and motivating sporting experiences for young people.

It is evident that the transition from extra-curricular activity to community club participation is more successful in some areas than others. For example, 50% of participants from one after-school club in Penarth progressed to a community club, whereas transfer rates were lower across the Barry cluster. A range of factors influence this, including cost and the ability or motivation of families to support access to community provision. This reinforces the importance

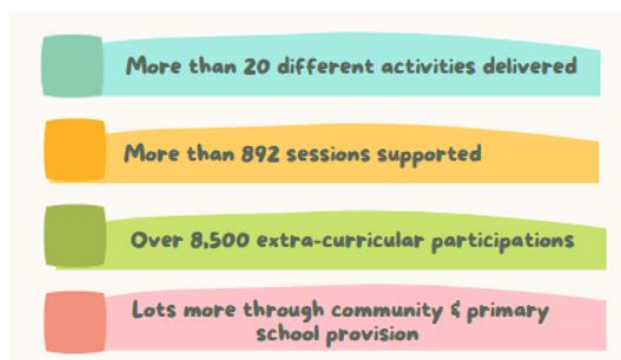
of targeted school-based extra-curricular programmes in enabling participation among children who are unable or less likely to access community opportunities. It also highlights the differing needs of residents and the value of continuing to develop and promote informal, low-cost and no-cost physical activity opportunities.



4 - Lots of fun and achievements at the Pencoedre High afterschool skateboarding sessions



5 - Pupils comments highlight the range of benefits experienced from the extra-curricular programme



6 - A programme of extra-curricular and community-based opportunities was delivered throughout the year, targeting identified schools, specific age groups, and individuals with additional needs.

Case Study: 'Hooked' Boxing Project

The Welsh Boxing *Hooked* Programme is a community initiative designed to introduce young people to boxing in a fun, safe and inclusive environment. Delivered through community activators, the programme works with schools to provide structured sessions that develop fundamental boxing skills, confidence, discipline and enjoyment.

The Vale of Glamorgan was selected as a pilot area to test the use of secondary-age Young Ambassadors (YAs) in delivering activities to primary-aged pupils, building on the proven success and positive impact of YAs across a range of local sports development initiatives.

Working in partnership with Welsh Boxing and Whitmore High School, the Sports Development Team supported the training of Young Ambassadors, equipping them with the skills and knowledge required to deliver safe and engaging sessions. As a result, the programme was successfully delivered across 13 primary schools in Barry.

The project demonstrates how partner organisations can work collaboratively towards complementary objectives. For the Sports Development Team and Welsh Boxing, the focus was on increasing participation, improving health and wellbeing, and developing young people's skills through positive sporting experiences. For schools, the programme provided an effective tool to enhance pupil engagement, reinforce behavioural expectations and support readiness for the transition to secondary school.

To support continued participation beyond the school setting, the Sports Development Team is working with two local boxing clubs to establish clear progression pathways, enabling young people to transition into community-based opportunities and build on the enthusiasm generated through the programme.



7 - Whitmore High School Hooked Boxing programme

Case Study: Basketball - Responding to Identified Demand

Basketball has been a key area of development in response to identified local demand and limited junior community provision. Basketball sessions were delivered in seven Barry primary schools, engaging 514 Year 4 and Year 6 pupils, supported by more than 14 Young Ambassadors.

In addition to schools reporting improvements in pupils' skill levels and 98% of pupils feeling more skilled, the sessions have also positively influenced participation in extra-curricular clubs. This is evident in the transition from Year 6 to Year 7, with over 50 Year 7 pupils attending extra-curricular basketball clubs. Furthermore, 74% of current Year 6 pupils indicated they would be more likely to join a club when starting secondary school. Beyond the school setting, 72% of participants in the primary sessions expressed an interest in basketball opportunities outside of school.

To address the shortage of junior community provision, a new basketball club was established in Penarth, the successful culmination of over two years of sustained development work. While much of the impact is now becoming visible, this success has been underpinned by significant groundwork carried out over that period. This has been supported by local festivals to raise awareness and encourage progression into regular participation.

Building on this, a Penarth Cluster Basketball Event was delivered in partnership with Basketball Wales, attracting 75 pupils. The event sought to increase participation, develop skills and strengthen pathways into sustained club involvement. It combined enjoyable gameplay with leadership opportunities for Young Ambassadors while strengthening engagement with local schools and enhancing links between curriculum, extra-curricular and community provision.

Further growth is being supported in Llantwit Major, where discussions are underway with a recently formed adult basketball club to establish junior opportunities. Club volunteers are currently undertaking training to support this expansion.

The Impact of Sports Festivals

Sports festivals are designed to inspire lifelong participation in sport and physical activity by creating positive first experiences, building confidence and connecting young people with local opportunities. These events contribute to a range of outcomes that extend well beyond the festival itself, providing a lasting impact on attitudes and future participation.

Festival Key Outcomes

- Increased awareness and interest in local clubs
- High levels of pupil enjoyment and engagement
- Positive attitudes towards skill development as opposed to competition
- Strong female participation in pre-event activities
- Evidence of sustained interest beyond the event (club sign-ups and independent practice)



Barry Schools Cluster Focus

The team continued to support the Council's priority geographical area through actions such as involvement in the multisector Health Fayre and involvement in the Community Focused Schools/Your Place: Afterschool Skills Pilot for Families (Whitmore High School). This collaborative project is designed to improve engagement and wellbeing among families in Buttrills 2. Targeting both parents and children, the project builds on the community's family-focused approach to strengthen relationships between parents and schools, while addressing the Employment domain of WIMD. The delivery of sport and play activities was included in this, delivered by the Sports Development Team.



FITMORE CASE STUDY INSPIRING A COMMUNITY TO MOVE MORE



BACKGROUND

The Fitmore initiative was developed by staff and Young Ambassadors at Whitmore High School in partnership with the Sports Development Team's Cluster Officer. Designed to promote healthy lifestyles and increase physical activity, the project positively engaged pupils, staff, families and feeder primary schools across the Whitmore cluster.

