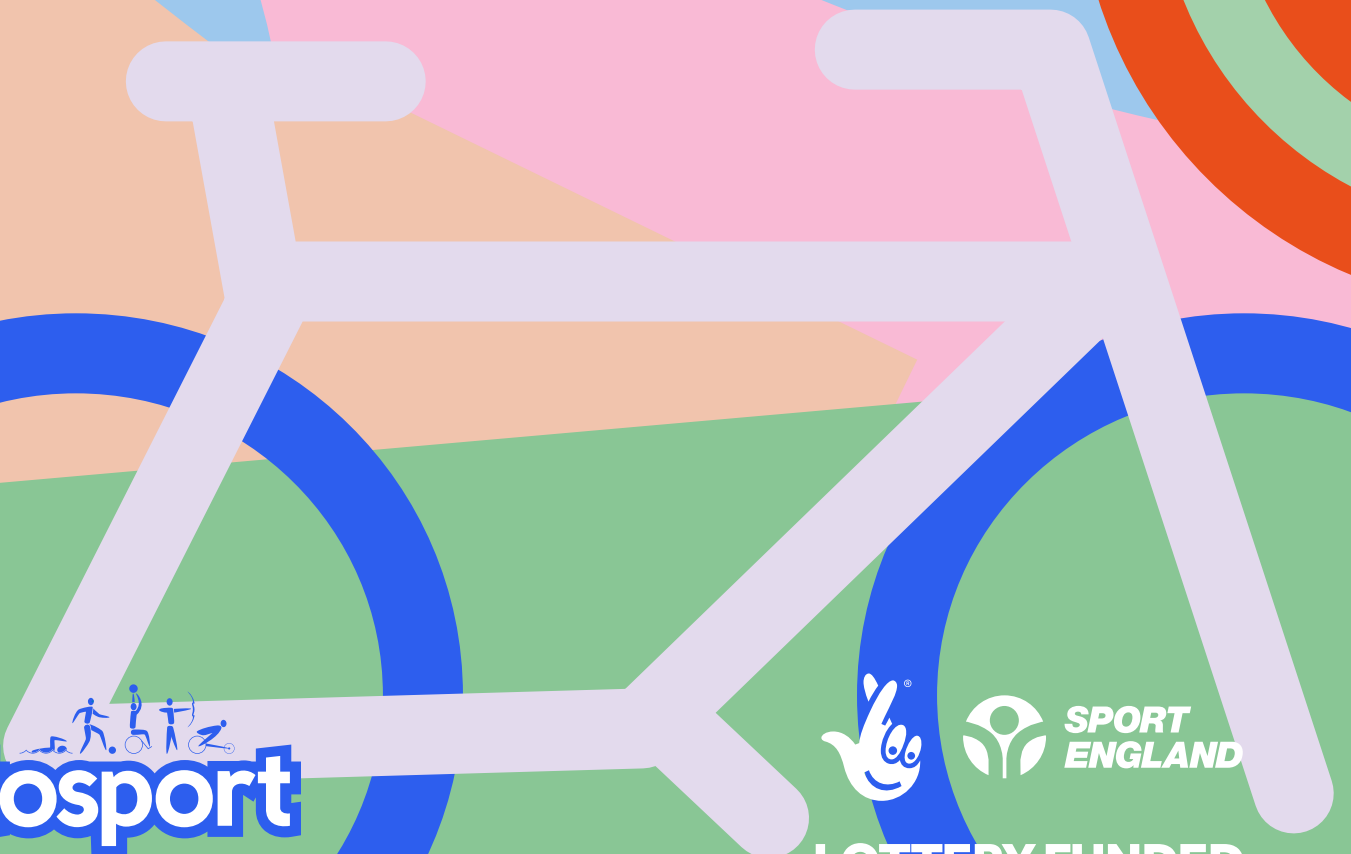


Yes we can!

Engaging Deaf and Disabled People in Sport and Physical Activity

A resource for Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations

Written by Inclusion London, March 2017



With thanks to our Into Sport partners:



Photo: Richmond AID

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Photo: Southwark Disablement Association

INTRODUCTION

Why sport and physical activity should be on a Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation's agenda

'Enabling disabled people to participate in sport and physical activity is more than just a statement, it is the force that drives me to make SPA more accessible to disabled people and push participation in activity to greater levels. SPA is no longer reserved for elite athletes – it is for everyone to enjoy and incorporate into their lives. The London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics demonstrated that SPA belongs to everyone, from competitors to the volunteers. We now have a unique platform of opportunity to support disabled people to enjoy more SPA and build a legacy for future generations.'

