

A photograph of a smiling man and woman in the foreground, with the London 2012 Olympic Park in the background. The man is wearing a dark jacket and has dreadlocks. The woman is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background features the red, spiral sculpture of the London 2012 Olympic Park and the stadium structure.

# Leading the Movement

## Medway Leadership Programme

14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> May 2026

# Welcome

**Liz Davidson** – Active Kent &  
Medway Director

**Stuart Butler** – AK&M Place  
Programme Manager

# Welcome

Yvonne Rees - Facilitator  
Nicky Barlow - Facilitator

# Activity

*Who are  
you.....*

Introductions:  
Discussion in 2's or  
3's





One Direction



WestLife



Girls Aloud



Spice Girls



Bananarama



Boyzone



Take That

# Our 2 days:

- Where could we get to?
- The kind of session we need
- How are we feeling?





# How Open are we to Change?

# Let's start work:

Introductions:  
Discussion in 2's or 3's

**What is your own personal connection/ association with being physically active?**



# **Sport England overview**

# Leading the Movement

This is Place-based Leadership course is one component of Sport England's wider Leading the Movement programme.

which aims to support leaders to tackle inequalities in sport and physical activity.

For more info visit ....  
[www.leadingthemovement.org](http://www.leadingthemovement.org)



# **UNITING THE MOVEMENT**

**Uniting the Movement**

**Our approach to working in Place**

# Uniting the Movement

Our vision is clear

We want everyone in England  
regardless of age,  
background or level of ability  
to feel able to engage in  
sport and physical activity.



# Commitment – back in 2023

**£250m over next 5 years** to expand our place partnerships to **80 additional places** via the network of people in our **existing Local Delivery Pilots and Active Partnerships alongside a universal offer** that all places can benefit from and deepening in the existing pilot areas.

Delivering impact against our **4 key outcomes**:

- Increasing Activity
- Decreasing Inactivity
- Tackling Inequality
- Providing positive experiences for children and young people

# Why are we taking this approach?

# The Why?

- The **most active place** in England has **activity levels (79%) that are 30% greater** than **the least active place (49%)**
- Your **lifespan could vary by up to 9 years** depending on where you live.
- People living in some places in England are **twice as likely to have a disability or Long Term Health Condition** than people living in other places.
- **Healthy life expectancy** can vary by up to **17 years depending on where you live.**
- **Inactivity rates** in England's **most deprived places (34%) are 14% greater** than those of the least deprived (20%).

# Local Delivery Pilots

In 2017, we invited communities from all over England to test a new way of working with us by becoming one of 12 'local delivery pilots'

## Our 12 local pilots

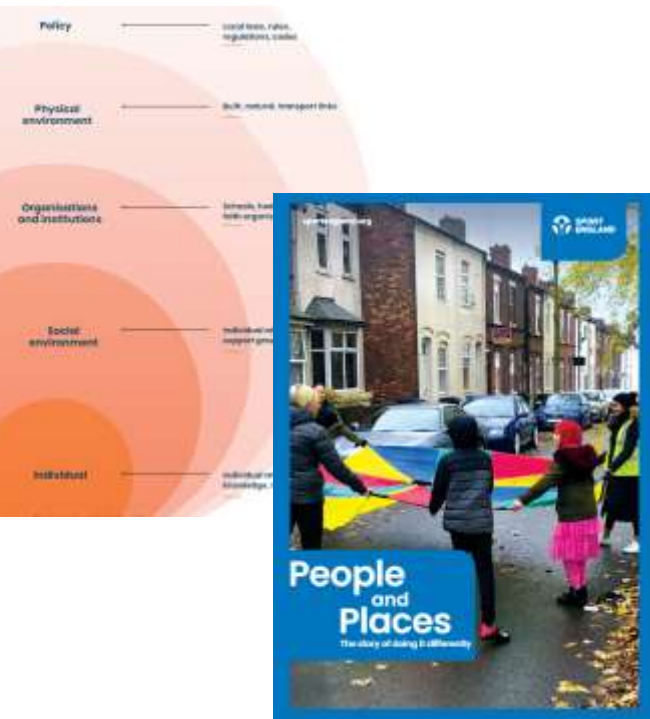
At the end of the process, we had 12 local pilots:

1. Southall
2. Greater Manchester
3. Calderdale
4. Birmingham and Solihull
5. Exeter and Cranbrook
6. Doncaster
7. Withernsea
8. Bradford
9. Essex
10. South Tees
11. Hackney
12. Pennine Lancashire



# Learning and evolving the approach

## 9 Cross-cutting conditions for addressing physical inactivity inequalities



# The How...

- We work this way because **every Place is different** – including **yours**.
- The approach you develop locally will have **some similarities** to other Places, but it will also be **shaped by your own needs and context**.
- Aiming for **change that lasts**, means working across **multiple layers at the same time**, not relying on a single approach.
- Use this as an opportunity to **bring more partners in**, and to **embed physical activity** into their work so it becomes **the norm**.
- We will **invest in** you and **recognise** that this work can be **challenging** and **involve doing things differently**

# Principles from the learning

1



## Progress moves at the speed of trust

- Start with building relationships and trust
- It takes time
- This can't be skipped to move programmes forward

5



## Say 'yes' to mess

- No simple answers
- Flexible approach that can respond to evolving needs, ideas and opportunities

2



## Stubborn on the vision, flexible on the detail

Be flexible along the way and let investments be guided by need

6



## Going where the energy is

Find places where common purpose and enthusiasm exist and start there

3



## Holding our nerve

Believing in ourselves and staying true to our goals is essential to prevent defaulting to old ways of working

7



## We can't solve the problem with the same mindset that created it

- Doing the right thing can be challenging
- Challenge assumptions, cultural rules and ways of thinking about physical activity

4



## Bridging the empathy gap

- Engaging communities
- Pushing aside preconceptions and adapting the way we communicate
- Support change emerging from communities

8



## It doesn't have to be perfect to be better

- Take on real barriers to physical inactivity and their root causes
- Don't rush to provide solutions or interventions

# **The Voice of Experience!**

# Scaling Up: Place Expansion Investment

- In 2023, Sport England committed to scale up this approach with **£250m over the next 5 years**
- **4 key outcomes:**
  - Increasing Activity
  - Decreasing Inactivity
  - Tackling Inequality
  - Providing positive experiences for children and young people