The initiative began when 50 members of staff from Whitmore High School committed to taking part in the Cardiff Half Marathon. Inspired by their challenge, they wanted to create a lasting legacy that would encourage the wider school community to become more active.

WHAT HAPPENED?

Working alongside the Sports Development Team as part of the Vale-wide Young Ambassador programme, the school's Young Ambassadors led the planning and delivery of a series of Fitmore Fun Runs across all cluster primary schools. The events engaged children from Year 1 to Year 6, creating a fun, inclusive environment where everyone could take part at their own pace.

Children ran, walked, skipped and even cartwheeled their way around the courses, many dressed in colourful costumes and accompanied by music. Parents, grandparents and family members were also encouraged to join in, helping to create a vibrant community atmosphere. Over the course of the week, approximately 1,500 children participated in the initiative.

To support longer-term participation, children and families were signposted to opportunities such as The Daily Mile and Junior Parkrun, encouraging them to continue their physical activity journey beyond the events.

KEY OUTCOMES

- 50 Whitmore High School staff completed the Cardiff Half Marathon.
- Young Ambassadors led the planning and delivery of cluster-wide Fun Runs.
- Approximately 1,500 children participated across the week-long programme.
- Families were actively involved, helping to strengthen community connections.
- Children were signposted to sustainable opportunities including The Daily Mile and Junior Parkrun.
- The initiative will expand in 2026/27 as Run Together, incorporating the Pencoedtre Cluster.

"I would like to express my appreciation for the hard work and enthusiasm that went into our Fitmore session at Gladstone Park. The Sports Ambassadors are a credit to Whitmore High School, demonstrating kindness, encouragement, positivity and boundless energy throughout the event. Dai and Angela also delivered a well-organised and thoroughly enjoyable experience, and it was fantastic to see so many families attending and participating. I hope this is something we can continue to build on and use to strengthen collaboration between our schools."

Gareth MacPherson, Deputy Head Teacher, High Street Primary School



ACTIVE COMMUNITIES



Supporting residents to access free or low cost activity

Holiday Activities

Throughout the year, 72 free sports sessions were delivered in partnership with local clubs, helping to reduce cost barriers to physical activity, particularly for families affected by the cost-of-living crisis. The sessions provided opportunities to engage with families, build participants' confidence, promote community-based activity pathways, and offer informal learning in a welcoming and supportive environment.

Close collaboration with the Play Team and other services helped widen reach and increase access to physical activity through non-traditional routes. Evaluation data showed the programme successfully attracted less active children and young people, including many who were not already involved in local sports clubs.

Video here: <https://youtu.be/h9j628voLUg>



8 - Click to take a look at the range of activities on offer















CASE STUDY: NO COST HOLIDAY PROVISION
 Strategic Priorities: Giving Everyone a Good Start in Life
 Vale Sport Plan: Increasing Participation; Informal activity; Inclusive and thriving clubs

INSIGHT

- Cost of activities is a barrier to children, young people and families being more active
- Some residents are not aware of local opportunities
- More children are asking for 'informal sport'
- Clubs would like support promoting their opportunities

PROJECT AIMS

Aims of project:

- To increase physical activity levels for children and young people
- To increase awareness of local clubs, opportunities and facilities
- To provide 'no-cost' activities supporting families experiencing cost of living impacts
- To provide an informal mechanism to educate parents/carers on activities they can undertake at home and in the community at low/no cost

Further information please contact Sports Development Team: healthylivingteam@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
 @valesportsteam1

9 - The holiday programme provides fun, local opportunities for children, young people and families to take part in activity without the worry of cost.

Impact and Feedback

98% participants felt more confident and 84% more motivated as a result of attending sessions

72 holiday sessions for ages from pre-school through to 16 years - a mix of informal activity and sports activities with local clubs.

Approximately 50% of participants at sessions did not do any sport outside of school. Sessions have therefore encouraged community participation and helped young people become more active

Additional activities were also provided at numerous community family based partner events

Reasons for attending:

- Try new activities (33%)
- Something to do
- No cost (42%)
- Make new friends / be with friends
- Interested in trying activities as seen on the Winter Olympics (Kurling)

"He loved it. Was nervous about going as he didn't know anyone but got stuck in and thought it was fantastic. He usually won't join in with anything".

"Yes! They enjoyed chatting to the teacher and trying different games and making their own games up"

"Involvement in delivery of activities has supported clubs with the promotion of their year round opportunities"

"Absolutely loved it and is really inspired to continue tennis at a local club"

Parent of a disabled child indicated that attendance at holiday provision has developed their confidence to attend extra-curricular sessions.

10 - It also provides the opportunity to try out new activities and build confidence to keep participating

Free sporting activities were provided at a range of community events, including National Play Day, the Flying Start Family Fun Day and local community events. By bringing communities together, these events encouraged families of all ages to be active, have fun and enjoy shared experiences. They also provided an informal opportunity to raise awareness of low and no-cost activities that parents and carers can enjoy with their children, while sharing information about local sport, play and physical activity opportunities available within their communities.

Streetfit Videos

A series of online StreetFit videos has been developed to provide residents with the knowledge and confidence to undertake physical activity safely at home or within local community spaces, including outdoor gyms.

The idea emerged from feedback gathered through the Energise YOUTH project, where some participants reported that the cost of ongoing gym memberships was a barrier to staying active, despite their desire to maintain regular physical activity.

The videos help to remove cost as a barrier to participation while also addressing concerns around confidence and knowledge of how to use fitness equipment correctly. They provide practical guidance on warming up effectively, exercising safely, and adapting activities to suit individual abilities and fitness levels. Residents are encouraged to work at their own pace while developing the skills and confidence needed to remain active in their local communities.

STREETFIT

with Vale Sports Team

Get moving and feel great—these videos make it easy to stay active at home or in your local area.