Bugra Zaim, Into Sport Project Co-ordinator, Inclusion Barnet

This information resource is based on learning gathered from the Into Sport project. Into Sport is a unique partnership of Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations (DDPOs) in five London boroughs (Barnet, Greenwich, Lambeth, Richmond and Southwark), led and managed by Inclusion London, with sports expertise provided by Interactive (now merged with London Sport). Our goal has been to increase the number of Deaf and Disabled Londoners participating in sport and physical activity (SPA) by building the capacity of DDPOs to apply their information, advice, advocacy, support brokerage and peer support expertise to support Deaf and Disabled Londoners to take up SPA and sustain their involvement in it.

Deaf and Disabled people often experience a multitude of big and complex physical, economic and attitudinal barriers to taking up SPA and many feel and believe SPA is not for them. SPA can feel out of reach, too scary and challenging. Even if we are interested, we don't know where to start. This resource will show, however, that there are ways to remove or minimise these barriers so Deaf and Disabled people can be supported to successfully and sustainably take up SPA.

During the Into Sport project so far 746 Deaf and Disabled people have gone from being inactive to active, with a total of 32,699 SPA activities being undertaken so far.¹ In the summer 2017 we will produce an accompanying resource which will include a series of more detailed case studies about the different approaches that our partners have used during the three-year project.

To achieve this level of engagement in SPA by Deaf and Disabled people, the Into Sport partners have:

- offered advice and support to Deaf and Disabled people who want to get active
- piloted and analysed what approaches work best in supporting people to start and sustain regular activity
- established what enables DDPOs to embed advice & support on SPA into their core work and shared this learning with the DDPO sector
- worked with SPA providers, the NGBs (the national governing bodies which manage specific sports), and local decision-makers to remove barriers to participation in SPA faced by Deaf and Disabled people.



Photo: Disability Advice Service Lambeth

¹ Data correct as of February 2017, two years and nine months into the project. The project was due to end in the summer of 2017 but has been extended to March 2018.