# Public Health – context

**Scott Elliott**, Strategic Head  
of Service, Public Health,  
Medway Council

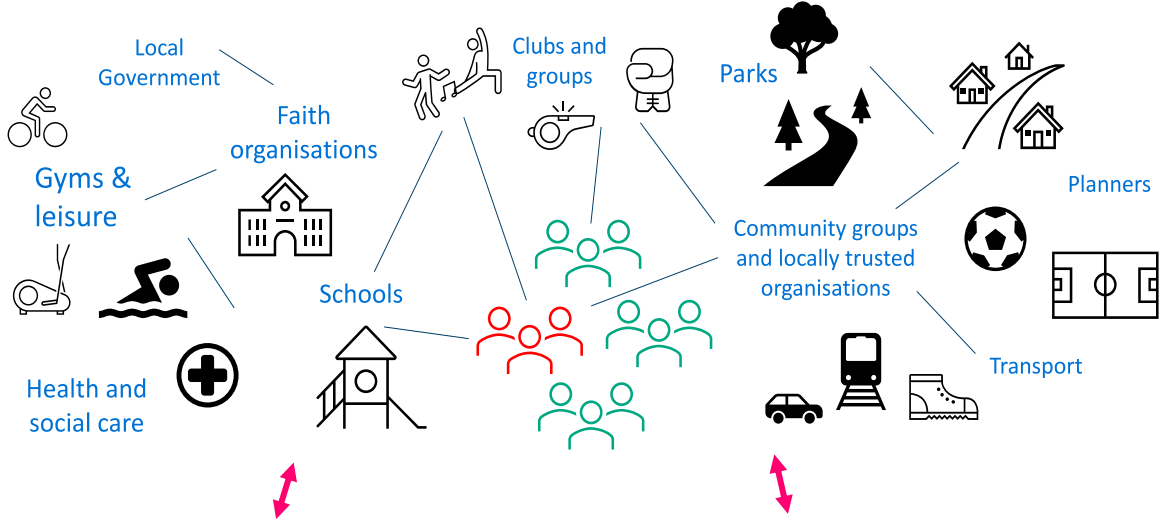


# Principle 1: Understanding Context

Know where you are!



Being active – put it on and they will come



**but it is more complex for many than this**

- yes, people’s motivation is important
- but their own circumstances/wider determinants
- and how all these influences/organisations combine and enable activity ..... or not

*'Alone we can do so little; together we  
can do so much'*

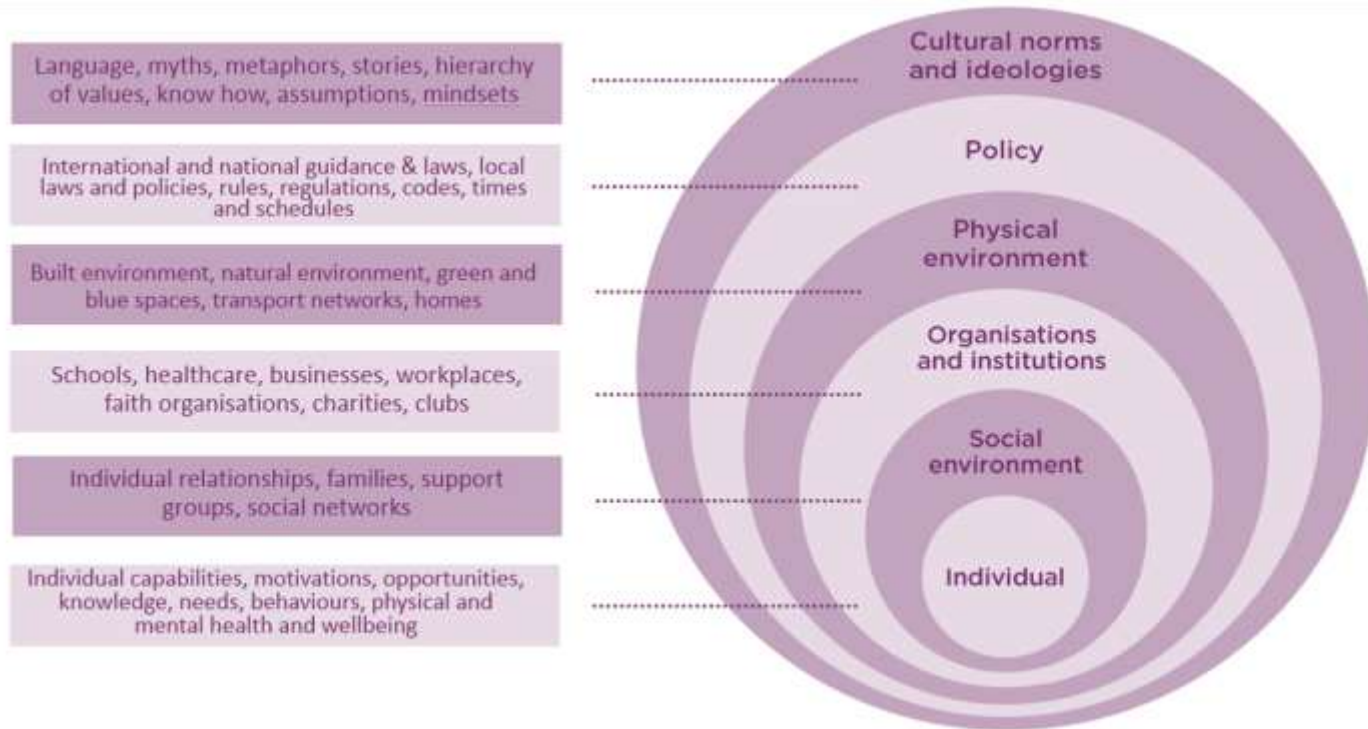
Helen Keller,  
Deaf blind author and lecturer.



Lunch

# Principle 2: Understanding Systems

# Systems have Layers: Socio-Ecological Model

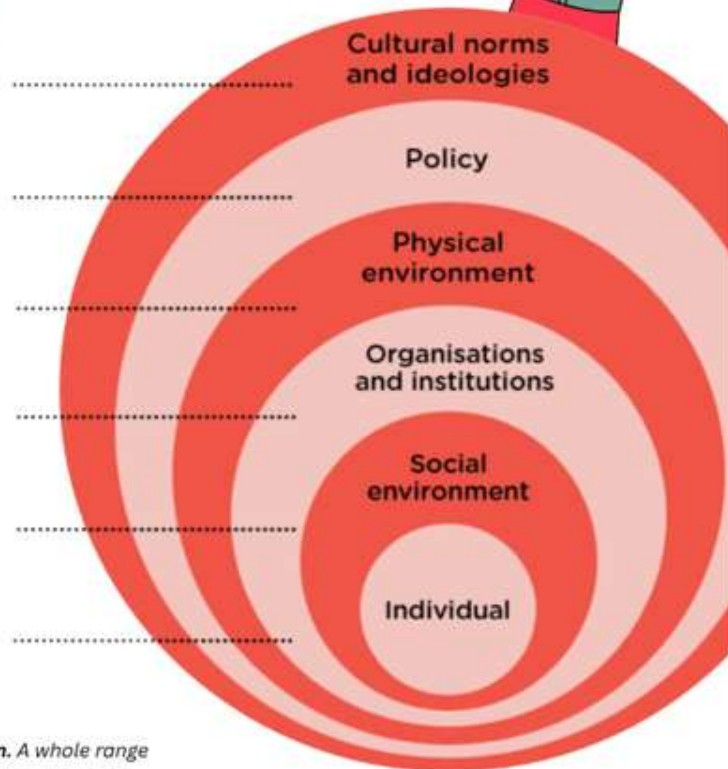


# Socio-Ecological Model: Real Life Example

A mum wanting to be more physically active.



Barrier	Enabler
In her social circle, being active isn't prioritised	National campaigning promoting physical activity for women
Local authority gritting policy prioritises roads over pavements when it's snowing	'School streets' programme led by local authority creates temporary restriction for cars outside schools to encourage safe active travel
Local park feels unsafe in the evenings due to poor lighting.	A newly built footpath has made it possible for her to safely walk her children to school instead of driving.
Leisure centre classes clash with school pick-up times.	A local community group offers free/low-cost morning sessions after school drop-off.
Friends and family aren't active, so there's little encouragement.	A neighbour invites her to a buggy-walking group for parents.
She feels self-conscious and lacks confidence to join the gym.	Motivated to get fitter for her children and happy to start with walking.



