

**2026**

**Making the most of**

# **MAJOR SPORTING EVENTS**

**A Practical Toolkit for  
Community-Based  
Organisations**

**HOST ▪ INSPIRE & INCLUDE ▪ GROW**



## **For citation of this toolkit**

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# FOREWORD



Major sporting events can bring moments of excitement, pride and celebration to a city. They can showcase places, bring people together and create opportunities that extend beyond the event itself. However, the true value of major events is not measured only by what happens in stadiums, venues or fan zones. It is also reflected in the ways local communities are able to participate, benefit, and feel part of the journey.

Community-based organisations play a vital role in making this possible. They understand the needs, strengths and aspirations of local residents. They are often best placed to identify who may face barriers to participation and how opportunities can be made more accessible, inclusive, and meaningful.

This toolkit has been developed to provide practical, step by step guidance for organisations that want to engage with major sporting events. Whether an organisation is new to this area or already has experience, the toolkit offers support to understand the wider impact of major events, identify local opportunities, recognise potential barriers, and develop an Event Engagement Plan that works for their community.

It is particularly important that the benefits of major sporting events reach groups who may otherwise be underrepresented or excluded, including young people, women and girls, minoritised ethnic communities, and others who may face social, cultural or economic barriers to taking part. By supporting organisations to plan, build partnerships, and engage with opportunities such as volunteering, funding, and community activities, this toolkit can help make major events more inclusive and locally relevant.

We hope this toolkit will be a useful and practical resource for community-based organisations across Birmingham and beyond. Major sporting events can create lasting value when communities are supported to take part, shape opportunities, and benefit from them. This toolkit is an important contribution to that ambition.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K E Brazier".

**Katie Brazier**

Head of Events & City Centre Management  
City Operations Directorate  
Birmingham City Council  
UK

**“ Major sporting events can create lasting value when communities are supported to take part, shape opportunities and benefit from them. This toolkit is an important contribution to that ambition. ”**

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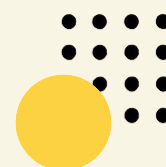
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# TOOLKIT OVERVIEW

## WELCOME

Major sporting events are more than entertainment. They bring real economic, social, and environmental benefits to local communities.

Host cities invest heavily in these events and expect returns through business and other opportunities. However, benefits do not happen automatically. Our research shows that support is needed to ensure communities are aware of opportunities and can plan to make the most of them.

Community-based organisations, including for-profit, and non-profit groups, businesses and local associations, are crucial but often overlooked players in major sporting events. They act as bridges, either seizing opportunities themselves, or helping local residents get involved. This creates wider, more inclusive benefits for everyone.

This toolkit offers simple guidance to help community-based organisations spot opportunities and create strategies to make the most of major sporting events.





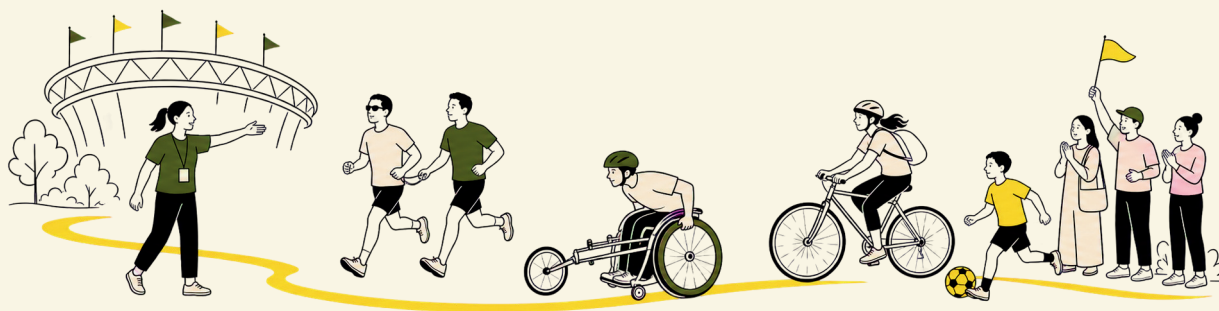
# Purpose of the toolkit

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The toolkit provides practical, step-by-step guidance for community-based organisations that want to engage with major sporting events.

**Whether your organisation is new to this or has prior experience, the toolkit will help you:**

- Understand the wider impact of major sporting events
- Identify opportunities created when cities host these events
- Spot potential benefits for your community
- Recognise barriers that may stop local residents, particularly underrepresented groups, from taking part
- Create an Event Engagement Plan that works for your organisation



**The toolkit is particularly useful for organisations supporting young people, women and girls, minoritised ethnic communities, and other underrepresented groups.**

# Benefits of using this toolkit



This toolkit is based on evidence and lessons learned from communities in Birmingham, UK.

Although developed in this context, the research insights are relevant to other major cities with diverse populations, particularly for community-based organisations seeking to maximise opportunities from future sporting events hosted in their city.

## **This toolkit will help your organisation:**

- ✓ Learn practical ways to tap into opportunities arising from major sporting events.
- ✓ Access useful resources, examples, and funding information.
- ✓ Develop a clear and achievable event engagement plan.

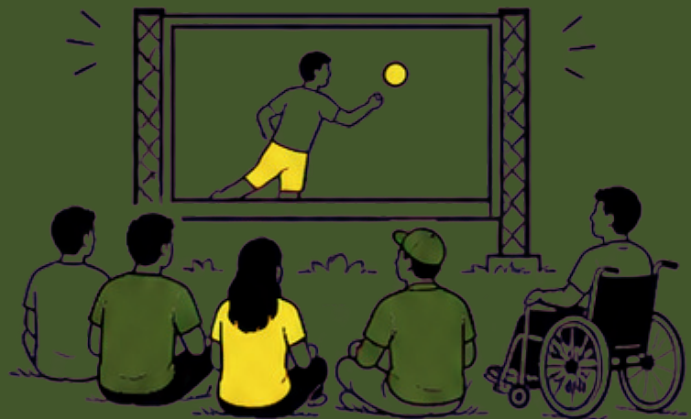
# SCOPE

## What is a major sporting event?

A major sporting event is a large-scale sporting competition that attracts public attention, media coverage, visitors, and investment.

