



Oxford Hub Active Reach Report

This report shows what Oxford Hub delivered as part of Active Reach from July- October 2020. It outlines our delivery, the success, challenges and any learning for future projects.

Blackbird Leys Summer school

We delivered a summer school in Blackbird Leys which ran for three weeks over the school summer holidays. It was a high-quality holiday activity programme - including lots of sports, support with literacy and a nutritious meal every day, free of charge.

The programme was open for teachers to refer children from their schools who were most at risk of holiday hunger and for those whose parents wouldn't be able to afford, or access, any other provision or support during the holidays. 45 young people were referred to the programme and 32 of these Children attended the summer school and it was a great success, enjoyed by the young people, volunteers and staff members. The programme was supported by Active Oxfordshire, Youth Ambition, a range of sport providers, parents and literacy support organisations. Oxford Hub coordinated the programme, collected resources that were needed as well as recruiting staff and volunteers to help run the programme.

It was really important that we stuck to Covid regulations and social distancing. We had 3 bubbles; Year 3/4 bubble, Year 5 bubble and a Year 5/6 bubble. The staff and volunteers did not cross bubbles at all. We had staggered lunch breaks with time to clean in between sittings. We had different areas of the field for different groups to use so there was no crossing of bubbles/ groups as well as different equipment for each bubble. The toilets were cleaned twice a day and we had staggered collection times for the different bubbles.

We provided the young people with literacy games and support as a lot of them have been missed out on school during the lockdown, meaning continuous learning through summer was more important than ever. We also gave all the young people the opportunity to do cycling training to make them more confident cyclists which would support their physical health and wellbeing. Other sports we organised for the young people include; Tri Golf, Bocca, Disk Golf, Netball, Table Tennis and much more!



For the literacy sessions we did 1-1 reading for children. ARCH, a local reading charity that inspires children to read, attended a few days to work with small groups of children. We had Oxford poetry library come and deliver sessions on their book 'Lost Words' and lots of literacy games which were donated by residents through our Amazon wishlist.



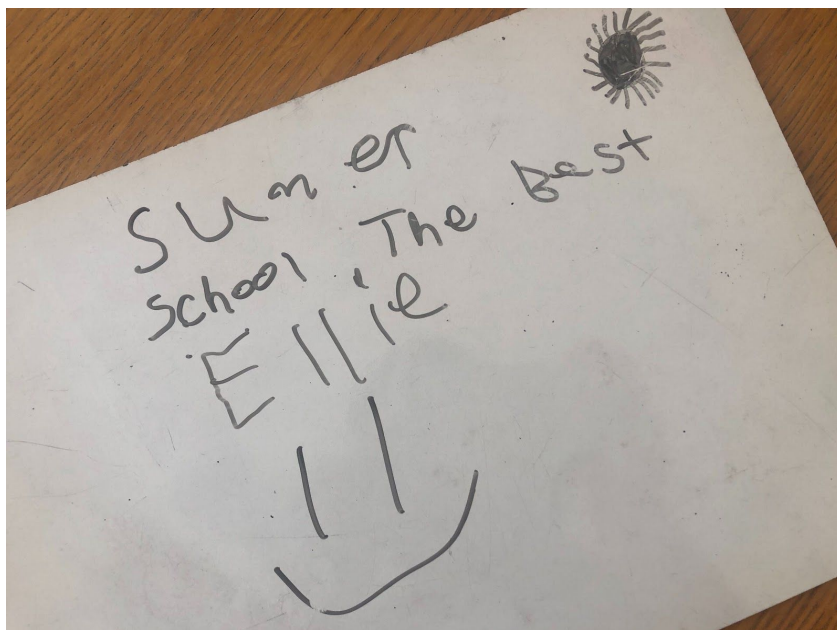
It was a really enjoyable 3 weeks and we had great feedback from the young people about the summer school and even had tears on the last day as the children didn't want it to end!