	Streetfit: Outdoor Gym - Beginners Level Edition Provides a combination of strength training and cardio exercises in a natural environment Find Link Here: https://youtu.be/HWUq3FCdZTU	
	Streetfit: Outdoor Gym - Intermediate Level Provides a combination of strength training and cardio exercises in a natural environment Find Link Here: https://youtu.be/5wtydyoti8	
	Streetfit: Outdoor Gym - Advanced Level Edition Provides a combination of strength training and cardio exercises in a natural environment Find Link Here: https://youtu.be/oiCKOWX0Dys	
	Streetfit: HIIT Edition (high intensity) Involves short, intense bursts of exercise followed by brief recovery periods Find Link Here: https://youtu.be/DsjF5_0SF3k	
	Streetfit: Resistance Band Edition A workout that uses elastic bands to provide muscle resistance to develop strength. Bands available to borrow from your local library Find Link Here: https://youtu.be/46Sgyv9fgVs	
	Streetfit: Tai-Chi Edition A mindful gentle exercise to improve balance, relaxation & flexibility Find Link Here: https://youtu.be/TD_Gze_k5il	



Hints & Tips Before you Start

Work at your own pace and at your own level.

Warm up first - it helps your body get ready and keeps you safe.

Move the right way - good form helps you get stronger and avoid getting hurt.

Drink water.

Follow us for more information:



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11 - Streetfit flyer with QR codes that take residents to activity videos



12 - Beginners Level Streetfit Outdoor Gym activity video

Informal Football

Kicks Social Football

The Kicks project is delivered in partnership with Cardiff City Football Club (CCFC) and harnesses the power of football to engage young people in regular, positive, enjoyable diversionary activities, while contributing to stronger, safer and more inclusive communities. These free ‘turn up and play’ sessions provide young people aged 11 to 16 with access to football alongside personal development opportunities in a safe and supportive environment.

Engagement from the target group remains strong, with 20 to 30 young people regularly attending weekly sessions at Colcot Sports Centre. Evaluation findings demonstrate sustained participation, with most attendees being non-club players from areas of higher deprivation. The project has successfully increased physical activity levels among young people from lower-income households and enhanced motivation to participate in sport and physical activity. Additional opportunities provided through CCFC have further supported ongoing engagement. The CCFC Foundation regards the site as a valued provision and is keen to continue delivery. Feedback gathered through participant consultation is directly informing programme development. For example, participants voted to continue outdoor sessions throughout the year rather than move indoors during the winter months.



COMMUNITY FOUNDATION **CHANGING LIVES, TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES**

Kicks football session
has **LANDED!**

 Colcot sports centre outdoor 5-a-side pitches, Colcot Road, Barry, CF62 8UJ

 Thursday's (term-time only) : April 2025 - July 2025 (5pm - 6pm)

Ages: 11-16 years

Free turn up and play social football !



 Turn up on day but register here so we have an emergency contact
Further info:
sportsbookings@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk



Penarth Social Football Clubs

Penarth Social Football Clubs were developed following consultation with young people, who identified a desire for a relaxed and enjoyable football environment focused on participation rather than competition. Sessions were designed to provide a fun, informal "kick about" without scorekeeping or pressure to win, with an emphasis on enjoyment, teamwork and social interaction.

The clubs successfully engaged young people who may not otherwise participate in extracurricular sport, provided pathways into wider community sporting opportunities where appropriate, and offered safe, enjoyable and motivating experiences that encouraged regular participation in physical activity.

"I enjoy hanging out with friends and being active at the same time"

"It's great to just play for fun without worrying about winning"

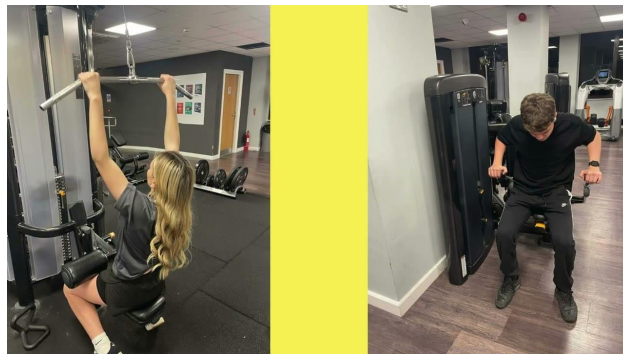
Familiarisation with Leisure Centres – Youth Takeovers

The Sports Development Team worked in partnership with Legacy Leisure to deliver four Youth Takeover sessions across local leisure centres for young people aged 11 and over, including two girls-only events. A total of 359 attendances were recorded across the programme.

The sessions were held outside normal opening hours, providing young people with exclusive access to the facilities in a safe and welcoming environment. The initiative was developed in response to feedback from young people requesting more informal recreational opportunities, while also addressing barriers associated with unfamiliarity and a lack of awareness of the activities available at local leisure centres.

The programme successfully increased confidence and motivation to be active, with 82% of participants reporting greater confidence in using leisure centre facilities and 65% stating they felt more motivated to participate in future physical activity opportunities.

Further information is highlighted in the case study below.



13 - Barry Leisure Centre Youth Take Over was very popular. Our fantastic Young Ambassadors helped support the delivery of the event, learning skills and building their knowledge as they volunteered their time.



















MORE ACTIVE COMMUNITIES FOR A HEALTHIER FUTURE

CASE STUDY: LEISURE CENTRE YOUTH TAKEOVERS

Strategic Priorities:

- Support access to localised, informal physical activity opportunities
- Support inclusion of females into provision to address inequalities
- Increase participation levels amongst residents affected by barriers



INSIGHT

33% of young people indicated they would do more sport in the Vale if there were opportunities that suited them....

58% of young people enjoyed 'informal sport' a lot.

Only 65% of girls felt confident to try new sports compared to 77% of boys.

32% of girls indicated they would do more sport if they could do it with friends....