Examples include:

- Multi-sport events: Olympic Games & Paralympic Games, Commonwealth Games, Asian Games
- Single-sport events: FIFA World Cup, Rugby World Cup, Cricket World Cup
- Continental championship: UEFA European Championships
- Elite annual/recurring events: Wimbledon, All England Open Badminton, major marathons
- Inclusive events: Invictus Games



# DID YOU KNOW?

**Major sporting events create opportunities for local communities before, during and after the event, not just during those few weeks of competition.**



# Where to search for funding opportunities?

Major sporting events often offer dedicated funding for programmes and initiatives beyond the event itself, with themes including arts and culture, sport, health, community cohesion and civic pride. As a first step, make sure you search for event-related opportunities.

For other funding opportunities for sport and/or community-related projects, explore resources such as Sport England. They offer various open funds to help people participate in sport and physical activities.

Additionally, the National Lottery Community Fund provides specific funding commitments for community projects. You can search for available funds and apply through their website [here](#).

Be sure to regularly check these platforms for the latest funding opportunities that can support your event-related activities.



# What do we mean by event engagement ?

**In this toolkit, event engagement means being part of the event in different ways, both on-site and off-site. Examples include:**

- ✓ Watching the event at home, in community venues, or at public screenings
- ✓ Talking about the event with friends, family, colleagues, and on social media
- ✓ Taking part in event-related festivals, celebrations, and cultural activities
- ✓ Volunteering at the event or in associated community projects
- ✓ Attending community activities inspired by the event
- ✓ Accessing grants, funding opportunities and support programmes linked to the event
- ✓ Developing new skills, partnerships and networks through event-related activities
- ✓ Sharing stories, memories and experiences that strengthen community identity and pride
- ✓ Supplying goods or services, for example through local shops serving visitors near event venues
- ✓ Applying for, organising, delivering, or taking part in event-related programmes



**You can access opportunities, experience the event's wider impact, and benefit from it beyond attending the event itself.**

# Who are community-based organisations?



**Community-based organisations are local groups that work to improve the lives of people in their communities.**

**They may focus on:**

**Sport and physical activity**

**Education and skills**

**Arts and culture**

**Equality and inclusion**

**Health and wellbeing**

**Youth development**

**Community support**

**Environmental projects**

**This toolkit is designed for all types of community-based organisations, including for-profit and non-profit groups, businesses, and local associations, especially those with little or no experience of engaging with major sporting events.**





# How to use this toolkit



The toolkit is organised into five simple steps:

## **1 Step 1: Explore Opportunities**

Learn about the different benefits and opportunities that major sporting events can create for your organisation and host communities.

## **2 Step 2: Reflect on Previous Experience**

Review how your organisation has engaged with past events, if any, and identify lessons for the future.

## **3 Step 3: Understand Your Community**

Consider the needs, interests and barriers faced by the people your organisation supports.

## **4 Step 4: Plan Inclusive Engagement**

Identify practical ways to help more people take part and benefit from event-related opportunities.

## **5 Step 5: Create Your Event Engagement Plan**

Develop a simple action plan with clear goals, activities, partnerships and measures of success.



By following these steps, your organisation can be better prepared to make the most of future major sporting events and create lasting benefits for your community.

1

# **EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES**



# Why do major sporting events matter, and why should my organisation care?

Major sporting events are more than just sporting competitions. They can create opportunities for local communities, organisations and businesses before, during, and after the event.

**Major sporting events can create opportunities and benefits such as:**

- New funding programmes and resources
- Volunteering opportunities
- Community projects and activities
- Increased participation in sport and physical activity
- Business and employment opportunities

- Stronger social connections and community pride
- New skills and learning opportunities
- Cultural celebrations and local identity
- Investment in facilities and infrastructure
- Lasting benefits for individuals, organisations and communities



For community-based organisations, major sporting events can provide a catalyst to engage residents, attract resources, build partnerships, and create lasting benefits for the people they support.



# TOP TIP

## Maximising community impact

**Start planning your community engagement as early as possible. The sooner you identify potential benefits, the better you can tailor your strategies to maximise the positive impact on your community.**



# Benefits your organisation could help create

Major sporting events can generate benefits across several areas:

## SOCIAL BENEFITS

- Bringing people together
- Strengthening community connections
- Creating volunteering opportunities
- Building skills and confidence
- Increasing community pride
- Creating shared memories



## ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- Increasing direct business growth opportunities for local businesses, such as access to new contracts
- Creating jobs and training opportunities
- Attracting funding and investment
- Generating new partnerships

## HEALTH & WELLBEING BENEFITS

- Encouraging physical activity
- Improving mental wellbeing
- Inspiring healthier lifestyles
- Increasing access to sport and recreation



## CULTURAL BENEFITS

- Celebrating diversity
- Showcasing local culture
- Encouraging community participation
- Creating opportunities for cultural exchange
- Creating unique urban memory and cultural memory

## ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE BENEFITS

- Improvements to public spaces
- Better transport and accessibility
- Regeneration of local areas
- Enhanced community facilities



# REFLECTION QUESTION



**Which of these benefits are most relevant to your organisation and the communities you support?**

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# Social memories and impact stories



## Community experiences and legacy stories

Major sporting events do more than create economic, social, and cultural benefits. They also create memories, stories, and experiences that can become an important part of a community's identity and legacy.

Community-based organisations are often in a unique position to capture and share these stories. Through conversations, photographs, videos, exhibitions, social media posts, and community events, organisations can help document how local people experienced and benefited from major sporting events.

## Collecting stories can help organisations

- Showcase the impact of their activities and programmes.
- Celebrate community achievements and participation.
- Highlight the voices and experiences of local residents.
- Strengthen community identity and belonging.
- Demonstrate outcomes to funders, partners, and stakeholders.
- Create a lasting record of the event's impact beyond participation numbers.



# Telling your organisation's impact story

Consider how your organisation contributed to a major sporting event.



## FOR EXAMPLE:

- Did your organisation support local residents to volunteer?
- Did you organise community activities or celebrations?
- Did participants gain new skills, confidence, or connections?
- Did your organisation develop new partnerships or secure new opportunities?



Documenting these achievements can help demonstrate the value of your work and support future funding applications.



# Sharing organisational stories and memories

Personal stories can bring impact to life in ways that statistics alone cannot.



