

Active Warrington Strategy

Developed by representatives from
Warrington Borough Council, Warrington School Sports Partnership,
Warrington Wolves Foundation, Great Sankey High School,
William Beamont High School, Lymm High School, Warrington Collegiate,
St Peters Primary School, Sport Cheshire and
Warrington Disability Partnership.

Warrington
Borough Council





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1. Introduction

The proposed vision:

'Each year, Warrington will become more active and healthier.'

The proposed target by which the vision will be measured is:

'By 2016, Warrington will be the most active borough in the North West.'

1.1.1 The management, organisation and delivery of sport and physical activity in Warrington needs to change. There is less public sector funding, the health service is being reorganised and significant changes are taking place to School Sports Partnerships. The vast majority of Warrington people are not doing enough sport or active recreation to benefit their health. As a result, a number of significant health issues are emerging, and these are concentrated in the most deprived area of the town.

1.1.2 In response to this, a range of partners and stakeholders, led by Warrington Borough Council, have come together to prepare new strategy for sport and physical activity. The aim of the strategy is to maximise the positive impact of sport and physical activity on the people of Warrington.

Specifically:

- to make sure people in Warrington's disadvantaged areas will be healthier and more active
- to help residents of Warrington's disadvantaged communities feel safer

- and to enable residents of Warrington's disadvantaged communities to fully participate in the decisions that affect their future and the future of their neighbourhoods

1.1.3 (adapted from two 'Closing the Gap' programmes: 'Healthy and Active People in Warrington (May 2010)' and 'Safer and Stronger Neighbourhoods (March 2010)').

1.1.4 The vision is that each year, the Warrington community will become more active and healthy. And by 2016, Warrington will be the most active borough in the North West.

1.1.5 This vision cannot be achieved by any one organisation working in isolation. It will require the local authority, public sector agencies, schools, clubs, civil society organisations and volunteers to work together and deliver on the actions allocated to them within this strategy.

1.1.6 The strategy is intended to be inclusive - that is, it aims to cater for the needs of everyone in Warrington. It therefore does not go into details about the needs of specific user groups. Partners responsible for specific actions will be expected to deliver their actions in the most appropriate way to meet the needs of the user groups they serve.





1.1.7 Achieving this vision will not be easy. We already know, based on the experience of people working in sport and physical activity in Warrington, that there are a number of barriers to increasing participation. For example:

- a lack of time and resources
- the groups most in need are often the hardest to reach
- proximity to services and activities does not always equate to access
- there is difficulty in co-ordinating effort and activities
- sport and physical activity has a relatively low profile among many partner organisations
- there is a lack of awareness and understanding in the community of the benefits of sport and physical activity
- there is a lack of activities which are appropriate for different user groups
- sport and physical activity is not always aligned with other national strategies and policies

1.1.8 This document sets out the strategy to achieve the vision. The strategy includes a series of actions - what people will need to do. The first set of action plans have a strong focus on sport, which reflects the content of many of the programmes currently being delivered. However, the intention is that the strategy will evolve over time to have a greater focus on non-sporting physical activities. These are likely to have a greater impact on those people who currently have very low levels of activity.

1.1.9 Details of how to get involved with the strategy are set out on page 15.



2. Key themes and goals

2.1.1 This strategy has a number of component parts, or themes. Each one of these has its own goal - what it must achieve if the overall strategy is to be successful. These are:

2.2 Involving neighbourhoods

'To involve local communities in the planning, organising and delivery of sport and physical activity to meet the specific needs of their neighbourhood.'

2.3 Building the capacity of volunteers

'To build the capacity of volunteers through recruitment, support, sharing of best practice and, where possible, training. We will do this in partnership with voluntary organisations, local employers and individuals. We are seeking a strong, committed and sustainable volunteer base, with volunteering levels matching the best in the region.'

2.4 Building the capacity of clubs

'To build the capacity of clubs through direct support, providing resources and information, sharing best practice, removing red tape and, where possible, training individuals. We will do this in partnership with governing bodies of sport, the County Sports Partnership and other interested organisations. We are seeking a strong and sustainable club network, with club membership levels matching the best in the region.'