WHAT HAPPENED

- Young people aged 11+ 'took over' leisure centres for two hours once they had closed to the public.
- 4 'Take Overs' took place attracting 359 young people. As a result of feedback, two specific Take Overs were held for girls only (132 attendees).
- A range of activities were available to young people based on prior consultation. The format meant they could dip in / dip out of activities. Some activities were instructor led, whilst others were social play.
- The events were developed in response to demand for more informal activities, to enable young people to try the leisure centres in a comfortable environment without the presence of other residents, and to address a lack of awareness of the opportunities available at local leisure centres.

Further Information please contact Sports Development Team: healthylivingteam@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

  @valesportsteam1



Energise YOUTh

The Energise YOUTh project was developed to promote positive wellbeing and increase physical activity levels among targeted young people aged 11-18 who are experiencing low wellbeing, through a referral-based approach.

During the year, 28 young people registered for the project. Referrals were received from the Vale Youth Service, the Vale Early Help Team, and Social Care officers.

To help address confidence-related barriers to participation, a series of Safe and Strong awareness sessions were delivered. These sessions introduced participants to safe and effective gym-based activities, helping them feel more confident using leisure centre facilities.

Take a look at the case study below to learn more about the impact of the project.

STREETFIT: SAFE AND STRONG

Join free weekly sessions to learn safe techniques to develop strength

The sessions will be led by a friendly instructor and aimed at those who are looking to join a gym, recently joined a gym or those wanting to be active in outdoor gyms or at home and looking to gain more confidence .




- ✓ Suitable for young people in school years 8 and above
- ✓ Barry Leisure Centre (Studio B)
- ✓ Thursday's from 15th January to 12th February 2026 (5.30pm - 6.30pm)

SESSIONS ARE FREE

Spaces limited -Book here: <https://Valesafeandstrong.eventbrite.co.uk>

For further info: sportsbookings@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
@valesportsteam1




14 - Safe and Strong flyer promoting the free coaching sessions organised to show young people how to safely undertake activities in the gym

CASE STUDY: ENERGISE YOUTH

A targeted project to improve wellbeing and activity levels

Strategic Priority: Targeting Inequalities




INSIGHT

Internal services contacting Sports Development Team on a regular basis for access to gym and leisure activities for young people to support their wellbeing.

School Sport Survey data linked to deprivation indicating lower participation levels.

SHRN data - highlighting mental wellbeing, emotions and activity levels decreasing by year groups from school year 7 through to 11.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

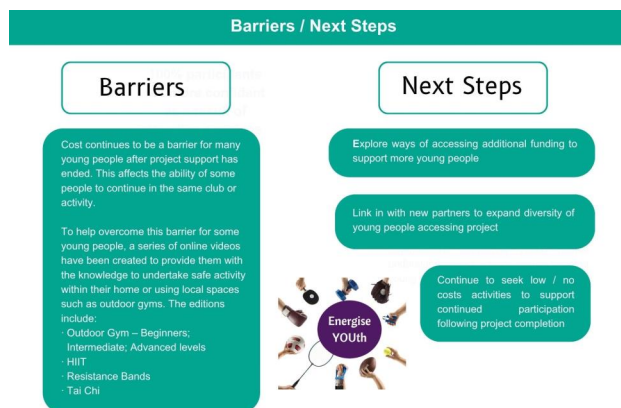
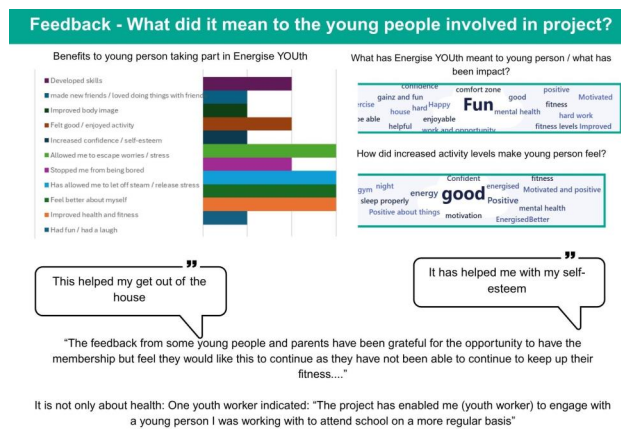
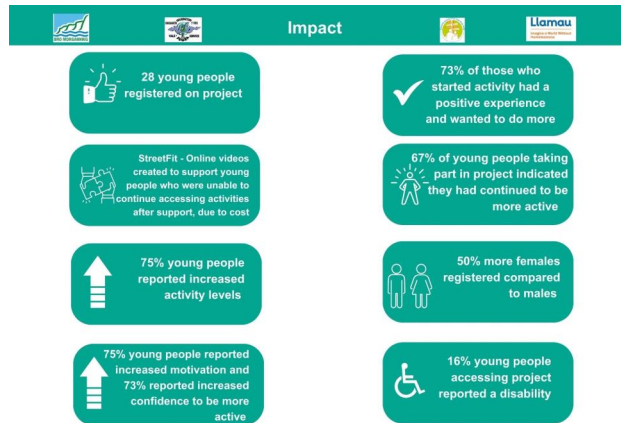
A project developed as part of the Vale Sport and Physical Activity Plan to promote positive wellbeing and increase physical activity levels amongst targeted young people experiencing low well-being (aged 11-18) through a referral style project. Ultimately, the project aimed to:

- provide positive experiences that make young people feel good about physical activity and sport and have the confidence and motivation to continue within community settings.
- remove barriers to participation and support behaviour change by supporting young people to exercise and to build regular activity habits, as well as create opportunities for young people to try new things, build confidence, to learn new skills, and to engage within their community.

The project works with identified partners including Vale Youth Service, Vale Early Help Team, Vale Social Services (Disability team) and Llamau Youth Homeless Service, who already have support workers / mentors working with young people. Registered young people could access 'free activity' from a menu of providers for a time specific period. Activities included leisure centre access, as well as links to local sports clubs provision.

- It was noted that access to appropriate clothing was a barrier to some young people so the project included the purchase of clothing to support those without appropriate clothing to ensure they felt comfortable in both themselves and the environment. Also recognised that some young people did not have enough towels to have a towel at home and one to take swimming, so this was also supported where appropriate.

