



# Sport England: Understanding variations in sports participation

Case study in driving participation: Derby City, Derbyshire  
County Council, and the districts and boroughs of Derbyshire

August 2010

# Background

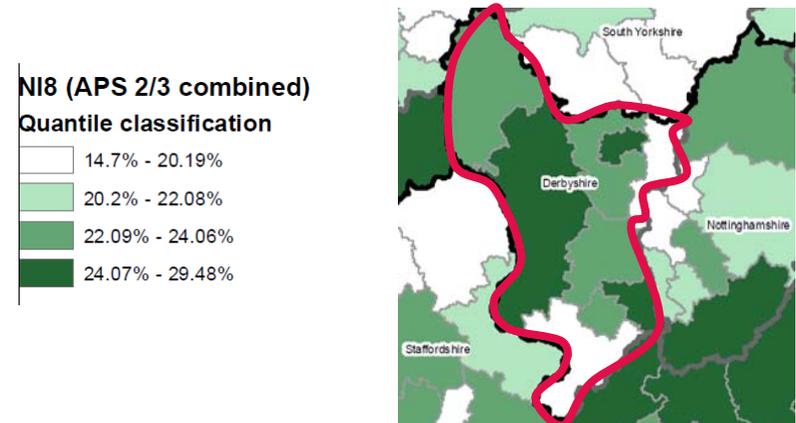
- Sport England is focused on the creation of a world-leading community sport system
  - Investing to grow and sustain participation in grassroots sport
  - Collaborating with partners at a national and local level
  - Targeting an additional 1 million people doing more sport by 2012-13.
- As part of this objective, Sport England has commissioned a series of robust quantitative models aimed at better understanding the factors which account for variations in sports participation, and thereby identify the levers most amenable to public policy intervention.
- This case study attempts to illustrate some of the findings from the quantitative modelling, and also provide practical learning with examples of specific interventions.



# Sporting participation levels in Derbyshire are higher than quantitative models alone would predict

- One objective of the modelling work has been to strengthen our understanding of what accounts for variation in participation levels between areas; in other words, to better understand why one area has a higher level of sporting participation than another.
- At a county level Derbyshire has a high level of sporting participation compared to other nearby counties, and there are several high performing districts within the county where participation is higher than would be expected based on the demographics of the area (see diagram opposite).
- Much of this can be explained by factors that were found to be the most significant drivers in the modelling work, which are listed on the following slide. However, in addition to the drivers of participation that the modelling work has found to be statistically significant, there are other **intangible factors that drive greater participation**. This case study attempts to tease some of these out.

## APS2/3 NI8 participation levels: Derbyshire region



## APS 2 and 3 participation levels

District/ LA	Actual participation rate	Predicted participation rate
Amber Valley	25.1%	22.8%
Bolsover	18.9%	17.7%
Chesterfield	24.5%	21.5%
Derbyshire Dales	27.2%	23.7%
Derby UA	21.1%	21.3%
Erewash	25.4%	23.2%
High Peak	22.2%	23.9%
North East Derbyshire	24.9%	22.6%
South Derbyshire	18.9%	23.5%
National Average	22.0%	

\* A fuller explanation of these drivers can be found in the complete technical report separate to this case study

# Reference: overview of the drivers of participation in the NI8 model

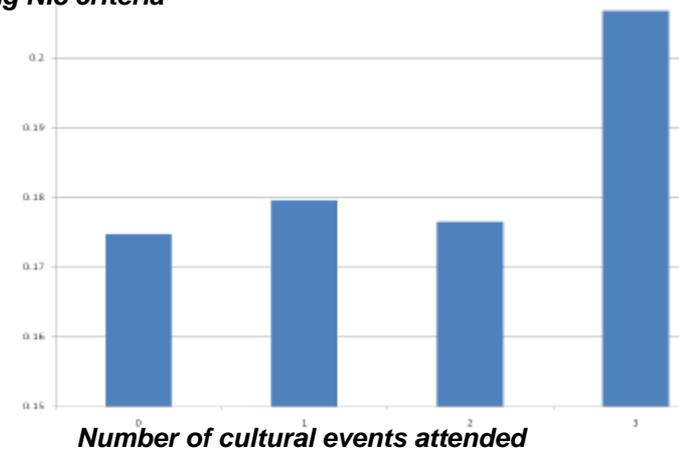
- The table to the right provides an overview of the variables which the modelling found to have a significant impact on the probability of an individual reaching the NI8 criteria, and whether an increase in this variable means an individual is more (positive) or less (negative) likely to reach NI8.
- More detail on the quantified impact of each of these drivers can be found in the full modelling technical report.