United by 2022



Saheli hub

## WHAT TO COLLECT

You may wish to invite community members to share:

- Their memories of attending an event.
- Volunteering experiences.
- New friendships or connections they made.
- How participation affected their confidence, wellbeing, or sense of belonging.
- Photographs, videos, or creative responses inspired by the event.

These stories can be shared through digital storytelling, social media campaigns, online galleries, community exhibitions, podcasts, newsletters, or short films.

# Reflection activity

Think about a previous major sporting event.

- What stories emerged from your community?
- What positive changes did the people your organisation supports experience?
- How did your organisation contribute to these outcomes?
- How could you capture and share these stories in the future?

Numbers tell us how many people participated, but **stories** help us understand why those experiences mattered.



LGBTQ+ Asssocation Birmingham



City of Birmingham striders

## CASE STUDY

### THE LEARNING FROM BIRMINGHAM 2022 GAMES

The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games demonstrate how major sporting events can create opportunities that extend far beyond the sporting competition itself. The Games attracted substantial public and commercial investment, generating opportunities for local businesses, communities and residents. Hundreds of contracts, programmes, and community initiatives were created to support the delivery of the Games and its long-term legacy.

For community-based organisations, Birmingham 2022 showed that opportunities can arise in many different sectors, including:

- Community services
- Education and training
- Event management
- Hospitality and catering
- Culture and the arts
- Health and wellbeing
- Youth development
- Volunteering

Many opportunities were available not only to large organisations but also to small and medium-sized organisations and community groups.

# Opportunities beyond sport



Not every organisation needs to be a sports organisation to benefit from a major sporting event.

## FOR EXAMPLE

- A youth organisation could run leadership or volunteering programmes.
- A community centre could organise cultural celebrations or public viewing events.
- A women's group could develop activities linked to health, wellbeing, or volunteering.
- A minoritised ethnic community-based organisation could use events to celebrate cultural diversity and strengthen community connections.
- A local charity could apply for funding to deliver event-related community projects.



Major sporting events can provide opportunities for organisations across many sectors.

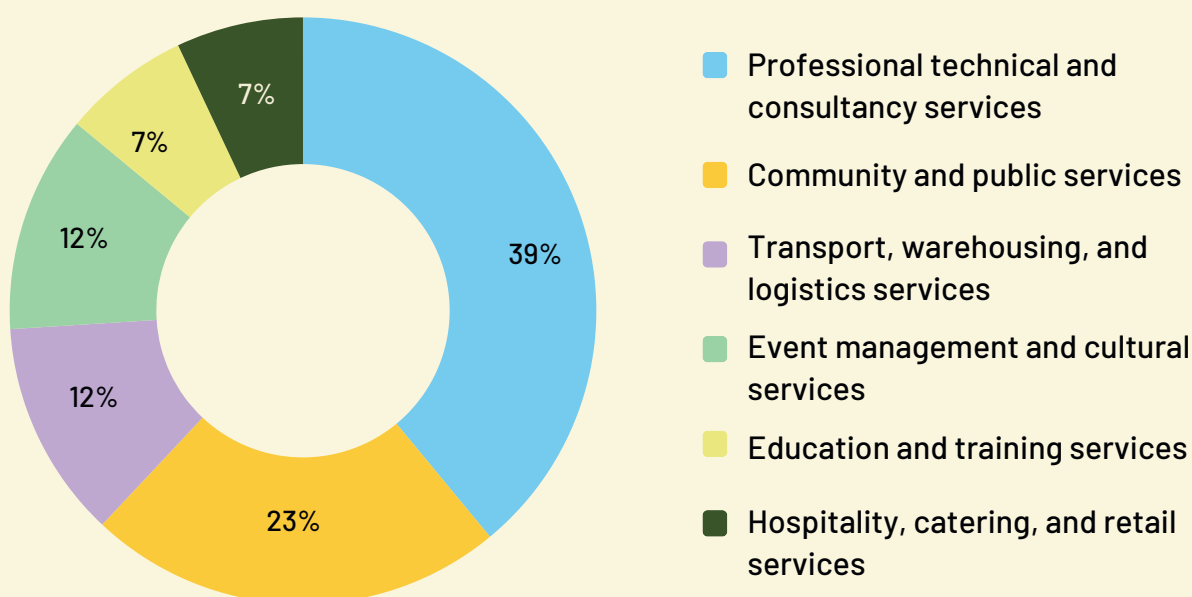


Figure 1. Supplier diversity in Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games contracts

# TOP TIP



## Start planning early

**The greatest benefits are often achieved by organisations that begin planning early.**

**Keep an eye on:**

- Event websites
- Local authority announcements
- Funding opportunities
- Volunteer programmes
- Procurement and contract opportunities
- Community engagement initiatives

The earlier your organisation becomes involved, the more opportunities you are likely to identify and access.

### QUICK CHECK

**Before moving to Step 2, consider:**

- ✓ What opportunities might upcoming events create for your organisation?
- ✓ Which benefits are most relevant to your community?
- ✓ Are there any partnerships or funding opportunities you could explore?
- ✓ How could your organisation help local residents benefit from future major sporting events?

# 2

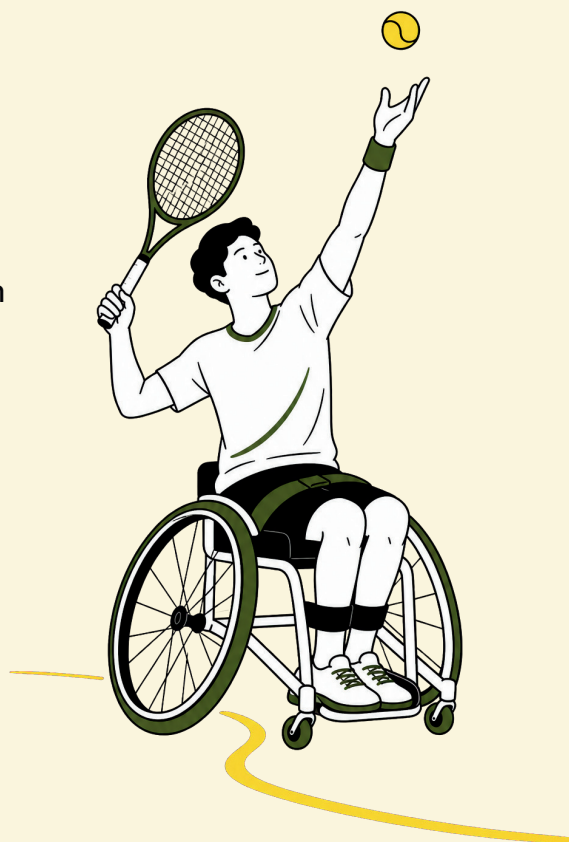
## **REFLECT ON PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE**



Before planning for future major sporting events, it is helpful to look back at your organisation's previous experiences.