Further information please contact Sports Development Team: healthylivingteam@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
@valesportsteam1



Youth Service Partnership

The Sports Development Team have continued to support the Vale Youth Service to further embed physical activity into their offer. This has included the Sports Development Team:

- Delivering sports within local youth club taster sessions to increase opportunities for those that would not normally go to a sports club, and also increase access to different experiences. This also acted as a mentoring opportunity for the Youth Service staff and their young people.
- Linking the autism resource bases into the Youth Service boxing project
- Supporting the Emojis project to increase physical activity levels amongst children who may find it challenging to attend community provision. The Emojis project aims to empower young people to express themselves, build their confidence and self-esteem levels, and develop skills to manage their emotional responses in a positive manner.
- Inviting the Youth Service to attend the leisure centre Youth Take Overs to add an extra element to the offer
- bringing the Youth Service onto the Energise YOUTH scheme as a referring partner

Borrow & Be Active - Equipment loan bag scheme

The Borrow & Be Active scheme enables families to enjoy physical activity without the need to purchase equipment. Loan bags are available to borrow free of charge from seven of the eight Vale libraries. Each bag contains equipment and accompanying activity sheets, providing practical ideas and guidance to help families take part in fun, free activities at a time and place that suits them. To improve accessibility and encourage participation, equipment bags have been strategically located close to relevant community facilities. For example, tennis bags are available near local tennis courts and basketball bags near Multi-Use Games Areas. This approach helps to reduce financial barriers, supports spontaneous participation, and promotes inclusive opportunities for physical activity within local communities. In addition, two school-based loan bag schemes have been established in targeted areas where families may be more affected by the cost-of-living crisis and where access to the main library hubs can be limited due to transport challenges. These schemes are based at Palmerston Primary School and the Big Bocs Bwyd provision at Oakfield Primary School.

BORROW AND BE ACTIVE

Borrow sports equipment for free and enjoy being active at home or in your local area.

Blue bag

Foundations Bag

This bag is designed for young children in nursery or the Foundation Stage. It includes fun items that help develop important movement and coordination skills, such as throwing and catching.

Turquoise bag

Young person/ Adult Bag

This bag is designed for children, young people and adults. It includes equipment like table tennis bats, balls, skipping rope and resistance bands—perfect for staying active at home or in your local park or open space.

Green bag

Tennis Bag

This bag, at specific sites only, comes with everything you need to enjoy tennis, including rackets and balls. You can choose an adult set or a child set—then just head out and play! Visit our website to find out where you can play tennis.

How it Works:

- Visit your local library or setting with bags
- Select bag you want to borrow
- Borrow as you would a book
- Get Moving and have fun!

FREE



Find your local lending station and further information:
 @valesportsteam1
<https://bit.ly/valesportsandphysicalactivity>



Free Downloadable Resources

The Council's Sports and Play webpages provide a range of free downloadable resources, offering information, ideas and signposting to services that support residents to be active and improve their wellbeing. Resources include:

- Vale on the Move: Active at Home Family Resource Pack
- Little Rockets Early Years Challenge Cards
- Reggie Goes to the Moon: Physical Literacy Storybooks for disabled children and their families
- Healthy, Active and at Home Activity Cards
- Wellbeing Walks
- Learn 2 Ride Activity Booklets
- Prescription for Play activity sheets, supporting free outdoor play opportunities within local communities

A link to these resources are also included on the Council's Cost of Living webpage. Find out more and access the resources at:

- <https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/enjoying/Sports-and-Play/Sport-and-Physical-Activity/Activity-Resources.aspx>

Inclusive and thriving clubs and organisations- supporting local organisations to thrive and develop



Club Development

We have supported local clubs to grow and develop, working with National Governing Bodies of Sport and other partners to provide tailored support. This has included strengthening school-to-club pathways, securing funding opportunities, facilitating training, promoting activities, and sharing information through our club newsletter.

Support has been prioritised for clubs where consultation identified unmet or latent demand. This included:

- Boxing clubs
- Basketball clubs across three areas
- Tennis clubs, including promotion of the Parks Tennis initiative
- Gymnastics clubs

- Penarth Swimming Club
- Karate clubs, resulting in successful progression from extra-curricular activity into community club participation
- A local dance group to deliver free sessions through secured funding
- Table tennis clubs
- Various other clubs with funding applications and development support



National Governing Body of Sport Engagement

We have worked with a range of National Governing Bodies of Sport and sector partners to share insight, identify opportunities, and develop collaborative initiatives. These included:

- Basketball Wales, supporting young leader and teacher training, and club development festivals
- Boxing Wales, through the Hooked project
- Netball Wales
- Tennis Wales, supporting the Parks Tennis programme
- FAW Cymru, including Project Chwarae, the Facilities Strategy, and club development initiatives
- StreetGames
- Run Wales, supporting consultation distribution and engagement
- Beicio Cymru



15 - Hooked Boxing sessions led by the Whitmore High School's Young Ambassadors

Facility Development

- Worked with the Cardiff and Vale Public Health Team and an external consultant to undertake a facilities and community use audit. The audit aims to provide an up-to-date understanding of physical activity and sports facilities across the Vale, including their condition, accessibility, gaps and barriers, helping to inform future investment priorities and maximise impact.
- Contributed to a Cymru Football Foundation working group established to identify and prioritise key sites for football facility improvements across the Vale of Glamorgan.

ACTIVE ADULTS



The Vale Sports Development Team's 60+ Active Leisure Scheme continues to support older adults across the Vale of Glamorgan to become more physically active, improve their wellbeing and reduce social isolation. The scheme remains focused on engaging residents who are currently inactive or face barriers to participation, using physical activity as a preventative tool to improve physical health, mental wellbeing and social connection. The programme supports the principles of the Welsh Government's Age Friendly Wales strategy and contributes towards the Vale of Glamorgan's commitment to supporting residents to age well and remain independent.

