

Utilising Local Delivery to Build a Successful Project – Arboretum, Derby

Theme: physical activity, local delivery, green spaces

Defining the Issue

Learning about local issues, needs and requirements, and engaging members of the local community in project planning and delivery can be key to ensuring that the project is successful. This is something that Kate West, Move More Co-Ordinator at Derby City Council, wanted to do when looking to implement a physical activity offer as part of the Ping! Derby project.

Background Information

During the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, Derby Community Table Tennis Club (DCTTC) was established and began to build traction in the form of members and participation. After relocating to Arboretum, one of Derby's most deprived areas, the club reached out to Derby City Council to get support in expanding table tennis provision across the city.

Kate had already begun a piece of engagement work within Arboretum, which focussed on gaining an insight into what support local people would need to be more physically active, and what barriers prevent the community from taking part in sport and physical activity.

The insight demonstrated that programmes had previously been delivered by people from outside of the community, and therefore didn't necessarily have the right local connections in order for the programme to be a real success.

Using this insight, Kate ensured that any project was co-designed with the community, working in collaboration with those who live and work in Arboretum. The consultations discovered that the community wanted to have more equipment in a local park, which would provide them with more reasons to visit the park and improve their experiences when visiting.

The provision of outdoor table tennis would provide a solution to the communities needs, as well as build on the strong indoor provision created by DCTTC.



The Project

The aims of the project were to;

- Create a local activator group, bringing together local residents and partners strengths and knowledge for a shared purpose
- Learn and understand how outdoor table tennis can be embedded into the park and the local community
- Create a free and accessible physical activity for those already using the park, to inspire people to use the park more and to increase the number of people visiting the park

“From previous insight work with local communities, I’ve learnt that for sustained engagement with an activity, there needs to be a local network on the ground championing the offer and connecting more people into the conversation.” – Kate West

The learnings captured through the co-design phase were shared across the cities Move More Derby Ambassador Network, alongside connections with residents and partner at ward level. An invitation was provided to visit the park and begin the conversations about outdoor table tennis provision and engaging the community in the offer. Twelve people attended the first meeting and two outdoor table tennis tables were installed in October 2021 as part of Ping! Derby, with a launch event the following week during half term which involved providing bats and balls to residents.



The Impact

Ping! Activator meetings take place monthly, providing the opportunity to get together, progress outstanding actions, solve any issues that have arisen and discuss ideas for future activation.

The local community regularly engage with the outdoor tables, with Park Rangers reporting positive interaction with the offer – particularly on weekends.

Awareness of DCTTC has increased, with some attending the launch now attending Junior sessions at the club.

More local residents and partners are coming together for a common goal and shared purpose to embed physical activity into the local area through the Activator group.

“The table tennis has brought new life to Arboretum and there has been an increase in activity in the park” – Pakistan Community Centre Staff Member

Key Learnings

1. Co-designing with the community, and getting them to champion the offer at a local offer, will increase the success of the project
2. Outdoor table tennis has the opportunity to signpost participants into more regular and sustained opportunities

Further Information

For more information on Ping, visit www.tabletennisengland.co.uk/ping



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