Think about how your organisation engaged with past events. For example, did your organisation apply for funding, deliver community activities, host celebrations, promote opportunities, or support local residents to take part?

This reflection should consider the experiences of your organisation as a whole, rather than those of individual staff members or volunteers.



## REFLECT

**Take time to assess your organisation's past interactions with major sporting events, whether through direct or indirect support. Understanding what worked well and where there were gaps can help you refine your approach.**

# Understanding different types of event engagement

Community-based organisations often support major sporting events in two ways:

## 1 DIRECT ENGAGEMENT

Direct engagement involves helping people take part in or benefit from an event through activities organised by your organisation.

Examples include:

- Organising community watch parties or public screenings.
- Helping residents access tickets or attend events.
- Supporting people to apply for volunteer opportunities.
- Delivering event-related activities, workshops, or festivals.
- Securing event-related funding or contracts that benefit the community.
- Organising event-themed sessions to create excitement and encourage community participation.





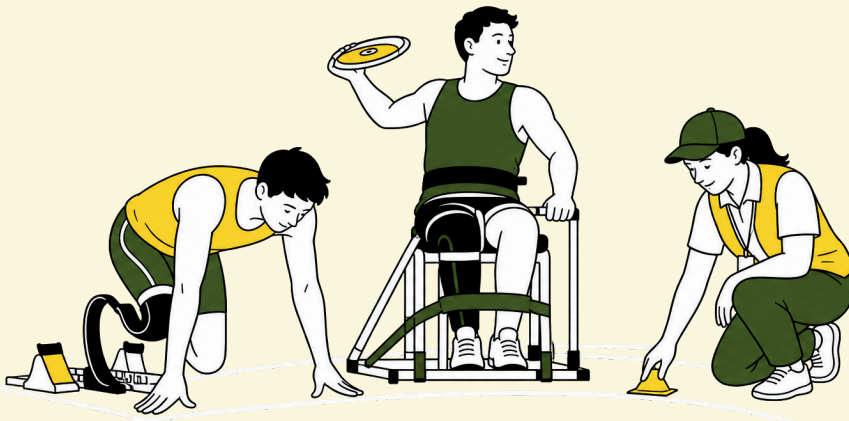
## 2 INDIRECT ENGAGEMENT

Indirect engagement involves promoting opportunities and helping people learn about ways to get involved.

### Examples include:

- Sharing information about events and activities.
- Supporting your community to apply for event volunteering roles.
- Advertising local festivals, community projects or programmes that are related to the event.
- Signposting residents to event-related opportunities.
- Raising awareness of funding, training, or participation opportunities.

**Both approaches are valuable and can help communities benefit from major sporting events.**





# REFLECTION ACTIVITY

If your organisation do not have any previous experience of major sporting events, you may skip this.

**As you work through the checklist, consider:**

- Which activities has your organisation already delivered?
- Were your activities mainly direct or indirect?
- What worked well?
- What challenges did you face?
- Are there opportunities to expand your approach in the future?

For example, if your organisation has mainly shared information about events, you may wish to explore more direct activities next time, such as organising community events, supporting volunteers, or applying for event-related funding.



**This reflection will help you identify strengths, gaps, and new opportunities as you prepare for future major sporting events.**



# QUICK CHECK

If you do not have any previous experience of major sporting events, feel free to skip this.

**Before moving to Step 3, consider:**

- ✓ What did your organisation learn from previous major sporting events?
- ✓ Which approaches worked particularly well for your community?
- ✓ What challenges or gaps did you experience?
- ✓ What skills, partnerships, or resources did you develop?
- ✓ What lessons can you carry forward into future event planning?

By reflecting on previous experiences, your organisation can build on what worked well and make informed decisions about future event engagement activities.



# Table 1: Direct or indirect support of event engagement

Use the Table below to review your organisation's previous experiences.

| TYPES OF SUPPORT                                                                                             |                          |                                                                                                                |                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| TICK THE BOX IF RELEVANT                                                                                     |                          |                                                                                                                |                          |
| DIRECT SUPPORT                                                                                               |                          | INDIRECT SUPPORT                                                                                               |                          |
| Our organisation helped people get together to watch the Games in person.                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Our organisation helped people buy tickets to see the Games live.                                              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Our organisation organised gatherings for people to watch the Games together on TV.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Our organisation shared information about where to join others watching the Games.                             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Our organisation secured Game-related contracts or legacy grants that involve local communities.             | <input type="checkbox"/> | Our organisation spread the word about the Games.                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Our organisation encouraged people in the community to volunteer for the Games.                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | Our organisation told people where they could find volunteer opportunities for the Games.                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Our organisation put together local festivals or activities themed around the Games.                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | Our organisation pointed people to local festivals or activities related to the Games.                         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Our organisation ran sports workshops or training sessions to get ready for the Games.                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | Our organisation told people about sports workshops or training sessions available locally.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Our organisation worked with local businesses to offer discounts or promotions for the Games.                | <input type="checkbox"/> | Our organisation encouraged people to support local businesses with promotions related to the Games.           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Our organisation pushed for everyone in the community to have equal chances to join Game-related activities. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Our organisation shared info about efforts to make sure everyone could participate in Game-related activities. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Our organisation arranged rides to help people get to Game-related events.                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Our organisation told people about transport options to get to Game-related events.                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Others                                                                                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | Others                                                                                                         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Our organisation did not directly or indirectly support engagement with the Games.                           |                          |                                                                                                                | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3

# **UNDERSTAND YOUR COMMUNITIES**



To create meaningful and inclusive event activities or projects, it is important to understand the needs, interests and experiences of the people your organisation supports.

Not everyone experiences major sporting events in the same way. Factors such as cost, transport, accessibility, family commitments, cultural background, confidence, and awareness can influence whether people choose to take part.