During 2025–2026 the programme continued to expand through a combination of partnership working, targeted interventions and investment into community opportunities. Alongside the continued success of the Golden Pass, additional work was completed, focused on supporting people living with dementia, unpaid carers and other priority populations through community-based programmes and partnerships.

The Golden Pass



16 - Testimonies from Golden Pass holders

The Golden Pass remains the main project within the Vale of Glamorgan's 60+ Active Leisure Scheme. This provides older adults who are inactive with the opportunity to access free physical activity opportunities across the Vale for a set period of time to test out the activities on offer. There are currently 41 different activity providers delivering 88 different sessions through this scheme.

The Golden Pass continues to act as an effective behaviour-change tool, helping residents overcome barriers to participation and discover activities they enjoy.

- 
- 372 Golden Passes were awarded
 - 253 participants completed feedback forms
 - 70% of respondents reported using their Golden Pass (175)
 - 86.5% intend to continue attending physical activity sessions following completion of their pass
 - 95% reported an increase in confidence to participate in physical activity
 - 82% reported an increase in social connection

17 - Golden Pass statistics

Supporting People Living with Dementia

Supporting people living with dementia and their carers remained a key priority throughout the year, reflecting the programme's commitment to inclusive physical activity opportunities. Working with Memory Cafés, Disability Sport Wales and specialist dementia services, the Healthy Living Team developed activities that promoted movement, social connection and enjoyment.

Boccia Development Programme

Growing engagement with dementia support groups led to the delivery of three Boccia Leaders courses for 20 staff and volunteers from:

- Barry Rotary Memory Café
- Home Instead
- Solace
- With Music In Mind
- Early Onset Dementia Team
- Cwmpas OT Group

The training enabled the organisations to deliver Boccia independently, increasing sustainable opportunities for people living with dementia to remain active.

A case study from Cwmpas OT demonstrated how Boccia can support gentle movement, coordination and social interaction, with participants reporting high levels of enjoyment, engagement and teamwork. See the case study below.

Interest in the project has continued to grow, with Dementia Friendly Llantwit Major requesting training for volunteers and members. Additional Boccia training is planned for 2026-27, extending opportunities across the western Vale.

Barry Blue Bowls Bash

The Healthy Living Officer supported the organisation of the Turning Barry Blue Bowls Bash, a dementia-friendly event delivered with volunteers, community groups and charities. The event provided people living with dementia, carers and support organisations with an opportunity to try a new activity, socialise and enjoy the benefits of being active.

These initiatives have strengthened relationships with local dementia organisations and created a strong foundation for future dementia-friendly programmes.



VALE 60+ PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROJECT CWMPAS OT BOCCIA CASE STUDY



OVERVIEW

This case study arises from the Dementia & Boccia Project, part of the Vale Council 60+ physical activity programme. The project aims to embed boccia within memory cafés and dementia-focused services to improve access to appropriate physical activity.

Cwmpas OT is a community organisation supporting older adults (and their carers), including people living with dementia, through inclusive, occupational therapy-led group activities that promote wellbeing beyond discharge from public health services. The Council's 60+ Lead partnered with Cwmpas OT to support participants and carers to be more physically active in a familiar, supportive setting. Following consultation, the group chose to try boccia.



WHAT HAPPENED

The 60+ Activity Lead delivered an introductory boccia session which included all of the components needed to deliver a safe, engaging session. This included a short warm-up to prepare participants for movement, followed by a series of Boccia games using a range of variations to keep the session dynamic and inclusive. Some participants required assistance to take their turn - carers or staff supported as needed, ensuring everyone could join in at their own level.

The session was a success, providing an introduction to the activity for the group members and acting as an informal training session for the staff and carers. As a result of the success of the taster session, a Boccia training session was delivered to CwmpasOT staff, through a partnership between the Sports Development Team and Disability Sport Wales, providing them with the knowledge and confidence to deliver future boccia sessions. To support sustainability of boccia activity, they were provided with a free boccia set.

"The atmosphere throughout was positive and lively, with plenty of smiles, laughter, and encouragement. Participants showed excellent teamwork, turn-taking, and sportsmanship. Residents and staff commented on how enjoyable and fun it was. Several mentioned they would love to do it again. We were able to run a highly engaging and inclusive session that brought fun and physical activity to our group. The session focused on promoting gentle movement, coordination, & social connection through accessible gameplay that everyone could enjoy".

OUTCOMES

- **Physical benefits:** gentle exercise, improved coordination, and movement
- **Social benefits:** increased interaction, teamwork, and mutual support.
- **Emotional benefits:** visible enjoyment, smiles, and verbal feedback expressing fun and satisfaction.
- **Sustainable, inclusive physical activity that can be delivered at no cost to both group members and their carers.**

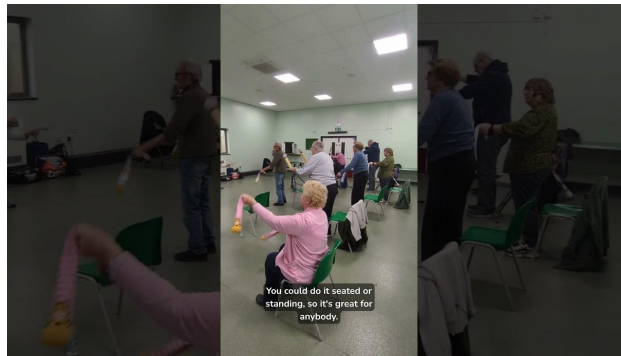


The Boccia project has already made a meaningful difference by providing a simple yet powerful way to bring people together through physical activity.



The Golden Fund

The Golden Fund continued to support local organisations to expand and diversify opportunities for older adults. Building on previous successes, small investments continued to create meaningful opportunities and increase participation across communities. Examples include the Spinpoi project highlighted above and supporting Stillworks to deliver seated physical activity sessions at the Bridge Between Centre in Barry. Designed for disabled adults and their carers, the sessions provided an accessible environment that increased opportunities for participation, reduced barriers to activity and strengthened community connections.