Variable	Impact	Variable	Impact
Social club membership	Positive	Single adult household	Positive
Attended cultural events over the last year	Positive	Male	Positive
Region: East Midlands, North East, North West, South East, South West, Yorkshire	Positive	National lottery grants awarded within 10kms	Positive
A-Levels	Positive	Lakes within 10kms	Positive
5 or more GCSEs	Positive	Own home outright	Positive
Higher education at degree level	Positive	Number of children in household	Negative
Average temperature	Positive	Population density in local area	Negative
Total rainfall	Positive	Live in council housing	Negative
Income Level	Positive	Number of children in household	Negative
Own ethnicity in area	Positive	Car Van Available	Negative
White ethnicity	Positive	Age	Negative
Attend cultural events	Positive	Illness	Negative
		Four or more adults in household	Negative

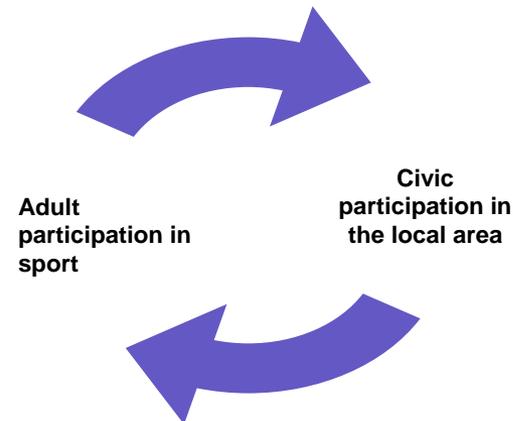
# Participation in community life and participation in sport appear to be interrelated

- The modelling work found that people who attend cultural events are more likely to meet the NI8 criteria of doing sport for at least 30 minutes, 3 times a week (see charts on the right side). We can use these measures as a proxy for participation in community life or civic participation. In other words, if you are someone who is engaged in cultural and social activities, you are more likely to do sport 3x30 minutes a week, all other things being equal.
- It is reasonable to assume from this that there is **a relationship between participation in sport and general civic participation**. There may also be a “virtuous circle” effect here, as people who participate in sport more are more likely to get to know and engage with community in the area they live, and thus civic participation levels may rise in tandem with sporting ones.
- Although we have not proven or analyzed the link in any detail, there may therefore be a link between NI8 and NI1 (% of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area) and NI2 (% of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood).

*Impact on probability of meeting NI8 criteria*



*Hypothesis on the relationship between civic participation and participation in sport*



# Networks that build participation at a community level in Derbyshire

- Gosforth Fields Sport Association in North East Derbyshire is a partnership that was formed out of three local football and rugby clubs in a bid to maintain and improve facilities on Gosforth Fields, an underdeveloped site that had been previously used as school playing fields.
  - By pooling its efforts and resources, The Association was able to attract investment from bodies such as Derbyshire County Council, the Football Foundation and Sport England, for the construction of a £2.3 million set of multipurpose sporting and social facilities that are intended to become the focal point for the community.
  - The site was developed in December 2009, so it is too early to record return on investment, but there has been increased uptake of rugby, and early indications suggest that all sports have benefited from improved all weather facilities.
- Jog Derbyshire is a network of community based jogging groups which encourage people to become more active by starting to jog with people of similar fitness levels
  - The scheme offers multiple routes for new participants, depending on their local area: jogging groups are based in leisure centres, work places, village halls, local schools, community centres, sports clubs or anywhere where there is interest.
  - There are currently 56 active groups and the programme has trained over 100 leaders and introduced over 1,000 people, new to exercise, in 6 months from February to September 2009.

## Gosforth Fields Sport Association



## Jog Derbyshire



***“The best interventions have been the ones that have made the most of existing village based clubs and infrastructure”***

***- Les Warren, Derbyshire Dales Leisure Officer***

### **Questions and implications for other areas**

- *Are there any underused facilities in your area that could be developed if sporting and non-sporting clubs concerted their effort?*
- *In rural areas, how can you make sport can be a more central component of community life?*

# Treating sport as a means to an end, and sport as an end in itself boosts participation levels

- The drivers of participation in sport are extremely complex and encompass a broad range of demographic, socio-cultural and lifestyle factors; one of the key findings of the modelling work was that there is no single “magic bullet” that can be isolated and addressed through a single-minded intervention.
- Rather it is more likely that a broad range of strategies will be required to increase participation levels in sport amongst adults and that different approaches will be appropriate for different local areas. In order to raise participation levels, sport needs to be considered both as a means to an end – for instance within health and civic participation – and an end in and of itself.
- This clearly entails a greater degree of partnership in local communities on shared initiatives that both increase sporting participation levels, and simultaneously drive other positive outcomes.