By understanding what motivates people (particularly those from under-represented groups) to get involved and what barriers may prevent participation, your organisation can design activities that are more relevant, accessible and impactful.

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## Why does this matter?

When applying for funding or planning community event activities or projects, it is important to consider who your target audience is and how their needs may differ.

Taking time to understand the people your organisation serves in the context of major sporting events can help your organisation. Taking time to understand your community can help your organisation:

- Design activities that people want to take part in.
- Remove barriers to participation.
- Reach groups who may be underrepresented.
- Increase the impact of your projects.
- Strengthen funding applications by demonstrating community need.



## What does the research tell us?

Our research found that different groups can have different motivations, preferences, and barriers when engaging with major sporting events.

This toolkit focuses on three priority groups that were highlighted during the research: young people, women and girls, and minoritised ethnicities.



# PRIORITY GROUPS

## YOUNG PEOPLE (AGED 16-24)

Our research suggests that young people are often interested in the social aspects of major sporting events, including spending time with friends, volunteering, and trying new activities.

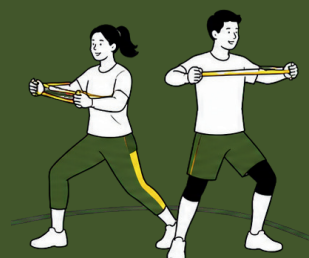
They are particularly interested in large international multi-sport events, such as the Olympic Games, as well as arts, culture, music, and heritage festivals.

When it comes to participating in physical activity, walking or hiking, badminton, and swimming were the most popular activities. For spectator sports, football, basketball, and badminton emerged as the top preferences among young people.

These findings suggest that major sporting events may be most effective in engaging young people when they combine sport, culture, social experiences, and opportunities for active participation.

### Common barriers may include:

- Cost of tickets and activities
- Limited transport options
- Lack of awareness of opportunities
- Limited experience applying for volunteering roles



## WOMEN AND GIRLS

Women and girls often value activities that promote wellbeing, social connection, family participation, and community involvement.

They tend to prefer participating in sport and physical activity alongside others, suggesting that group-based and socially supportive activities may be particularly effective in encouraging engagement.

Community-based organisations may wish to consider offering inclusive, welcoming, and family-friendly activities that support both active participation and social engagement around major sporting events.

### Common barriers may include:

- Family or caring responsibilities
- Safety concerns
- Limited free time
- Lack of activities tailored to their interests



## MINORITISED ETHNICITIES

Our research revealed that people from minoritised ethnic backgrounds value opportunities that strengthen community connections, celebrate cultural diversity, and encourage participation.

Mass participation events, such as community walks and fun runs, were also popular. When it comes to taking part in physical activity, walking or hiking, badminton, and football were the most preferred activities. For spectator sports, football, swimming, and badminton emerged as the top choices.

These findings suggest that major sporting events can be particularly engaging when they combine opportunities for sport, cultural celebration, community participation, and social connection.



### Common barriers may include:

- Lack of awareness of opportunities
- Language barriers
- Limited representation in event-related activities
- Cultural or practical barriers to participation





# Using these insights

The previous pages provide summaries of the experiences, interests, and barriers identified for each priority group.

These insights are not intended to represent every individual. Instead, they provide a starting point to help organisations think about how they can design more inclusive and accessible opportunities.



## As you review the information, consider:

- Which groups does your organisation currently support?
- What barriers might they face?
- What motivates them to get involved?
- How could your organisation adapt activities to better meet their needs?



# TOP TIP



## Involve communities in the planning process

The best way to understand people's needs is to involve them directly.

Whenever possible, speak with community members, volunteers, service users, and local partners when planning event-related activities. Co-designing activities with communities helps ensure that opportunities are relevant, accessible, and meaningful.

### QUICK CHECK

**Before moving to Step 4, consider:**

- ✓ Who are the main groups your organisation supports?
- ✓ What barriers might prevent them from taking part?
- ✓ What opportunities would be most appealing to them?
- ✓ How can your organisation make the activities more inclusive and accessible?

Understanding your community is the foundation for creating successful and impactful event engagement activities.

# 4

## **PLAN INCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT**

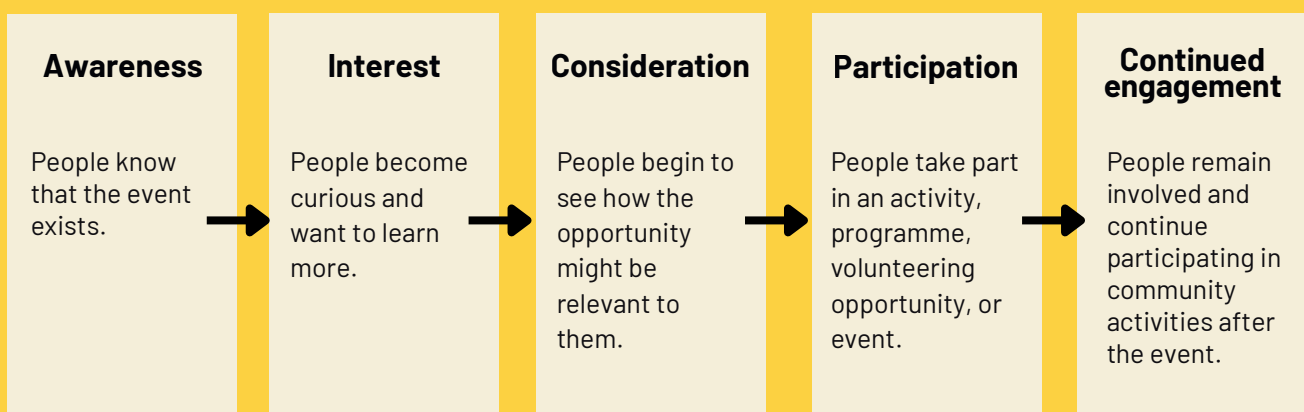


Community-based organisations play an important role in helping local residents benefit from major sporting events. Whether your organisation is large or small, you can make a difference by helping people overcome barriers to participation and connecting them with opportunities.