18 - With Music in Mind Spinpoi sessions case study - funding was provided through the Golden Fund to enable With Music In Mind staff member to attend Spinpoi training to support delivery of ongoing activity

Partnership Working

Partnerships remain central to the success of the 60+ Active Leisure Scheme. Throughout the year, relationships with organisations across the public, voluntary and community sectors continued to improve access to physical activity opportunities.

Ageing Well Team

Partnership working with the Ageing Well Team secured additional funding to extend the Golden Pass programme towards the end of the financial year, ensuring uninterrupted access to activities for older adults. The collaboration reflects shared priorities around prevention, ageing well and reducing inequalities. The Healthy Living Officer also supported community events, including showcases of older people's services and opportunities, while Ageing Well officers continued to strengthen community connections and engagement.



19 - Boccia session at the Memory Cafe

Community Engagement

Key partnership activity included:

- Attendance at the Section 16 Forum to strengthen links across the care sector.
- Working with Sight Cymru to promote Golden Pass, NERS and Free Swim opportunities.
- Partnership work with Jobcentre Plus to promote physical activity opportunities.
- Resident engagement through The Gathering Place breakfast club in St Athan.
- Ongoing support for Vale Homes and tenant groups.
- Contributions to Communities for Work and development of the Active Start programme.
- Support for Active April for Carers, including a carers' walk delivered with Valeways.
- Development of links with local men's groups, including Men's Corner Cadoxton.
- Continued support for the Live Well Age Well programme.
- Ongoing partnership with Valeways to promote free and accessible walking opportunities.

These partnerships continue to extend the reach of the programme and connect residents with opportunities within trusted community settings.



20 - Promoting the Golden Pass at community events

ACTIVE LEARNING & VOLUNTEERING



Young Ambassadors

The Young Ambassadors programme provides a pathway for young people to become leaders and advocates for sport and physical activity within their schools and communities. The initiative empowers participants to be the voice of their peers, harnessing the positive power of sport and physical activity to build confidence, improve wellbeing, and develop lasting friendships. Through training and support, Young Ambassadors are equipped to facilitate activities, foster a sense of belonging, and help tackle inequalities in participation.

In the Vale of Glamorgan, the programme provides a leadership journey from Year 6 through to Year 13, creating opportunities for young people to develop and progress throughout their school years.

There were 142 Young Ambassadors engaged in the programme this year.

Silver and Gold Ambassadors are selected from secondary schools and play a key role in supporting and inspiring both their peers and younger pupils within primary settings. See the case study for further information and impact.

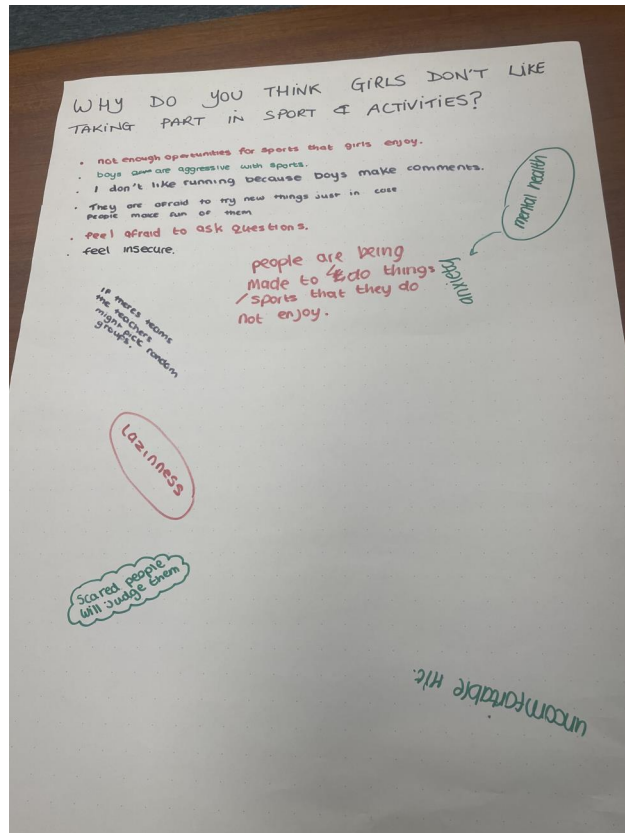
The Bronze Ambassadors programme was delivered in targeted primary schools to increase opportunities for pupils identified as having lower levels of participation. Alongside this, young leaders continued to be developed through the *Playmakers* training course, enabling them to lead playground-based activities. For example, 48 pupils from three schools within the Pencoedtre cluster were trained to lead activities for their peers. Following the training, **100% of participants reported feeling more confident to lead activities**. This has contributed to increasing opportunities for younger pupils to be active, particularly among groups identified through SHRN data as having lower participation levels.



21 - A group of our Young Ambassadors attended the National Young Ambassadors conference









The Young Ambassadors programme delivers far more than increased physical activity. It also supports wider outcomes linked to confidence, behaviour and school engagement. One young person, who was initially unable to join due to poor attendance and behaviour, was so determined to take part that they worked hard to improve both. Their efforts resulted in them being successfully selected as a Young Ambassador, highlighting the programme's ability to motivate and inspire positive change.



CASE STUDY: YOUNG AMBASSADORS

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: Workforce development, Inclusion and increasing activity levels
Community empowerment and community involvement
Tackling inequality



INSIGHT

The School Sport Survey highlighted lower levels of pupil voice (34%)
Participation by children in yrs 3 and 4 is lower than yrs 5 and 6 at primary age








PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Young Sports Ambassador project aims to provide a pathway for young people to become the voice for their peers and become leaders through sport and physical activity. The scheme aims to increase the confidence of the participants by empowering the young people to harness the positive power of sport/physical activity to improve wellbeing and build friendships. The project develops, supports, and empowers the Young Ambassadors to facilitate activities, build belonging and tackle inequalities. In the Vale, the Young Ambassador programme spans from yr 6 at primary level through to year 13 secondary age.