This example shows how being active *isn't just about personal motivation*. A whole range of factors can act as either **barriers or enablers**. Seeing **these layers together** highlights why a **place-based, whole-system approach** matters.



# Another way to think about it: Whole Person- Whole System

Person with multiple disadvantages  
(a whole person)



How we deal with them  
(a set of parts)



# Activity

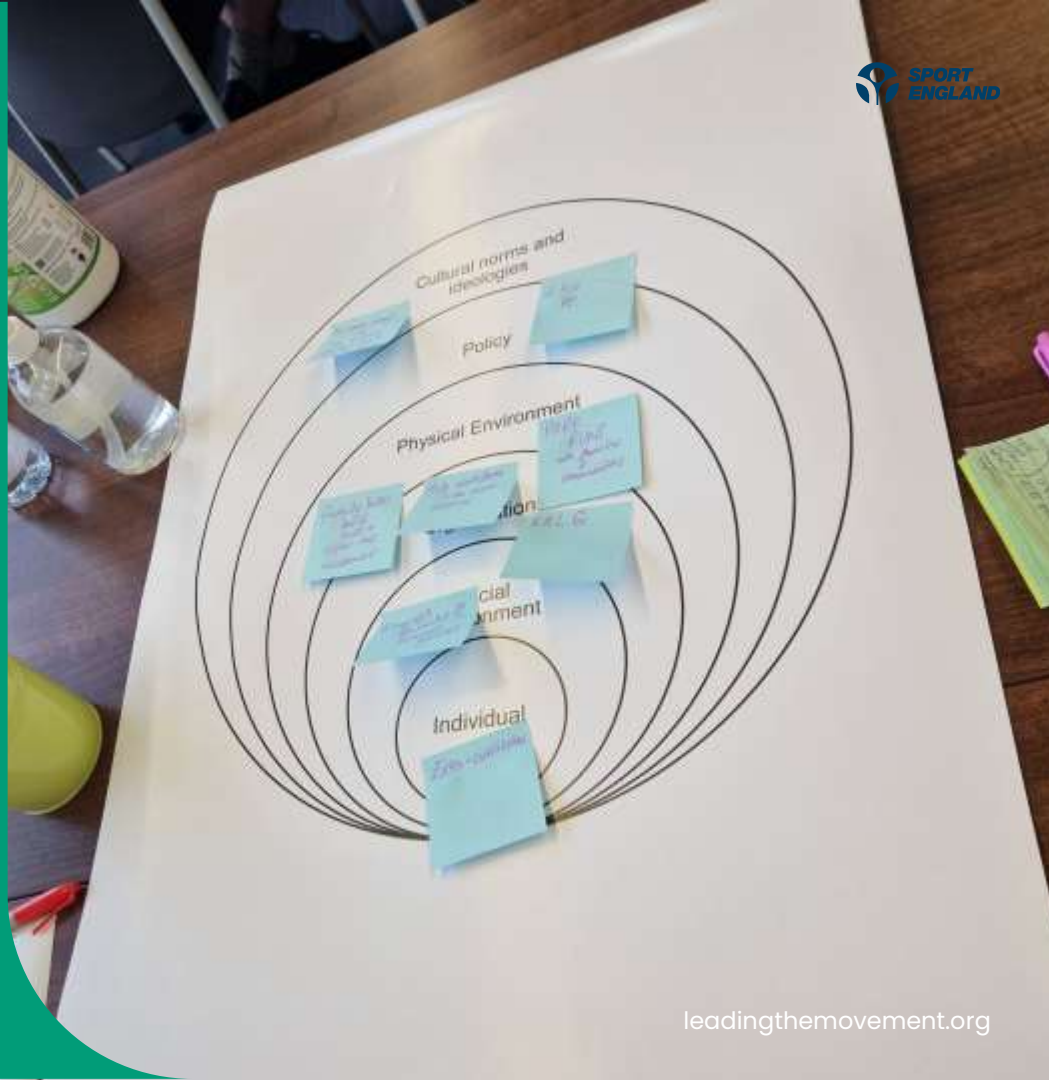
Using physical activity as a filter...

Map your current work against the different layers of the socio-ecological model.

What do you notice?

Which layer do you spend most time in?

Are there any gaps? Where do you spend the least amount of time?





**Who is not in the  
room????**

**Get to know  
the patch.....**

# Neighbourhood Scanning around Medway

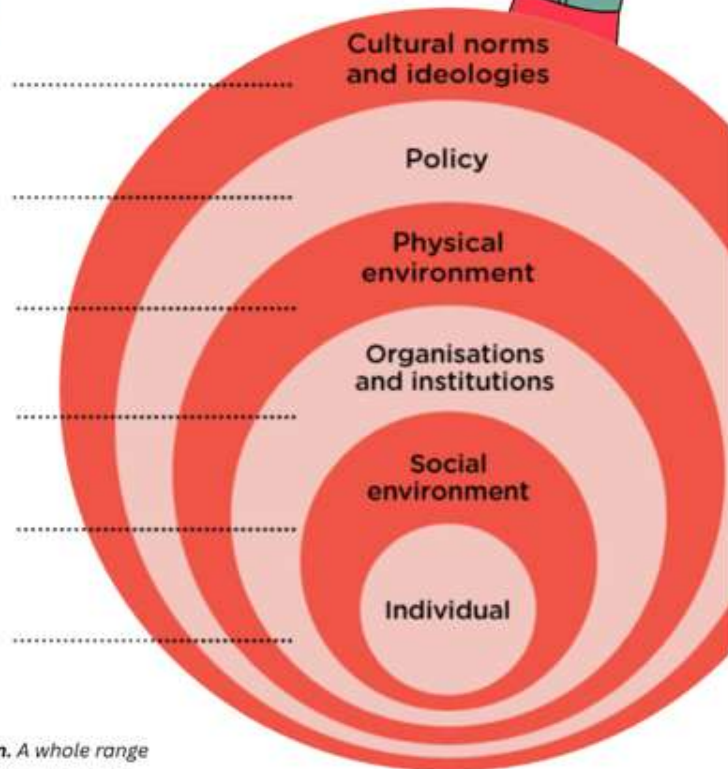


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# Break

# Principle 4: Cycles of Learning and Action

# Why we need a different approach to evaluation?

## Simple or traditional approaches to evaluation

Project evaluation often focusses on recording outputs e.g. participation numbers.