2.5 Building the capacity of coaches

'To develop a robust infrastructure of support for coaches that provides a clear and coordinated place for the community and schools to access adequately qualified coaches; the infrastructure also needs to recognise and reward coaches and provide pathways to recruit, so Warrington, year on year, has a thriving population of coaches.'

2.6 Inclusion and inter-generational activities

'To make the most popular sports and physical activities identified through the needs assessment fully inclusive and, where practicable, accessible to all Warrington residents.'

2.7 Events

'To use neighbourhood, borough-wide, national and international events to promote sport and physical activity in Warrington and in turn, inspire more people to lead healthy, active lifestyles.'

2.8 Facilities

'To ensure there is access to affordable and fit for purpose sports facilities for the people of Warrington.'

2.9 Marketing and communications

'To provide clear and consistent messages about sport and physical activity in Warrington as widely and effectively as possible but with a particular focus on inactive people.'

2.10 Quality

'To ensure activities, facilities and events are delivered to a consistently high standard, worthy of the Active Warrington brand. This means they are user-focused, professional in outlook and make the users want to come back for more.'

3. Involving Neighbourhoods



3.1.1 Warrington Borough Council delivers its services via a neighbourhood structure. So we're proposing that sport and physical activity is also delivered on a neighbourhood basis where possible. Neighbourhood 'Sports Forums' could be developed to lead the development of sport locally. Bringing these 'Sports Forums' together would form the basis of a borough-wide Community Sports Network.

3.2 Our goal for involving neighbourhoods

'To involve local communities in the planning, organising and delivery of sport and physical activity to meet the specific needs of their neighbourhood.'

3.3 What we are proposing to do...

- N1 Develop Neighbourhood Sports Forums (building on existing Community Sports Club Forums) to organise and deliver sport and physical activity locally. This will involve linking current Community Sports Club Forums to Neighbourhood Forums/ Panels and establishing representation for Community Sports Club Forums on Neighbourhood Boards.
- N2 Roll out a programme of events that link neighbourhoods and Sports Forums in each area.
- N3 Continue our consultation with children, adults and families and feed the results into our local programmes for sport and physical activity.
- N4 Share best practice from one neighbourhood to another.



4. Building the capacity of volunteers

4.1.1 Volunteers are critical for the delivery of sport and physical activity. With current financial pressures, they will become even more important. A robust system for volunteer management is needed which covers recruitment, motivation, reward and retention. Ideas such as time banking and mentoring could be part of that system.

4.2 Our goal for building the capacity of volunteers

‘To build the capacity of volunteers through recruitment, support, sharing of best practice and, where possible, training. We will do this in partnership with voluntary organisations, local employers and individuals. We are seeking a strong, committed and sustainable volunteer base, with volunteering levels matching the best in the region.’

4.3 What we are proposing to do...

- V1 Increase volunteering with a particular focus on the 16-25 age group.
- V2 Recognise and celebrate volunteering through an incentives/ rewards scheme.
- V3 Seek new volunteers from local companies and public bodies, as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility obligations.
- V4 Work with schools and colleges to enhance current volunteering schemes or establish volunteering opportunities for students.
- V5 Centralise and coordinate opportunities, pathways and management for adult (16+) volunteers in Warrington.
- V6 Create a clear offer/pathway for volunteers.



V7 Prepare an audit of coaches, volunteers, facilities and clubs; publish as an A-Z directory on the Warrington Borough Council website.

V8 Improve the information about volunteering: who can be a volunteer; which organisations are seeking volunteers; and what qualifications are needed.

5. Building the capacity of clubs

5.1.1 Clubs are the fundamental building block for delivering and growing sport. They also play a valuable role in creating local networks and a sense of place and belonging. Almost exclusively run by volunteers and often with a neighbourhood focus, clubs are intrinsically linked with the other themes of this strategy. There is also an important role for clubs in delivering physical activity outside of sport. This could include, for example, yoga, allotment gardening or conservation work.

