



## Clearing Hurdles

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<b>Location</b>	South Lanarkshire, Scotland
<b>Programme</b>	Active Futures
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### Project description

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Clearing Hurdles is the 'umbrella' name for several sport and physical activity projects South Lanarkshire Council run, hosted by their Physical Activity and Sport 21 working group. The projects received mainly revenue funding, to deliver sport and physical activity to 17-24 year olds in South Lanarkshire. Further, South Lanarkshire Council are able to highlight issues around social and economic deprivation as well as rural isolation through these projects.

Initially, the NHS were the main drivers behind the project. They recognised the poor health and well-being of young people in the area, and lack of provision for target groups such as people with disabilities. With this they contacted external funding bodies, who then contacted service providers. At this point South Lanarkshire Council took over the programme structuring and delivery.

The council are partners with NHS Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire Leisure (SLL), Healthy Valleys and the Outdoor Resource Base (ORB) for the delivery of Clearing Hurdles. These partners all play different roles in programme delivery. There are several departments from the council involved in the programme including the Youth Learning Services (YLS). YLS play a key role in referring young people to activities various projects are delivering, because they are a hard to access target group. The NHS will contribute to health promotion; Healthy Valleys will provide activities to rural areas where transport is an issue; and ORB provide outdoor education to young people.

### Project aims and objectives

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The aim of Clearing Hurdles is to engage with 17-24 year olds in the South Lanarkshire area and encourage them to become more active and take part in sport and physical activity. Further, Clearing Hurdles will meet the three main principles of youth work, which are inclusion, active citizenship and lifelong learning, through sport and physical activity.

### Project delivery and impact

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The programme is delivered through several projects, which already have staff in place. These projects are Active Outdoors (ORB) Sport for all (SLL), Fit for Life (Healthy Valleys) and Youth referrals (Youth Learning Service). SLL and ORB have a skilled workforce to deliver their activities. Healthy Valleys will employ a Community Capacity



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Building worker to deliver some activities, and make use of the skills and expertises of SLL and ORB. Fit for Life and Active Outdoors projects will hire staff to deliver activities.

However, the projects will also train volunteers from surrounding communities to contribute to the sustainability of the projects, through community involvement and a sense of ownership. Further, some of the projects offer training for different sport activity qualifications, which will give young people more opportunities to apply for better jobs, as well as giving something back to the project by using their new skills. Sport for All has a subproject called 'Game on' which caters for people with disabilities. It is the first project of its kind in the area, offering a golf programme, football, gym, athletics and outdoor activities. There is also a small coach education programme attached to 'Game on.'

Healthy Valleys has had training sessions for people to become involved in the projects, as well as producing leaflets to distribute. They also make use of the local papers by putting adverts with event information in them.

All the project feedback would suggest the grants they received were greatly received but not enough for making the projects sustainable. Larger grants would mean the projects could offer discounted rates for a longer period of time, as well as paying staff.

It is too early in the project to identify any real benefits in terms of physical activity or to the community. However, the projects did say that from experience and knowledge they expect the programme overall to have a positive impact on 17-24 year olds and their communities. They expect to see increased levels of physical activity leading to improved health and well-being, as well as improved self-esteem, confidence, motivation and drive. Further, the projects expect to see improvement in communities including decreases in antisocial behaviour, improved community relations and spirit, and young people with more qualifications and invaluable experience.

## Project performance

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The projects that have started are meeting their aims. The projects that have not started are confident that they will meet their aims in the short-term. The future depends on funding. Outputs expected include increased participation of 17-24 year olds in sport and physical activity, increased numbers of 17-24 year olds with sporting qualifications and lower numbers of 17-24 year olds being involved in antisocial behaviour. Outcomes expected will be improved health and well-being of participants, improved self-esteem, self-confidence, motivation and improved community spirit and cohesion.

## Issues or barriers to progress

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The projects felt the application process was slightly rushed. They would have liked more information and time before completing the application. They also felt it was difficult to cope with the funding method, as it is a case of 'pay out and be refunded.' With some projects being of charitable status this is a difficult situation. Further, the projects felt the number of partners in the bid meant the projects had to stick to certain rigid procedures. This made things less flexible for them, in how they work.

Some projects that work with target groups such as Black and minority ethnic groups are having difficulties with language and culture barriers. Blantyre Leisure Centre offers ladies-only nights on a Saturday, and this has presented issues. Women attending from black and minority ethnic groups have demanded there should only be female staff on-duty at these sessions, including lifeguards and reception staff. Further the staff must black out the windows around the pool. The centre finds it difficult to get enough female



Staff to cover these shifts, as they already have set hours and have to go out of their way to do these shifts. In addition some of the women attending from the BME groups bring their young children and leave them in reception, and now the centre must look into childcare facilities, which will mean more staffing issues. Another problem the centre have faced in the past with women from this group is their not using the lockers, and leaving clothes lying out, then accusing staff of stealing these. The centre trains staff to pick up items left out in changing rooms and put them into lost property.

Projects also feel that transport for activities is an issue because of the costs involved. If they cannot provide transport, many people will lose out on taking part in the activities on offer.

## Good practice

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Healthy Valleys is one project that provides a childcare service and pays for transport costs for people attending. They feel that this is a pull factor for young parents and young people with low incomes and no transport. Further, the project is trying to think 'out of the box', and offer diverse activities, different from traditional ones like football. They are going to offer karting,

## Future

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The project as a whole is unsure of how it will fund itself in the future. Most of the grants received were for revenue, but they need more funding to make projects more sustainable. At the moment the programme as a whole is giving free activities to all the 17-24 year olds that attend. When the revenue funding runs out they will not be able to meet their delivery costs including staff wages and building costs. This means the projects will have to stop delivering activities or start charging the 17-24s who are attending, unless they can get more funding from some source.

All the projects involved in Clearing Hurdles hope that once young people are attracted to their activities they will choose to stay, because the activities are enjoyable.

Healthy Valleys is one project that is giving participants the opportunity to get various sporting and coaching qualifications. The project hopes that this will contribute to the sustainability of the project, by these young people putting their skills to use at the site.