Successes

- **Successfully running a summer school during Covid**, giving huge opportunities to children and their families when lots of other options for families were not available this year. Due to tight regulations and hard work of staff and volunteers, we had no cases of Covid 19 being reported during the summer school.
- **Food**- 32 Children attend the summer school and received a free big hot meal each day. We used the usual dinner staff so they were able to cook meals that they knew the children would enjoy. As well as lunch they also received breakfast and lots of snacks. Food was donated to us by SOFEA so we were also using free food that would have otherwise gone to waste.
- **Active**- The children loved trying a big range of new active games and sports. 15 children that did not previously have bikes, received bikes to take home and keep. This provides them with a healthy new hobby and habit, helping them stay active. 14 children completed Bikeability courses during the programme. 12 children completing Ready Set Ride, a British cycling course for younger learners.
- **Academic learning**- Children engaged really well in literacy and reading and some even expressed an interest in doing Maths as well. The children really benefited from 1:1 academic support in a quiet environment and volunteers reported seeing progress in the children over the 3 weeks.
- **Parental engagement**- during the summer school and in the months after, we have had a really positive relationship with the parents of the children that attended. We have been able to link them up with other opportunities in the community.





Challenges

- Number of children attending - Due to the quick turnaround planning to Summer School, one of the schools we were working with didn't refer any children meaning quite last minute we had to invite some children from other schools. I think this impacted the attendance of some people.
- Covid 19 restrictions were certainly a challenge. This meant that there were restrictions in what sports we could do with the young people and meant that some of the logistics of the programme were more challenging.

Our learning for future projects

- Running the summer school over Summer 2020 gave us a huge amount of confidence to be able to do more in person delivery in a Covid secure way. In preparation for the summer school we had to write risk assessments and ensure we were following hygiene requirements. This has been really helpful learning for other Oxford Hub projects.

Bike donations

Active Reach facilitated the launch of the delivery for the bike donations aspect of our Ready Set Go campaign. The campaign ensures every child in Oxford can learn to swim and ride a bike, and supports families to be active together. Due to Covid-19 restrictions we are focusing on the cycling element first!

We have received lots of bike donations from local residents in Oxford. One of our lovely volunteers collects the bikes from houses and drops them off at a local bike shop. We are currently working with TRAX which engages learners who struggle with mainstream provision. The project works with 'difficult to engage' young people who may be on the verge of exclusion and aims to "channel the natural enthusiasm of young people into a positive and challenging direction, to aid their development towards future achievement." The money we are paying to refurbish the bikes is employing some of the students and paying their wage!

Children and families in Blackbird Leys who have expressed that they would like a bike and do not currently have access to one, can refer themselves for a bike. Once the bikes have finished being refurbished at TRAX, we take the bikes to one of the local schools (Orchard Meadow Primary School) and do a big bike collection. We match them with the referrals and invite them to the



school to collect their bikes. We also provide bike helmets, locks and lights so people can be cycling as safely as possible!



- So far we have reached 31 people in total.
 - 28 bikes to people who need them in Blackbird Leys.
 - 29 sets of lights
 - 28 locks
 - 28 helmets

We have also collaborated with Wheels for All to promote cycle support for any residents in the Leys, particularly those that had been donated a bike through us.

Challenges

- Having somewhere to store the bikes once they have been refurbished - sometimes we have more bikes than referrals or the bikes that have been refurbished don't match the height of the people referred meaning we sometimes have bikes waiting for a match and we have nowhere to store them at the moment and can't keep them at the bike shops because they need the space!

Our learning for future projects

- Due to the rapid turn around for Active Reach, the priority was to get bikes out to children and families as quickly as possible. In the future, we want to explore how we can make the experience more of a relational experience which gives us an opportunity to build more of a rapport with the people who are receiving bikes and us offer support with other areas.



Coordination of partner delivery

We were tasked with coordinating the delivery for all partners that had been given funding through Active Reach, Tackling Inequalities Fund.