Further Information please contact Healthy Living Team: healthylivingteam@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
@valesportsteam1

Impact and Feedback



142 Young Sport Ambassadors throughout the Vale



4693 voluntary hours input by the Young Ambassadors



1488 sessions/events assisted by Young Ambassadors



77% of secondary schools fully engaged



6 training courses for 96 primary age pupils delivered with Young Ambassadors to increase physical activity for younger age group



100% of Young Ambassadors felt supported in their role



"I have learned a lot from being a YA - especially going out and delivering in the primary schools. I feel I have really enjoyed doing it and feel I have developed my leadership skills and confidence when speaking in front of the class".



"There is a buzz around the whole school with pupils wanting to become a YA and improving behaviour accordingly to try to become one".
Headteacher - Pencoedre School



The Impact of Bronze Young Ambassador Programme to Increase Physical Activity Levels Fairfield Primary School



INSIGHT/ RATIONALE

Individual school data from the School Sport Survey highlighted that a significant number of learners were not meeting recommended daily physical activity guidelines, particularly those in years 3 and 4. Teachers observed that during break and lunchtime periods, activity was largely limited to a small group of 'sporty' children, while the majority of pupils remained inactive. A lack of inclusive opportunities for all learners to engage in active breaks was therefore highlighted and addressed through a project designed to create more inclusive and engaging opportunities. Consultation with pupils highlighted activities pupils wanted to take part in, however it was recognised that staff capacity, space, equipment or specialist coaching requirements were barriers.





WHAT HAPPENED?

16 year 6 pupils were trained by Silver Ambassadors from local high school, to become Playmakers and Young Ambassadors. These pupils then facilitated breaktime and lunchtime activities for younger peers... There was a focus on ensuring activities were inclusive, accessible and engaging.

Bronze Young Ambassadors sit on the school Health and Wellbeing Club meeting on weekly basis to plan events and activities to engage as many children as possible. Projects include dance zone, football free Friday, equipment review. The Health & Wellbeing club feed into the School Council.

The increased participation in physical activity during breaks had additional benefits demonstrating a positive shift in behaviour and inclusivity.

WHAT HAS PROJECT MEANT TO PUPILS AND STAFF ?

"Being part of the Health and Wellbeing Club makes us feel proud because we can help make our school a happier and healthier place. We enjoy planning activities like the Dance Zone and helping with playground games because lots of children join in. We also like asking pupils for their ideas and seeing them become real changes, like moving Football-Free Friday to Monday. It makes us feel like our voices matter and that we are leaders in our school." (J)

"The Health and Wellbeing Club has had a very positive impact across the school. Pupils have developed confidence in leading activities, speaking to their peers, and gathering feedback from across both Foundation Learning and Key Stage 2. Engagement in active playtimes has increased, particularly through initiatives such as the Dance Zone and pupil-led playground activities. Members demonstrate strong leadership, motivation, and a genuine sense of responsibility for improving the wellbeing of others. The club has also strengthened pupil voice, ensuring that children play an active role in shaping health and wellbeing provision at Fairfield Primary."
Emma Stead - Health & Wellbeing Lead in Fairfield



A journey of a Sports Ambassador Pencoedtre High School

Year 7



We met E in year 7 at sessions arranged within the autism resource base. These one off taster sessions included skateboarding, dance, archery, taekwondo, boxing and baseball. Through the introduction of these sessions delivered within the base, it helped with engaging E into sports and activities as he was in his safe space.

Year 8

In year 8 regular weekly sessions were delivered in the base as a follow on from the one off taster sessions. Skateboarding, baseball, boxing and taekwondo were delivered for 6 weeks. Having access to these weekly sessions enabled E to build relationships with the coaches which developed his confidence and skills. Following these sessions he then made the step into joining the community baseball club. E also attended community skateboarding sessions as a result of increased confidence after taking part in school sessions, and also completed his Skateboarding Agored Cymru accreditation.



Year 9

In year 9 E applied and was successful in becoming a Sports Ambassador. His confidence and enthusiasm for helping others is highlighted in his attendance at weekly after school sessions and also basketball sessions delivered for the cluster primary schools in Pencoedtre High School. E attends as a Sports Ambassador and helps Coach Coles deliver the sessions. His willingness to help the younger pupils is admirable. His confidence has grown so much that he has now started to support Coach Coles to deliver basketball to the year 4 in primary schools. E also assisted at our Barry Youth Takeover event as a Sports Ambassador.



Year 10

In year 10 E wants to chose PE as an option - his dad has said that 'a large part of the course is coaching so being a Sports Ambassador at events like the Youth Takeover, after school and primary school sessions are great experiences for him. His confidence has improved so much that he felt confident to attend the school ski trip, where he coped with being away from home and mixing with his peers. Something he would have struggled with before becoming a sports ambassador'.



We also delivered Young Leaders courses in High Schools including St Cyres High School. The course attendees are now actively using their new skills and knowledge to support within school settings.



Creating Confident Coaches & Volunteers Project

Investing in coaches and volunteers helps create safe, inclusive and positive environments where participants can thrive. The project has supported local clubs and organisations to strengthen their workforce, improve knowledge and skills, and enhance the quality of opportunities available across the Vale of Glamorgan.

Achievements this year include:

- 25 individuals from 10 organisations were supported to attend First Aid training, with a further 14 individuals completing safeguarding training.
- The Sports Development Team worked closely with National Governing Bodies of Sport to coordinate sport-specific training opportunities in response to local demand.
- Continued support for the Foundations Framework for Wales, Sport Wales' good practice guide for those delivering, organising and promoting physical activity and sport for children aged 3-11. The framework aims to ensure that every child has access to positive, enjoyable and developmentally appropriate experiences that build confidence, skills and motivation for lifelong participation. Within the Vale of Glamorgan, this included:
 - Upskilling casual staff

and Young Ambassadors

- Promoting the framework through local resources and guidance
- Sharing information and best practice with local clubs through communication channels such as the Club Newsletter.