5.1.2 But running a club is time consuming and can be challenging. We need to build the capacity of clubs so that the individuals running them can improve their skills, deliver more and get more satisfaction from what they do.

5.2 Our goal for building the capacity of clubs

To build the capacity of clubs through direct support, providing resources and information, sharing best practice, removing red tape and, where possible, training individuals. We will do this in partnership with governing bodies of sport, the County Sports Partnership and other interested organisations. We are seeking a strong and sustainable club network, with club membership levels matching the best in the region.'

5.3 What we are proposing to do...

- CL1 Develop and share resources such as draft policy documents, constitutions, budgeting tools, job descriptions, website formats and sports development plans.
- CL2 Encourage clubs to participate in Neighbourhood Sports Forums.
- CL3 Make introductions between clubs and casual participants, schools, colleges and events organisers.
- CL4 Develop a resource to promote the activity and successes of our local sports clubs.
- CL5 Develop a programme of incentives/ recognition for clubs who proactively engage in their community.
- CL6 Make quality marks, such as Clubmark, a minimum standard for clubs in Warrington.
- CL7 Take advantage of national schemes to support our clubs i.e Sainsbury's Active Kids Vouchers and Tesco's Vouchers for clubs and schools, which can be used to purchase kit for clubs.
- CL8 Encourage inclusivity into mainstream clubs through inclusive sports package.
- CL9 Prepare an audit of coaches, volunteers, facilities and clubs; publish as an A-Z directory on the Warrington Borough Council website.
- CL10 Develop our use of Coach Web to identify, recruit, induct, communicate with, monitor and evaluate coaches and coaching across the town.



6. Building the capacity of coaches



6.1.1 Coaches are an essential part of the workforce for this strategy. The support of coaches, both voluntary and paid, will be needed to deliver many aspects of this strategy. The key is having a robust yet flexible workforce that is suitably qualified and motivated to deliver the strategy's vision.

6.2 Our goal for building the capacity of coaches

'To develop a robust infrastructure of support for coaches that provides a clear and coordinated place for the community and schools to access adequately qualified coaches; the infrastructure also needs to recognise and reward coaches and provide pathways to recruit, so Warrington, year on year, has a thriving population of coaches.'

6.3 What we are proposing to do...

CO1 Work more with third sector partners to recruit, develop and retain coaches, with particular focus on 16-25 year olds.

CO2 Promote and encourage more women into coaching.

CO3 Encourage young people (under 16s) to develop coaching skills, for example via the PE GCSE.

CO4 Establish a programme of promotion, reward and recognition for coaches.

CO5 Link coaching pathways from education to the community.

CO6 Prepare a development strategy for coaches including mentoring and education.

CO7 Prepare an audit of coaches, volunteers, facilities and clubs; publish as an A-Z directory on the Warrington Borough Council website.

7. Inclusion and inter-generational activities

7.1.1 There are many sports and physical activities that can be enjoyed by almost anyone, regardless of their age, background or ability. However, certain sports are perceived as elitist, exclusive or just not right for some people. This means that participation rates in particular groups in society are low. Sport and physical activity should be open and inclusive - the message 'sport for all' has as much relevance now as it did when it was first coined over 30 years ago.

7.1.2 The Strategy is intended to be inclusive - that is, it aims to cater for the needs of everyone in Warrington. It therefore does not go into detail about the needs of specific user groups. Partners responsible for delivery will be required to ensure the needs of all citizens are met. The Strategy aims to improve participation of all Warrington citizens in Sport and Physical Activity, especially those disadvantaged because of their age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation or caring responsibilities.

7.1.3 One particular area of focus for inclusion is inter-generational activities. An active child could influence inactive parents, for example, if the right activities are available. Families and small groups of friends provide playing partners, support, encouragement and familiarity; they are just right for people who are not ready to join a club.