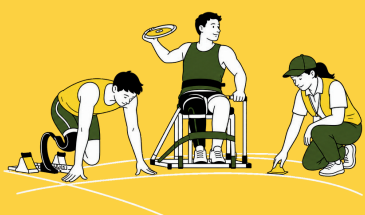
The previous step explored the needs, interests and experiences of different groups within your community. This step focuses on turning that understanding into action.

## Understanding the participation journey

People often move through several stages before they decide to engage with a major sporting event or event-related activity.



**At each stage, different barriers may prevent people from moving forward.**



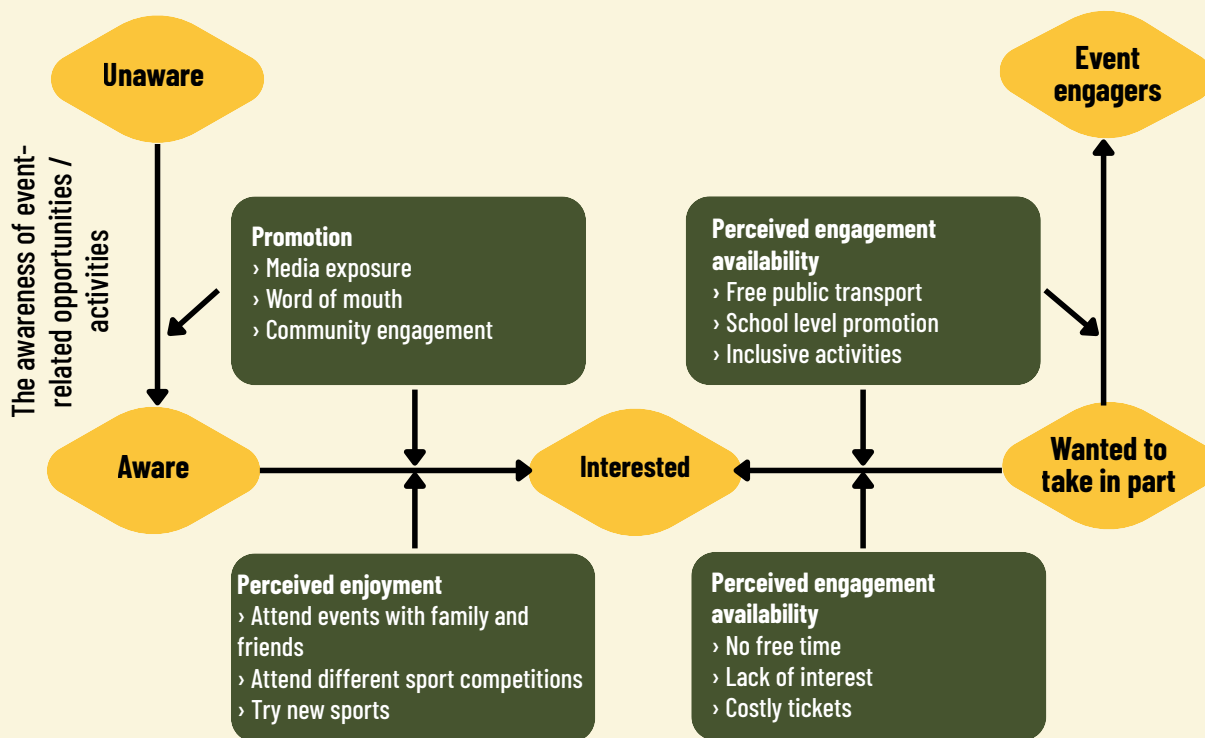


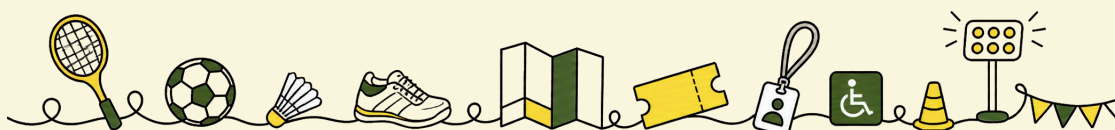
Figure 2. A simulation model for supporting more young people to be part of major sporting events

Understanding what motivates different groups of people can help you plan more effective engagement with major sporting events.

Applying the theoretical model developed by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (2010), the diagram above uses evidence gathered from young people to illustrate the process through which people may engage with a sporting event. It shows how support may be needed at different stages, from first hearing about the event to taking part.

You can use this model to plan your activities. For example, if you want to raise awareness among the people you support, the model helps you predict how activities like word of mouth promotion might increase engagement.

The core message is simple: community-based organisations can stimulate public interest by creating opportunities for local participation and helping people feel connected to the event.



# What can community-based organisations do?

Community-based organisations can help people move from awareness to participation by providing practical support and creating welcoming opportunities.

Examples include:

## RAISING AWARENESS

- Sharing information through trusted community networks
- Using social media, newsletters, and community noticeboards
- Promoting opportunities through local partners

## REDUCING FINANCIAL BARRIERS

- Identifying free or low-cost opportunities
- Applying for grants to subsidise participation
- Working with partners to provide discounted tickets or activities

## IMPROVING ACCESS

- Organising group visits
- Providing transport support where possible (e.g. offer discounted or subsidised) tickets for young people
- Offering activities in familiar community settings
- Supporting people with registration or application processes

## CREATING INCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITIES

- Providing information in accessible formats and different languages (e.g. offer bilingual staff or volunteers to assist with communication)
- Considering cultural and religious needs
- Offering family-friendly activities (e.g. provide on-site childcare facilities)
- Ensuring venues and activities are accessible

## BUILDING CONFIDENCE

- Offering taster sessions or introductory activities
- Using peer champions and community ambassadors
- Encouraging participation through trusted community leaders



# TOP TIP



## Start with what you already do well

You do not need to create entirely new programmes to support event engagement.

Consider how major sporting events could be linked to activities your organisation already delivers. Small changes can often have a significant impact.

**For example:**

- A youth organisation could promote volunteering opportunities.
- A women's group could organise a community watch event.
- A community centre could host an event-themed celebration.
- A cultural organisation could develop activities that celebrate local diversity.

### QUICK CHECK

**Before moving to Step 5, consider:**

- ✓ What barriers are most relevant to the people you support?
- ✓ Which barriers can your organisation help address?
- ✓ What practical actions could you take to improve participation?
- ✓ Are there partners who could help your organisation provide additional support?