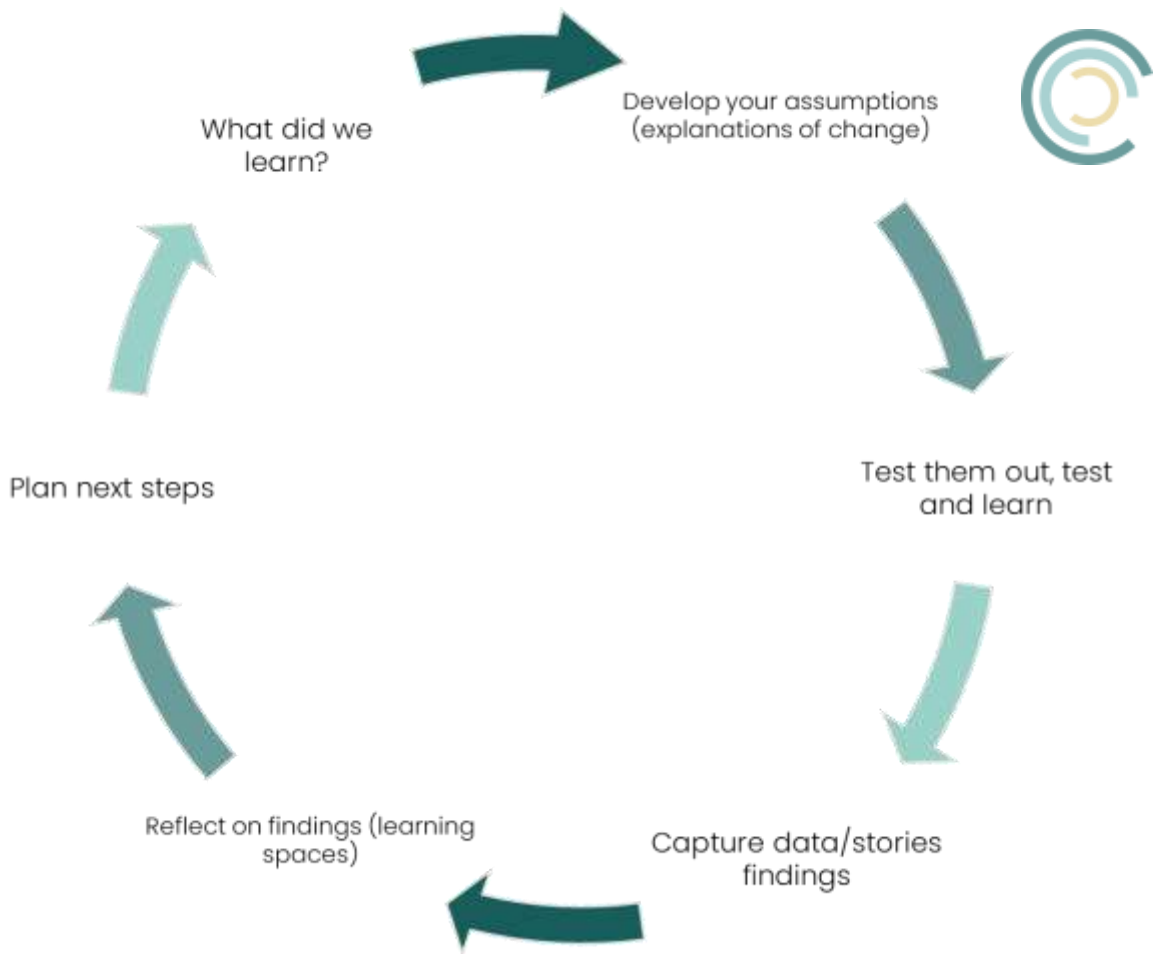
Judgements about “successes” may rely on before and after tests. Or making comparisons based on the inclusion of interventions, or not.

## Complexity sensitive approaches to evaluation

Real changes in systems may not be demonstrated by numbers, alone.

Places are unique and change over time, so comparing is less appropriate.

# Cycles of learning to and action



# Principles underpinning good evaluation

- To be adaptive
- To include diverse perspectives
- To embed local capacity for evaluation and learning
- To use a wide set of data sources and methods
- To highlight what is, and isn't, working
- To recognise that the context contributes to the success or otherwise of actions and initiatives.



# Leadership: What is the role of strategic leaders in evaluation?

- Hold space and Advocate for and recognise the importance of evaluation and learning and how we 'measure' change.
- Supporting cycles of learning and action approach
- Practically enable **evaluation capacity** (resourcing).
- Strategic leaders themselves may benefit from E&L capacity building.
- Working with operational teams.

# **Over to Alexia – Creative Curiosity**

**The circle of love –  
the thing that  
stood out for me  
today was...**

**Thank you for  
your energy—  
see you  
tomorrow**



# Leading the Movement

## Place Based Leadership Programme

Day 2

# Welcome

Yvone Rees – Facilitator  
Nicky Barlow – Facilitator

# Connecting & Reflecting

On your table those who were here yesterday each share in 30 seconds, one thing that resonated with you yesterday?



**It's time to listen.....**

# Sherisse Bisram MA

## Women's Empowerment



• MENTOR • MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER • WORKSHOP FACILITATOR • PODCAST HOST •

# About me

Professional dancer + Dance teacher  
for 14yrs



Womens Charity Dance and leadership  
Facilitator  
4years



Mentor + International Workshop facilitator  
3 years



Public speaker  
Podcast host "Permission to Shine"

# My life is one of alchemy; Pain into power

Overcoming:  
Childhood trauma

BEREAVEMENT

Toxic masculintiy

Racism

Sexism



Holistic and Actionable ways to significantly improve Mental Health well-being to create authentic lasting Empowerment.

- Mentoring 1:1 clients
- Permission to Shine in school program for girls
- Motivational speaking
- Hosting workshops, events and trainings on mental health wellbeing and empowerment.



# Sherisse's Methodology



Meditation practices to encourage mindfulness and deep self-connection.



Journaling to release all feelings and manifest desired outcomes and goals (



Most importantly togetherness, by sharing thoughts and feelings with each other eliminates the feelings of isolation and builds bonds and support.



Dance exercises to help visualise the workshop topics, as well as increase dopamine, oxytocin and serotonin levels in the body (the happiness hormones).

Thank you so, so much for delivering such an important workshop. I am sorry we were late and ate into the time you had to deliver your session.

We couldn't stop talking about it afterwards, it seems to have had an impact on all of us 😊 Whilst there are some pros and cons to conducting it in the workspace, I would say it worked this time as most of us had no further work commitments that day. We went to lunch in town after and everyone's spirits were high, which is super important because our industry is constant high pressure and we rarely get time to decompress together without 'work' being the topic of conversation. Your session was a great reminder of what is important and that we all need to prioritise ourselves before we can look to support others.

Thanks Sherisse, you are terrific at what you do and I am so glad we found you to deliver our session.

# Feedback

*From the very beginning of the session, Sherisse cultivated an open, welcoming space that really allowed me to be honest and vulnerable. I felt completely supported throughout the session through her listening, prompts and reflections on her own personal experience. I've left the session equipped with tools I can begin to utilise and I feel so much more able to work towards my goals. Thank you.*

Sherisse put me at ease as soon as our session began and helped me to shed light from aspects of my childhood that are contributing to how I'm feeling in the present. She was able to unpick things sensitively and easily and I was blown away by the links she made to blocks that I have at the moment!