We did this predominantly through:

- Regular communication with partners- we had regular email contact and phone calls with all partners throughout the programme.
- Organising group zoom calls for all partners to hear from each other and share updates
- Introducing partners to local organisations or individuals that could help them with local links or outreach
- Community outreach for all opportunities on offer (more detail below)
- Attendance and support at Aspire fitness classes- meeting and greeting residents that attended sessions, telling them about other things that are on offer.

Successes

- Active Reach has been a great opportunity to work with other partners on a project and get people to work towards collaborating on the ground.
- Oxford Hub have partnered really well with Aspire throughout this project. It has been great to build more of a working relationship with them and do some work on the ground together. This is a relationship that we will be building on in the future. Aspire are going to continue delivering in the area with two weekly fitness sessions, after the funding ends.
- Close collaboration with Access Sport to distribute sports equipment to families meant that we were able to offer something exciting to the families that we work with over the summer, as well as build new relationships with more parents and families.



Challenges

- Many of the organisations that had received funding were not well placed to start delivering in Blackbird Leys in the time frame given.
- Due to the wide ranging nature of the projects that were funded, it was challenging for lots of the organisations to see clear areas of collaboration. In the future it would be great for



organisations to do the planning together to see what they could achieve together, to allow for deeper collaboration and understanding of each partner's aims.

- Local partners expressed frustration that the funded organisations were mostly regional organisations who do not have a history of community engagement in Blackbird Leys and therefore were not well placed to work with those that are most inactive.



Community Outreach

We took a lead on community outreach and publicity for all of the projects under the Active Reach umbrella. We recruited a local resident, Natasha Mighty, to support our community outreach for Active Reach. She worked 8 hours a week between August and October.

We have had a regular presence in the Leys, weekly, over the course of the project. This has involved stalls with tea, coffee and some games in the park, flyering at 'Top Shops' and attending the Gym Bus and Aspire fitness sessions to speak to residents. In addition, we have used a range of mediums to reach out to residents such as:

- Facebook



- Daily Info
- Word of mouth over Whatsapp
- Posters
- Word of mouth through existing relationships we have in the community.
- School newsletters
- Community Impact Zone website- <https://www.oxfordciz.org/getting-active>

Successes

- Some of the things that we have used a small amount in the past have been really successful for this project. Such as, we publicised the free sports equipment to 3 parents on Whatsapp and asked them to share it with other parents in the Leys and we quickly had contact from 30+ parents.
- Natasha joined us with a wide range of community connections, both with individuals and organisations. This helped to widen and diversify our reach.
- Doing this project has provided us with lots of new contacts and connections that we did not previously have. This will be really beneficial for our future work in the area.



Challenges

- We found that less people were out and about in the area, especially when the weather was not as good. This meant that in person outreach, which is what we often find most successful, has been harder.
- We had planned and publicised the Gym Bus as a tool for community outreach where we could chat to people about other opportunities on offer. Sadly, after the Gym Bus was destroyed in the fire, it was harder to do the outreach in the park.



Future of Active Reach

- We have extended Natasha's contract until the end of March. She will be supporting us with community outreach and doing more publicity for Oxford Hub programmes and physical activity in the Leys.
- Based on community interest, Natasha is setting up a Yoga class and exploring a women's football group. Fusion has given us space at the leisure centre, to share with Aspire, for free until the New Year.
- Continuing with bike support through Ready, Set, Go- this has been a great launch of our delivery for Ready, Set, Go and getting donated bikes out there do people who need them. We will continue to focus on donations in Blackbird Leys in the immediate future and then move to working in other areas of the Community Impact Zone and wider City.
- Future Fit, Fed and Read holiday camps- due to the success of the summer school this year and need to get kids physically active, reading and challenges around holiday hunger, we want to explore doing a similar project in other school holidays. This is a model which we could share with the council or other local groups.