By identifying barriers and taking practical action, your organisation can help ensure that more people have the opportunity to benefit from major sporting events.

5

# **CREATE YOUR EVENT ENGAGEMENT PLAN**



# Building your event engagement plan



You have now explored the opportunities created by major sporting events, reflected on your organisation's previous experiences, identified the needs of the communities you support, and considered ways to reduce barriers to participation.

The final step is to create an Event Engagement Plan.

Planning ahead can help your organisation make the most of future sporting events. By developing a clear plan, your organisation can increase participation, strengthen partnerships, secure resources, and create lasting benefits for local communities.





# 1. SET YOUR GOALS

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Start by deciding what you would like to achieve.

Your goals might include:

- Increasing community participation
- Encouraging volunteering
- Promoting health and wellbeing
- Building community connections
- Supporting underrepresented groups
- Raising awareness of local opportunities
- Developing new partnerships



## THINK ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION:

What positive change do you want to see in your community?

A yellow rectangular sticky note with a white tab at the top. It has four horizontal white lines for writing. The note is slightly curled at the bottom and has a soft shadow underneath.

## 2. IDENTIFY KEY PARTNERS

Think about who can help you achieve your goals.

Potential partners may include:

- Community-based organisations
- Schools and colleges
- Local businesses
- Local authorities
- Sports clubs
- Volunteer networks
- Faith and cultural groups



Building partnerships can help you share resources, reach new audiences, and increase your impact.

A green notepad with a yellow page. The page has five horizontal lines for writing.

### THINK ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION:

Who could help you deliver your activities?

### 3. PLAN ACTIVITIES

Choose activities that match the needs and interests of your community.

Examples include:

- Community watch parties
- Cultural celebrations
- Volunteering programmes
- Sports taster sessions
- Health and wellbeing activities
- Community workshops
- Youth leadership programmes
- Event-themed festivals



Use the insights from Steps 3 and 4 to ensure activities are inclusive and accessible.

#### THINK ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION:

What activities would be most valuable for the people you support?



Resources might include:

- 

[illegible]

What resources do you already have, and what do you need?

## 5. PROMOTE OPPORTUNITIES

---

A good idea can only make an impact if people know about it.

Think about how you will communicate with your community.

You may wish to use:

- Social media
- Community newsletters
- Local media
- Posters and flyers
- Community events
- Word-of-mouth promotion
- Community champions and ambassadors



### THINK ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION:

How will you reach the people you want to engage?

A yellow sticky note with a torn top edge and four horizontal lines for writing.

## 6. INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY

The most successful activities are often developed with communities rather than for communities.

Consider how local residents can contribute to planning, delivery, and promotion.

This could include:

- Community consultations
- Volunteer opportunities
- Community ambassadors
- Youth advisory groups
- Resident-led activities



### THINK ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION:

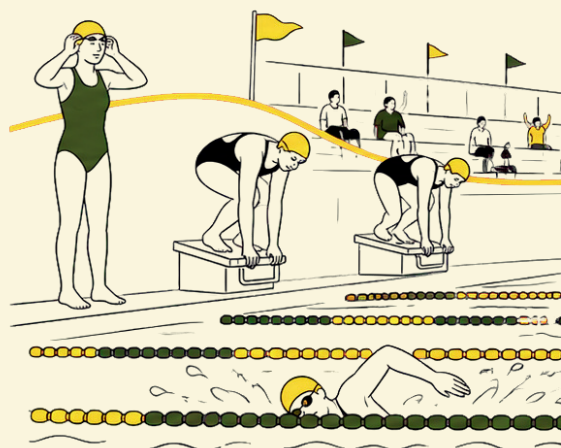
How can local people help shape your activities?

## 7. MEASURE SUCCESS

Decide how you will know whether your activities have been successful.

Possible measures include:

- Number of people your organisation supports
- Volunteer involvement
- Community feedback
- New partnerships created
- Funding secured
- Community impact stories
- Social media engagement



Collecting feedback can help you improve future activities and demonstrate impact to partners and funders.

### THINK ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION:

What evidence can be captured to show the difference your activities have made?

A large, stylized yellow cloud shape with a white outline. Inside the cloud, there are three horizontal white lines for writing, and a small white checkmark is visible in the upper right area of the cloud.

## 8. CELEBRATE AND SHARE YOUR IMPACT

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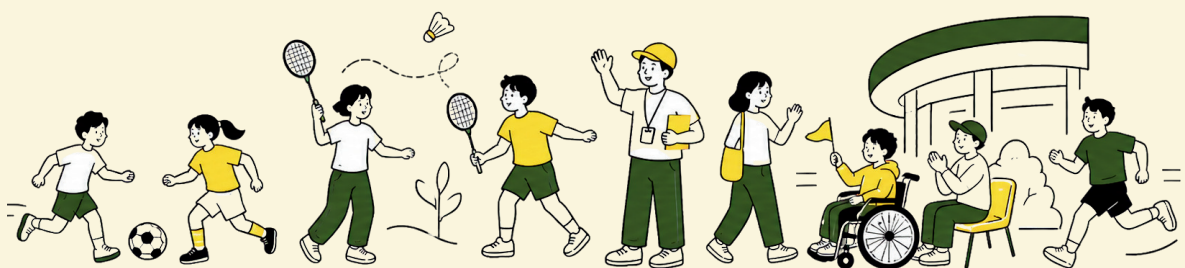
Take time to recognise achievements and celebrate success.

Encourage the people your organisation supports to share their experiences, stories, photographs, and reflections. These stories can help demonstrate impact, inspire others to get involved, and strengthen community pride.

Consider using:

- Community exhibitions
- Digital storytelling
- Social media campaigns
- Case studies
- Community celebration events

Sharing positive experiences helps create a lasting legacy beyond the event itself.





# YOUR EVENT ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Use the prompts below to develop a clear plan for action

**YOUR GOAL**

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**WHO YOU  
WANT TO  
ENGAGE**

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**ACTIVITIES  
YOU WILL  
DELIVER**

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**KEY PARTNERS**

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## YOUR EVENT ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Use the prompts below to develop a clear plan for action

RESOURCES  
AND FUNDING  
NEEDED

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---

HOW YOU WILL  
PROMOTE  
ACTIVITIES

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---

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HOW YOU WILL  
MEASURE  
SUCCESS

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NEXT STEPS

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# FINAL REFLECTION

## NEXT STEPS

- ✓ What opportunities will you prioritise?
- ✓ Who will benefit from your activities?
- ✓ What support will people need to participate?
- ✓ How will you measure impact?
- ✓ What legacy do you hope to create?