After the session, I implemented the work that was given to me and consequently I've had the best business month I've ever had! Thank you so much Sherisse!! 🍷  
I'm eternally grateful xxxx

21:07

Thanks for tonight! I really liked the somatic releases especially, that was really needed ❤️

Sherisse I can't thank you enough for helping on my journey of self discovery and understanding, you've given me tools and advice that I have and always will cherish and share with other people! Your podcasts are so warming and have inspired me so much (I literally rave about you all the time!) You have a way with words that just resonate in me and I can't thank you enough for the greater impact you've had on me. Thank you for being you! x

10:53

Feeling relaxed within myself, thank you, it was cathartic. Wonderful thank you! x

How to make myself feel better

Stand up for your self and be your self

That I'm not alone

Resting my head and dreaming what I want to be

To love yourself and not let people walk over you like your nothing

To always be myself no matter what

Learning Life skills

visualizations

Embodiment = In your Body

Empowerment = In Your Power





 [WWW.SHERISSEBISRAM.COM](http://WWW.SHERISSEBISRAM.COM)

 [SHERISSE@SHERISSEBISRAM.COM](mailto:SHERISSE@SHERISSEBISRAM.COM)

 Permission to shine the podcast



• MENTOR • MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER • WORKSHOP FACILITATOR • PODCAST HOST •

# Dance + Empowerment

A 6 WEEK AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM.  
THE SPACE TO MOVE, CONNECT, AND GROW INTO YOUR  
CONFIDENCE

Starts  
20th May

WEDNESDAYS  
4.30 - 6PM  
VICTORY ACADEMY CHATHAM

Sessions held by Sherisse Bisram  
Let's Get Active Medway



Secure your  
space here



# Dance + Empowerment

Secure your  
space here

FOR GIRLS 13-17 FROM ETHNIC  
MINORITY BACKGROUNDS

## ★ DANCE

- Feel-good movement (no pressure, just vibes)
- Learn choreography inspired by different styles & cultures
- Move your body, release stress, and have fun

## ★ EMPOWERMENT

- Build real confidence and self-belief
- Learn how to manage anxiety, overthinking & pressure
- Feel more comfortable being yourself – unapologetically

## ★ COMMUNITY

- A safe space to be seen, heard & supported
- Connect with like-minded girls (no judgement, no pressure)
- Be part of something positive and uplifting



LET'S GET  
ACTIVE

Sessions held by Sherisse  
Bisram Professional Dancer -  
Dance Teacher with 14 years  
experience. In association with  
Let's Get Active Medway

# Lets play Bingo!!

Who can do what?

Write the persons name in  
the box.

## Rules

No Duplicates

Can't name yourself




Shout Bingo when all boxes  
are filled



# Walk & Talk

**Principle 3:  
There are  
different types of  
problems**

# There are three types of problem:

		
<b>Simple</b> Following a recipe	<b>Complicated</b> Sending a rocket to the moon	<b>Complex</b> Raising a child



'The problem is not the problem. The problem is your attitude about the problem'

**What is the key?**

# Working in Systems



Understand the  
Complexity



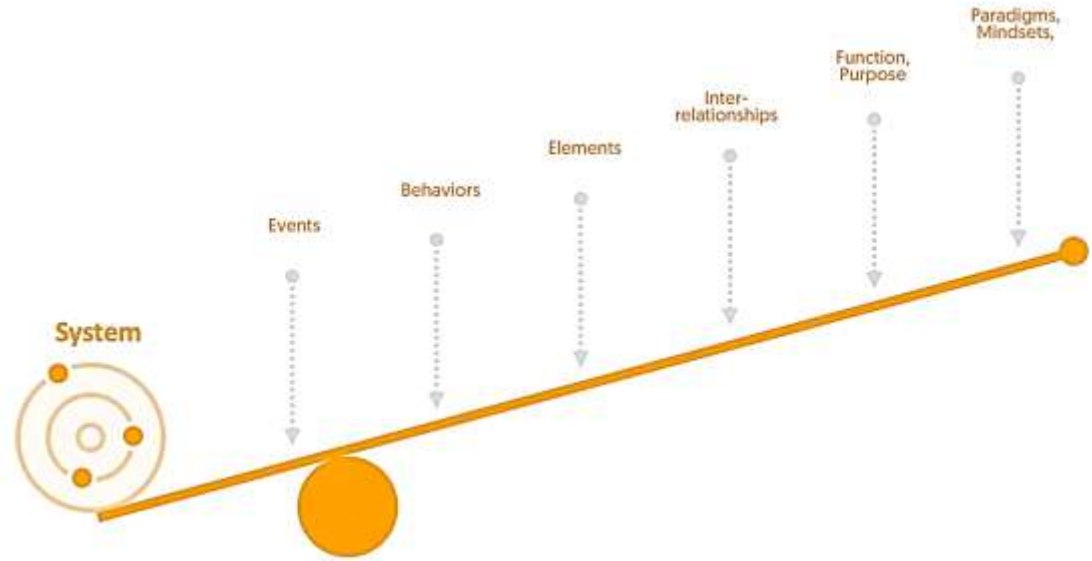
Identify the right  
places to make a  
difference  
(Leverage Points)



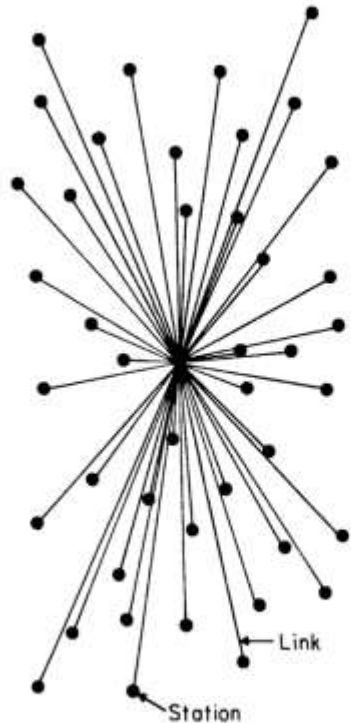
Act in Collaboration  
across the system  
(Networks)

# Identify Leverage Points

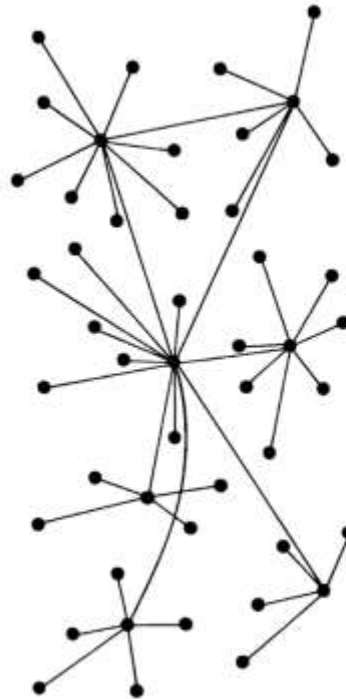
"Leverage points are places within a complex system where a small shift in one thing can produce big changes in everything."  
Donella Meadows



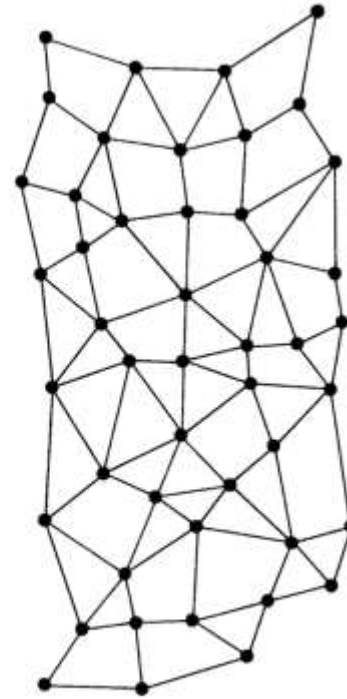
# Build Effective Networks



CENTRALIZED  
(A)



DECENTRALIZED  
(B)



DISTRIBUTED  
(C)