7.2 Our goal for inclusion and inter-generational activities

'To make the most popular sports and physical activities identified through the needs assessment fully inclusive and, where practicable, accessible to all Warrington residents.'



7.3 What we are proposing to do...

- 11 Use electronic games such as the Wii / exergaming technology to bring together people, young and old, who may not otherwise be interested in sport, by participating in the home or in other community venues.
- 12 Develop action plans to continue to provide opportunities to promote disability sport and physical activity to be overseen by the Leisure Recreation and Sport (LRS) Forum.
- 13 Develop 'Participation Tuesdays' where whole families are invited to leisure centres for low cost, family activities
- 14 Develop parallel activities where parents/ carers can do one activity while their children do another at the same facility or event.
- 15 Use obesity data to target children and families in need of support to make lifestyle changes and commission provision to support them.
- 16 Develop a plan to provide inclusive transport opportunities to allow people to access sport, physical activity and leisure opportunities.
- 17 In year 2, embed children's and adult's obesity care pathways

8. Events



8.1.1 There is great potential for linking events in Warrington with national events such as the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the 2013 Rugby League World Cup. Events provide opportunities to increase physical activity, volunteering and wider community engagement. Success factors include developing events which are attractive to local communities; making the most of the build-up to events; the quality of the events themselves; legacy and post-event benefits. Events could include fun runs, cycling sportives (mass participation rides), local 'Olympics', sports tournaments, and festivals.

8.2 Our goal for events

'To use neighbourhood, borough-wide, national and international events to promote sport and physical activity in Warrington and in turn, inspire more people to lead healthy, active lifestyles.'

8.2.1 The proposed target for community events is two events per year in each sport forum area. It is likely that the school games organiser will measure number of participants and the number of competitions but there is no clarity at present as regarding likely targets.

8.3 What we are proposing to do...

E1 Support and encourage the school competition programme.

- E2 Develop neighbourhood Olympics/ Paralympics, culminating in a borough-wide participation festival or tournament.
- E3 Ensure there is a lasting legacy for Warrington from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- E4 Ensure there is a lasting legacy from the 2013 Rugby League World Cup.
- E5 Links to town and national events e.g. 2012, RLWC, Half Marathon, etc. Events/ activities leading up to major events; schools, clubs, etc.
- E6 Develop a programme of events at Orford Park Community Sports Hub.
- E7 Develop incentives for participants and partners to proactively engage in events.
- E8 Develop 'lifelong learning' sports that can be developed from schools and can be continued post-16. E.g. running, cycling and swimming.
- E9 Develop 'Active Warrington' arts events focused on physical activity.
- E10 Roll out a programme of events that link neighbourhoods and sports forums in each area.

9. Facilities

9.1.1 If we are to increase participation in sport in Warrington, we need facilities which are accessible, affordable and fit for purpose. That means we need facilities in the right quantity, quality, distribution and specification. Facilities must be welcoming and attractive to people who are not interested in sport and physical activity, as well as to those who are.

9.1.2 Orford Park Community Sports Hub will have a significant role in providing high quality, affordable facilities in the central neighbourhood area. With advice and support from Warrington Disability Partnership and the authority's Adult Social Care Services, the site offers accessible facilities enabling future development of activities for Warrington's disadvantaged citizens. But it won't be the answer to all of Warrington's facility needs. In the current financial climate, we will have to identify new ways of providing access to facilities. This will include using schools, community halls and outdoor spaces more effectively.

9.2 Our goal for facilities

'To ensure there is access to affordable and fit for purpose sports facilities for the people of Warrington.'

9.3 What we are proposing to do...

F1 Ensure the successful delivery of the Orford Park Community Sports Hub as the main Olympic Legacy Project outside of London 2012.

F2 Undertake an annual non user survey across Warrington to identify barriers to participation and formulate an annual improvement plan for all partners.

F3 Ensure that information on all facilities and clubs is available via the internet and hard copies are retained at all libraries and leisure facilities for residents to access.



F4 Further develop access to school facilities across the town to ensure community usage is maximised.