### **Congratulations!**

**You have completed the toolkit and developed a plan to help your organisation make the most of future major sporting events.**



## Appendix: Development and testing of the toolkit

The toolkit was developed from a programme of research conducted during and following the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research gathered evidence from over 700 resident surveys, alongside interviews with community-based organisations and local residents. The findings provided insights into how host communities engage with major sporting events, and what helps, or prevents them from taking part and benefiting from them.

Drawing on this evidence, an initial version of the toolkit was co-created with community stakeholders and launched for consultation in 2024. Feedback was sought from a range of organisations and stakeholders involved in the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games to ensure the guidance reflected practical experiences and local needs.

To further strengthen the toolkit, a feasibility study was undertaken in partnership with Birmingham City Council ahead of the 2026 European Athletics Championships in 2025–2026. Four pilot organisations (City of Birmingham Striders Running Community, LGBTQ+ Association Birmingham, United By 2022, and Saheli Hub) tested the toolkit within their own organisational contexts. The aim was to assess the toolkit’s usability, practicality, and potential to help organisations identify event-related opportunities while enhancing the delivery of services and outcomes for their beneficiaries.

Feedback from the pilot organisations has directly informed the revision and refinement of the toolkit. The final version, therefore, reflects a combination of research evidence, stakeholder consultation, co-creation principles, and practical testing within community settings.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This toolkit would not have been possible without the support, collaboration, and contributions of a wide range of organisations, stakeholders, community groups, and residents who have been involved throughout the research, consultation, and development process.

We are particularly grateful to all attendees of our stakeholder consultation and toolkit review events for their valuable feedback, comments, and reflections on the development of the toolkit. Their insights have played a crucial role in ensuring that the toolkit is both evidence-informed and practically relevant for community-based organisations.

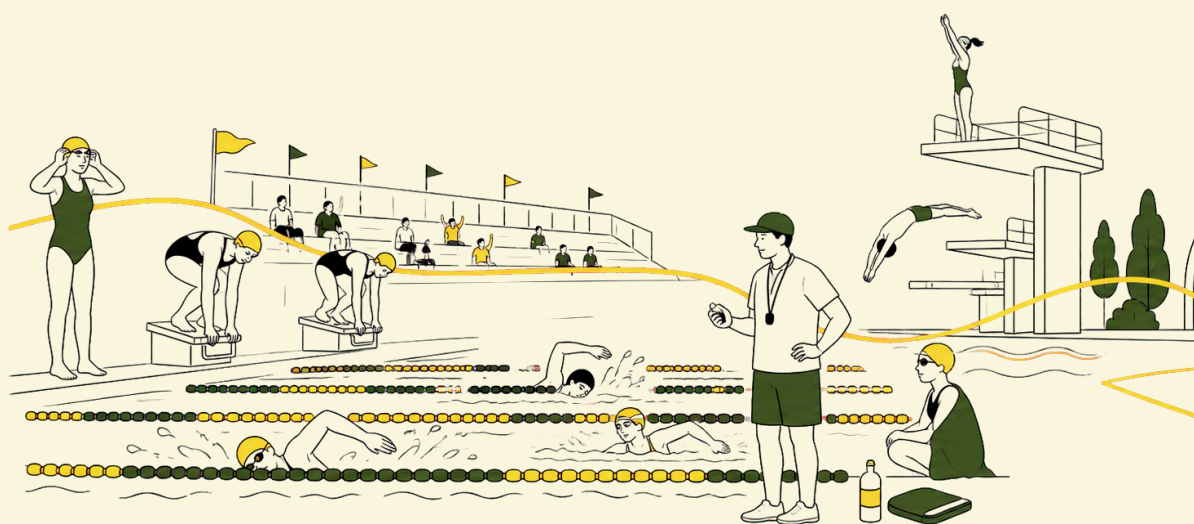
While the following list is not exhaustive, we would like to acknowledge the contributions and support of Birmingham City Council, Sport Birmingham, Sport England, the Birmingham Race Impact Group, Birmingham Voluntary Service Council, the Active Wellbeing Society, Warwickshire Cricket Foundation, United Communities Active Network, United by 2022, City of Birmingham Striders Running Community, LGBTQ+ Association Birmingham, Saheli Hub, and many community-based organisations and community leaders working across Birmingham neighbourhoods where the research was conducted.

We would also like to thank the residents and community leads who participated in surveys, interviews, workshops, consultations, and pilot-testing activities over the course of this research programme. Their experiences, perspectives, and expertise have shaped both the evidence base and the practical recommendations contained within this toolkit.



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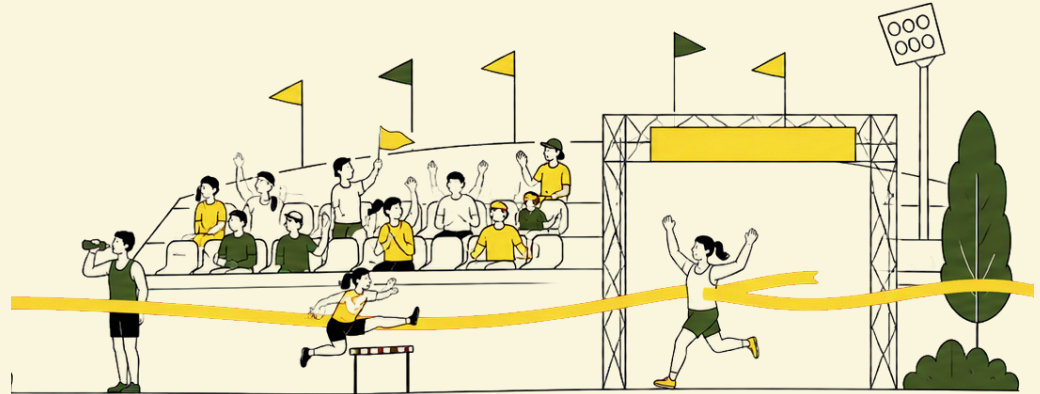
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