*Sport as health*

*Sport as civic participation*

*Sport as leisure*

**N18 Adult participation levels**

# Lifelong participation in sport as a route to long-term health: examples of initiatives in Derbyshire

*Two schemes that make use of partnerships to promote lifelong participation in sport*

- The PACE (Physically Active Children in Derbyshire) project set up by Erewash Borough Council and part funded by Pfizer, is a series of after school clubs that combine 45 minutes of physical activity with 45 minutes of healthy eating classes for children and their families
  - Following the first six weeks of PACE, 94 per cent of parents said their child's eating habits had improved; 81 per cent said self esteem had grown and that their child's feelings had changed towards physical activity.
- The b-Active programme is designed to help children, young people, and adults be more physically active through a range of accessible and fun sports and physical activities
  - The programme was set up after Derby City Council and NHS Derby set a stretch target in the LPSA2 for increased physical activity by children and young people
  - The programme builds on research from Leeds Metropolitan University, which found that low self esteem and negative previous experiences with physical exercise were barriers for inactive young people in becoming more active.

## **PACE, Erewash**



## **b-Active, Derby City**



# Other examples of partnerships that promote the value of sport to health

- The Active Derbyshire campaign aims to bring together different agencies to deliver on common goals in the area of sport-for-health, including Derbyshire Sport, Derbyshire County PCT, Derbyshire County Council, District and Borough Councils, The Peak District National Park Authority, Department of Health and Sport England
  - The campaign effectively also functions as a galvanizing force for sport-for-health in the area, with an activity finder searchable by sport and Derbyshire district, and other online tools such as a fitness diary to encourage people to maintain progress towards their goals.
- The Derbyshire Dales Walking for Health programmes is a series of led walks through local countryside that are part of the national scheme set up by Natural England
  - Led by trained walk leaders, the walks are tailored to encourage people to undertake a brisk walk of approximately one hour in length, with the specific aim of raising the activity levels and stamina of individuals who have not participated in exercise for some time.

## Walk for health networks



## Active Derbyshire



### Questions and implications for other areas

- Can you adopt similar approaches in your area to promote sport-for-health?
- Can you combine a “top-down” integrated approach with a system that rewards “bottom-up” innovation at the most grassroots level that may eventually be scaleable?

# The value of a sustained commitment to sport and a joined up approach across the county

- Derbyshire has benefited from a consistent, effective and joined-up approach to strategically prioritise sport across the county for around 15 years. Prior to the formation of the County Sport Partnership, Derbyshire Sport, there was already a strategic network of partners working collaboratively on sport (Derbyshire Peak Park Sport and Recreation Forum). Many of the people working in sport in Derbyshire at a county or district level have built up experience over a substantial period of time.
- The following factors have been identified in the success of the Derbyshire Sport Community Sport Partnership
  - **Strong clarity and vision:** in club development, coach development and volunteer development
  - **Strong understanding of its partners needs,** flexibility of delivery in meeting those needs, with a focus on mandating local partners to lead delivery
  - **Well developed working relationships,** with National Governing Bodies
  - **Strong positioning structurally** within the County and with the City
  - **Strong leadership** at all levels within the partnership
- Sport and leisure representatives also meet 6 times a year as part of the Derbyshire Cultural Officers Group (DCOG). DCOG meetings function as a forum for districts in Derbyshire to compare performance against sporting participation rates, and also to share ideas for initiatives within or across districts.

*“Derbyshire Partnership Forum has just published its Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2014 and ‘culture’ is one of 5 priority themes. This prioritisation reflects the key role culture and sport has in contributing to life within the County.*

*Partnership working in Derbyshire is mature. The role of District authorities is valued and respected, the strategic health framework (JNSA) provides the basis for health partners to engage and Derbyshire Sport has played a crucial role in developing both a Strategic Plan for Sport and Active Recreation in Derbyshire 2010-2015 and the Active Derbyshire Plan 2009-2013.*

*We are one of only 6 County Council areas to have achieved statistically significant change from Active People 1 to Active People 3. We are proud of this but continue to look for ways, working with our partners, to accelerate this improvement further.”*

*- David Lowe, Strategic Director, Policy and Community Safety, Derbyshire County Council*

# Summary of key messages

## There is no single “magic bullet” to success

- Whilst important, the demographic profile of the local population is not the only driver of sports participation. The drivers of participation are complex and broad (e.g. demographics, environment / infrastructure, local priorities, partnerships and interventions); there is no single ‘magic’ bullet that can be addressed through interventions

## Participation in sport and community life

### Sport as civic participation

- Civic participation and sporting participation appear to be interrelated
  - People who are more engaged in cultural activities are more likely to participate in sport
  - Interventions that target both sport *and* community engagement – may be particularly effective
  - This may particularly be the case in rural areas where sport can be an especially important outlet for community life.

### Sport as a means to an end

- Partnership on shared initiatives that treat sport as a means to an end of improving health can increase participation levels and improve health outcomes in a local area
  - Particularly initiatives that support lifelong participation in sport as a route to long-term health.

## Sustained commitment to sport in an area

- A joined-up, strategic focus on sporting participation throughout a region is more likely to raise participation levels and protect funding over the long-term.