F5 Continue to proactively promote co-location of services in the heart of communities through the development of further neighbourhood and community hubs across the town.

F6 Maximise the opportunities available in open space and park settings across the town to encourage greater participation in outdoor activities.

F7 Promote Community Asset Transfer and encourage a multi-sports approach where appropriate.

F8 Review activity programmes to ensure that minority groups have equal access to affordable activities.

F9 Prepare an audit of coaches, volunteers, facilities and clubs.

10. Marketing and communications

10.1 Introduction

10.1.1 Only about one-fifth of people in Warrington are doing enough sport and physical activity to benefit their health. So how do we persuade the other four-fifths to do more? Communication is one part of the solution. We must communicate effectively with the inactive people as well as those who are active. This requires clear, consistent messages about sport and physical activity - what's on offer and how people can join in. Branding can be a useful tool to link the messages to the activities, facilities, events and providers, thereby building credibility and trust.

10.1.2 Clear, consistent messaging and the development of a trusted brand requires a borough wide approach. It could benefit from collaboration with neighbouring authorities.

10.2 Our goal for marketing and communications

'To provide clear and consistent messages about sport and physical activity in Warrington as widely and effectively as possible but with a particular focus on inactive people.'

10.3 What have we done so far?

A few key examples...

- provided detailed information about sports and physical activities on the Warrington Borough Council website and in a range of publications
- launched the Leisure Warrington website
- provided regular news items about activities in Warrington
- offered information via Twitter and Facebook

10.4 What we are proposing to do...

M1 Deliver clear and consistent messages about sport and physical activity across Warrington.

M2 Develop and protect Active Warrington as the brand for all sport and physical activity delivered through this strategy.

M3 Co-ordinate all activities taking place through one information portal, such as a single website.

M4 Use traditional and non-traditional methods of communication e.g. Facebook, Twitter and SMS messaging.



11. Quality of delivery



11.1.1 It only takes one poor experience to deter a user from returning to a facility, event or activity. Local people need providers whom they can trust to deliver to a high standard, at affordable prices and in tune with what they want. In other words, to deliver quality.

11.1.2 There are various ways of assuring quality. Leisure centres and sports development teams can achieve Quest™ accreditation¹; sports clubs can achieve Clubmark; providers can become trusted brands by developing a reputation for great service. Whichever mechanisms are chosen, it is critical that quality is an integral to everything delivered under the Active Warrington banner - in other words, user-focused, professional in outlook and consistent.

11.2 Our goal for the quality of delivery

‘To ensure activities, facilities and events are delivered to a consistently high standard, worthy of the Active Warrington brand. This means they are user-focused, professional in outlook and make the users want to come back for more.’

11.3 What we are proposing to do...

- Q1 Work towards achieving Quest accreditation in the highly commended category within 12 months of Orford Park Community Sports Hub opening.
- Q2 Support all clubs to achieve Clubmark.
- Q3 Implement an internal policy of only allowing Clubmark accredited clubs to use leisure centres.
- Q4 Set quality standards for coaches, volunteers and events.
- Q5 Develop an events management template to quality assure all ‘in house’ and ‘external’ events (see also events theme).
- Q6 Publicise new policies and procedures to ensure that clubs, coaches and events are operating to the latest guidelines.
- Q7 Use CoachWeb to support the delivery of quality coaching.

¹ The quality standard for the leisure sector

12. Pledging your support

Pledging support for the Active Warrington Strategy

We, the undersigned:

- agree to play our part each year in making the Warrington community more active and healthier.
- pledge to work with Active Warrington and its partners to be a part of the solution
- pledge to help with the following three actions from the strategy. (*pledge quote the letter and number of each section*)

Signed:

Print name:

On behalf of (organisation - if relevant)
....

Position in organisation (if relevant)

12.1.2 Please post your pledge to:



Active Warrington
New Town House
Buttermarket Street
Warrington
WA1 2NH



or email your pledge to
active@warrington.gov.uk



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