# Day 2: Turning Creative Methods into Reliable Data

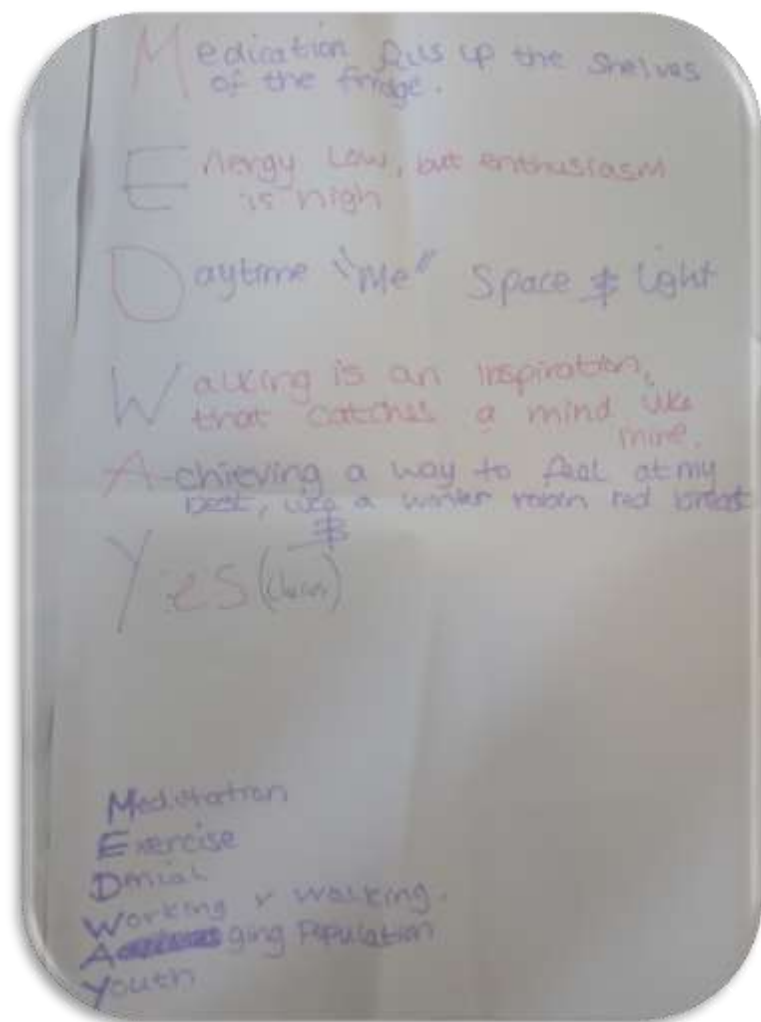
## What did we analyse?

### • Each poem captured:

- Perceptions of participation
- Barriers and enablers
- System conditions
- Priorities for change

### • Approach to analysis:

- Line-by-line coding
- Pattern identification across groups
- Grouping into higher-order themes



## Why & How is this valid data?

Repetition of key ideas  
across multiple groups

Consistent language  
despite different  
formats

Clear alignment with  
behaviour change and  
system theories

Convergence around  
shared challenges  
(access, wellbeing,  
voice)

**Conclusion:**  
These are not random  
ideas — they form a  
**coherent system  
narrative**

# Theme 1: Conditions Shape Participation

## What we wrote

- “More accessible opportunities”
- “Access for all”
- “Energy low but enthusiasm is high”
- “Medication...”
- “Aging population”
- “Women”
- “Youth”

## Interpretation

- People are motivated – but life context determines what’s possible

## System Insight

- Participation is driven by:
- Accessibility
  - Health realities
  - Safe, appealing environments

## What this means in practice

- To increase participation, systems must:
  - Design opportunities that are genuinely accessible
  - Recognise health, fatigue, and competing pressures
  - Create environments that feel Safe, Welcoming, Personally meaningful

# Theme 2: Voice & Agency Drive Change

## What we wrote

- “Youth voice/voices”
- **“You’re the answer”**
- “Exciting time to make a change”
- “Action, action, action!”

## Interpretation

- Individuals, organisations & system partners are all contributors, not recipients
- We are all experts in our own experience

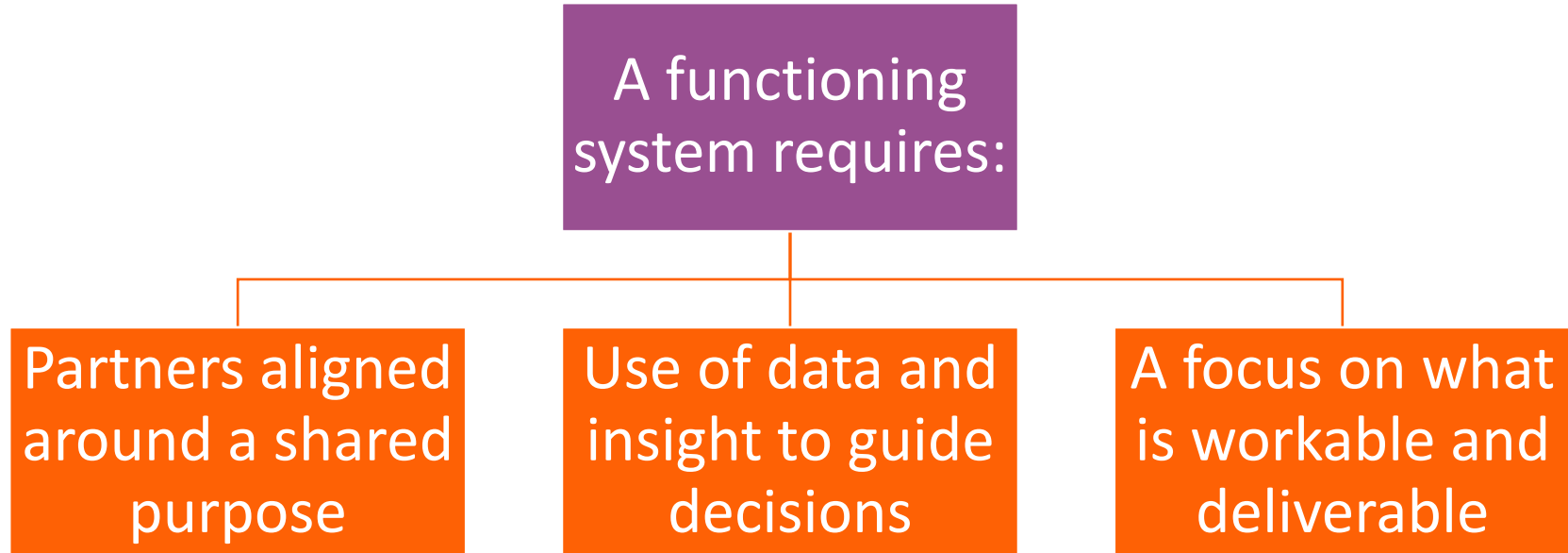
## System Insight

- When people feel heard and involved → ownership increases → sustained participation follows

## What this means in practice

- Effective approaches will:
  - Involve communities in shaping provision
  - Prioritise youth voice and lived experience
  - Move beyond consultation → co-creation

### Theme 3: What this means in practice



**Key tension identified: Ambition vs practicality — change must be achievable, not just aspirational**

Now imagine we had more than 4 poems...

The poems collectively tell us:

- People want to be active, but conditions limit action
- Communities must be part of the solution, not just the audience
- Systems need to be aligned, informed, and action-oriented

**In one sentence: Participation in Medway will grow when systems improve conditions, share power, and act coherently.**

## CREATIVE CURIOSITY IN PRACTICE

### FREE ONLINE LEARNING SERIES

- 22 April 2026 Introduction to MEL: Qualitative Research
- 20 May 2026 Foundations of MEL: Community based Participatory Action Research
- 1 July 2026 Developing a Plan: Refining research questions, identifying key stakeholders
- 29 July 2026 Choosing the Right Techniques for Your Project
- 26 Aug 2026 Core Techniques in Action: Interviews and Focus Groups
- 23 Sept 2026 Core Techniques in Action: Observations



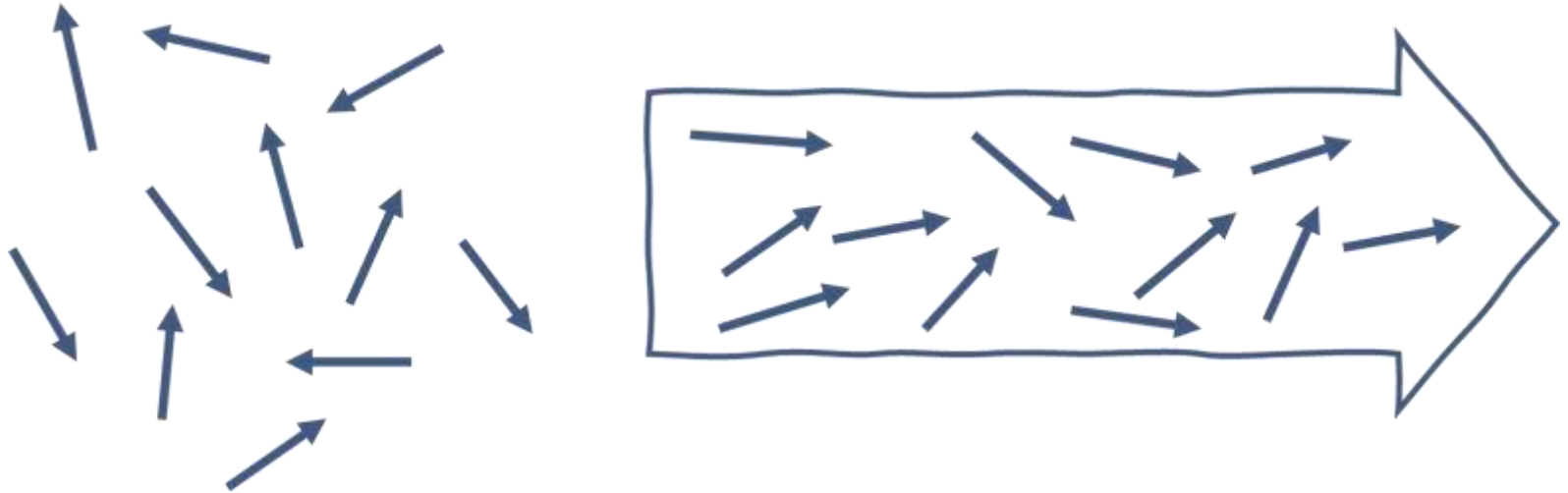
Presented by **Alexia Tam**  
Monitoring, Learning and  
Evaluation Officer




Spring/ Summer Creative Curiosity  
Series: Monitoring, Evaluation &  
Learning in Practice



# Develop Common/Shared Purpose



# What is our Common Purpose?



Systems for  
e and Impact

ion & Learning Officer

edway

**Lunch**

# ***Challenges to System Leadership***

- ***Language, a secret 'club'***
- ***'relationships', 'trust' – that's not real work', 'the day job'***
- ***Power dynamics & existing hierarchy***
- ***Too big, too distant, too complex..... scale of the opportunity***
- ***We are already doing it***
- ***It takes time – its hard work doing this in the existing system***

# ***Challenges to System Leadership***

- ***Frequent job moves***
- ***Funding arrangements, short termism***
- ***Rushing to known solutions.....***
- ***It is about projects but...***
- ***Local Govt Reorg / Devo..?***

## ***Mindset for System Leadership***

- ***'Strategic'***
- ***Collaborative***
- ***Passionate***
- ***Listen***
- ***Humble***
- ***Self-reflective***
- ***Courageous***
- ***Inspiring***

# Developing Place Based Networks

- Be deliberate and thoughtful about your network building. Who? Why? How?
- Connect the system to more of itself. Introduce and invite.
- Focus on what “we” need, not on what “I” need
- Convene spaces where people can connect and think together
- Dare to experiment and learn from failure
- Reflect on what’s stuck

*“Strong networks at the local level are the foundation for creating systemic change—because they are rooted in the unique needs, strengths, and opportunities of the place.”*

*Peter Senge*

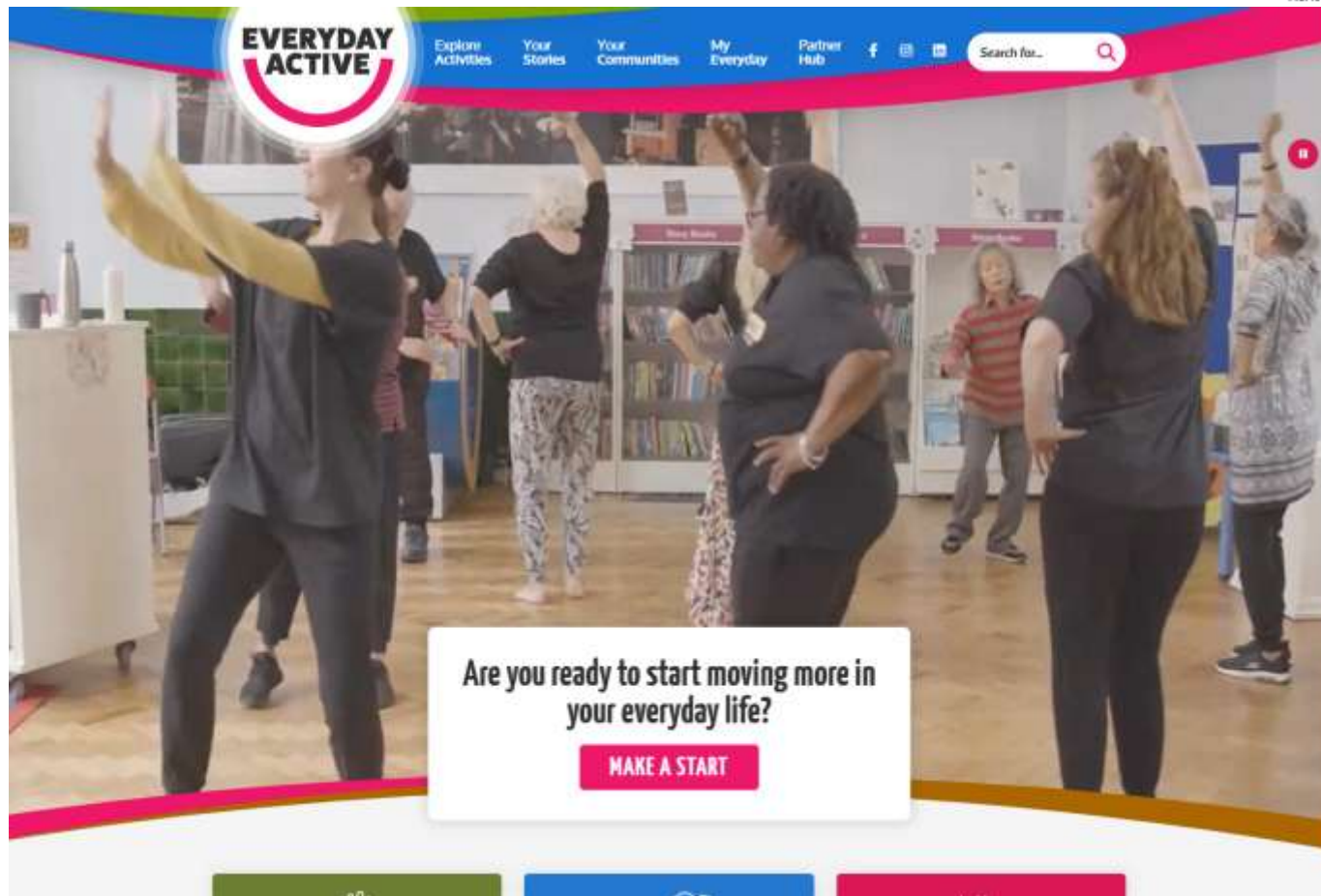
***System leaders see themselves  
as a leader in a system rather  
than the leader of the system***



**Using our time on  
what is needed and  
understanding what  
we are already  
doing....**

# Creating Healthier, More Active Communities Together

Andrea Murphy – Strategic  
Lead – Marketing, Strategy &  
Insight



**EVERYDAY ACTIVE**

Explore Activities | Your Stories | Your Communities | My Everyday | Partner Hub

Search for...

Are you ready to start moving more in your everyday life?

**MAKE A START**



EXPLORE  
ACTIVITIES



PERSONALISE  
CONTENT

## Making everyday active in Medway



Hi, I'm Brad- one of Medway's Everyday Active Champions and a Physical Activity Specialist within Medway Council's Public Health team. I'm passionate about helping our communities discover the benefits of moving more, feeling better, and staying active in ways that truly fit their lives. Medway offers a wide range of opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to get active, and I'm here to help you find the options that work best for you. Why not explore one of our activities today and see everything Medway has to offer?

REACH OUT TO BRAD

## ★ MY PICK OF THE WEEK



We've got our first session kicking off and this is your official invite to come along! Whether you've never played before or you're looking to get back into netball, this is the perfect place to start 💡 Here's what you need to know: 📌

**What:** Super fun, beginner-friendly netball session for all ages and abilities 📌 **Where:** Lordswood Leisure Centre 🕒 **When:** 6.30pm - 8pm 📅 **Tue 5th May** 💰 **Cost:** £5 – or just £2.50 with discount code DISCOUNT50! Chatham Grammar school ME5 7EH WEDNESDAY nights 7:30pm- 9:30pm

## ✓ MY RECOMMENDATION



We're looking to connect with local sports clubs, coaches, community activity providers and organisations who would be interested in delivering sessions in these new community facilities. If this is something that interests you, it's quick to complete and open to anyone who uses our parks or wants to get involved in future activity. Click on read more below for link

## New Medway PlayZones: We are looking for local clubs, coaches & activity providers



EXPLORE  
ACTIVITIES



PERSONALISE  
CONTENT

## What's going on in Medway

ONLY SHOW ME:

PAGE

ACTIVITIES



### Chatham

Find out what activities are going on in Chatham

READ  
MORE

SAVE THIS  
ITEM



### Gillingham

Find out what activities are going on in Gillingham

READ  
MORE

SAVE THIS  
ITEM



### Rainham

Find out what activities are going on in Rainham

READ  
MORE

SAVE THIS  
ITEM



EXPLORE  
ACTIVITIES



PERSONALISE  
CONTENT



## Everyday Active Workshop

The Everyday Active Workshop helps participants understand the benefits of physical activity and gain confidence to encourage others to get active across Kent and Medway. It's available online or in person, with open sessions offered year-round and tailored workshops available for local organisations' staff or volunteers.

- **Tuesday 2 December 2025, 13:00 – 14:30**

[Register for Everyday Active Workshop on 2 December 2025](#)

- **Wednesday 22 April 2026, 10:00 – 11:00**

[Register for Everyday Active Workshop on 22 April 2026](#)

- **Thursday 2 July 2026, 12:30 – 13:30**

[Register for Everyday Active Workshop on 2 July 2026](#)

- **Tuesday 10 November 2026, 14:00 – 15:00**

[Register for Everyday Active Workshop on 10 November 2026](#)

## National campaigns



### This Girl Can

[This Girl Can](#), Sport England's flagship campaign to help women get active, is turning its attention to tackling the exercise 'Enjoyment Gap' – as it reveals 2.4 million fewer women than men enjoy sport and physical activity. **'This Girl Can With You'** is a call-to-arms for sport and activity providers to dismantle the barriers that contribute to the Enjoyment Gap. Help women enjoy getting active by ensuring activities for women are:



### Moving Medicine

Moving Medicine is a comprehensive resource designed to help healthcare professionals integrate physical activity conversations into routine clinical care. They've launched 4 new resources to help healthcare professionals have better conversations about physical activity with people suffering from [anxiety](#), [type 1 diabetes](#), [people who are obese](#) and [people experiencing menopause](#).

To help address concerns around



### We Are Undefeatable

We Are Undefeatable was created by Sport England, in collaboration with 15 leading health and social care charities, to support people with long-term health conditions to become more active. The campaign features inspiring stories and provides a range of activity suggestions for people living with different types of conditions, providing "ways to move" that fit into their lives and around their personal circumstances.



EXPLORE  
ACTIVITIES



PERSONALISE  
CONTENT

# Live Longer Better



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## Join the Live Longer Better Network

A revolution is underway in Kent and Medway to enable people to live longer better, reduce the need for health and social care and reverse the effects of lockdown. The Live Longer Better network has three aims: **1) Increase physical, cognitive and emotional activity** **2) Increase healthy life expectancy and compress the period of dependency** **3) Reduce the need for health and social care because a person with greater strength, stamina, skill and suppleness has greater resilience and is less likely to need acute care.**

Whether you're a strategic lead or a front-line worker providing services for older people in Kent and Medway, you're invited to [join the Live Longer Better Network](#) to keep up to date with the Live Longer Better Revolution.

[JOIN THE LIVE LONGER BETTER NETWORK FOR KENT AND MEDWAY](#)



# Funding

- **AKM Small Grant (up to £500)** supports instructor costs, venue hire, small equipment and taster activity to grow participation





then you might have much fun



# Next Steps

## Active Partnership

## Next Steps and Collective Action

Three Month Follow Up

Six Month Follow Up

BUT

What's next for you  
personally? **What's your  
pledge?**

// *'not all treasure is  
sliver and gold,  
mate'*

*'wherever we want  
to go, we'll go'*

*Captain Jack Sparrow*

# Closing reflections

**Cllr Maple – Leader of Medway  
Council**

# Closing reflections

**Liz Davidson – Active Kent &  
Medway Director**



Sport England - Leading the  
Movement



Thank you