Photo: Inclusion Barnet

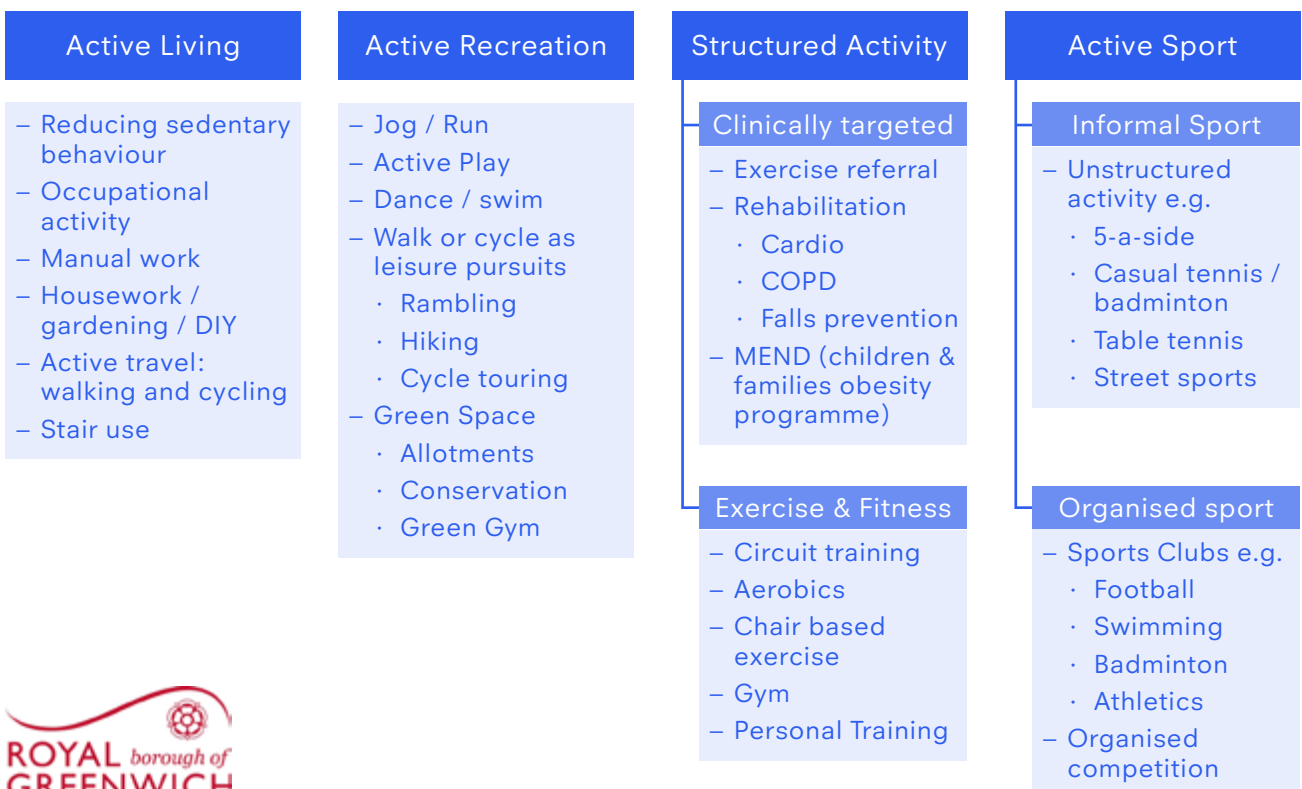


Photo: Greenwich Association of Disabled People

What we mean by 'sport' and 'physical activity'

The first stage in encouraging people to lead an active lifestyle is to understand what we mean by 'sport' and 'physical activity'. The Royal Borough of Greenwich has produced the following chart to help everyone understand what counts as physical activity:

Physical Activity



Into Sport is trying to communicate a number of key messages:

- Disabled people should have the right to be as fit and active as other people
- Any activity is better for health and wellbeing than no activity
- Sport does not have to be structured or competitive
- Exercise and fitness does not have to be a formally organised session at a gym or sport club
- Active travel such as walking and cycling counts
- Everybody can increase their level of activity as long as barriers and challenges to this are addressed
- Getting active is good for social, community and economic development.



Photo: Richmond AID



Photo: Southwark Disablement Association

SECTION 1

Why Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations should view sport and physical activity as a rights and equality issue

'Sport should not just aspire to be free from discrimination and prejudice; it should be at the forefront of actively embracing diversity.'
Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation, HM Government²

Disabled people should have the same right as anyone else to be active and enjoy the benefits of sport and physical activity (SPA), yet four out of five Disabled people are not active on a weekly basis and Disabled people are only half as likely to be active as non-Disabled people because of the barriers operating in society that prevent Disabled people from taking up and sustaining SPA. In addition over half of Disabled people are over 60 years old.³

We believe strongly that engaging in SPA (and the exclusion and disadvantage Deaf and Disabled people currently face when trying to take up and sustain SPA) must be seen as a rights, equalities and discrimination issue; and that supporting Deaf and Disabled people with SPA issues and tackling SPA barriers should sit alongside other issues like housing, independent living, employment, access and welfare support, on which DDPOs provide much needed advice, support and advocacy.

² 'Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation', HM Government, December 2015, p.70

³ Ibid, p.22

For example, Article 30 (Clause 5) of the **UN's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** focuses on 'Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport' and states the following:

With a view to enabling persons with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others in recreational, leisure and sporting activities, States Parties shall take appropriate measures:

- a. To encourage and promote the participation, to the fullest extent possible, of persons with disabilities in mainstream sporting activities at all levels;
- b. To ensure that persons with disabilities have an opportunity to organize, develop and participate in disability-specific sporting and recreational activities and, to this end, encourage the provision, on an equal basis with others, of appropriate instruction, training and resources;
- c. To ensure that persons with disabilities have access to sporting, recreational and tourism venues;
- d. To ensure that children with disabilities have equal access with other children to participation in play, recreation and leisure and sporting activities, including those activities in the school system;
- e. To ensure that persons with disabilities have access to services from those involved in the organization of recreational, tourism, leisure and sporting activities.

Source: www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html

Likewise, the **Equalities Act 2010** should provide Disabled people with protection from discrimination, including requirements and duties on service providers to ensure Disabled people can access their goods and services. Despite many problems with the enforcement of the Equalities Act⁴ this is still a powerful legal right and a way of challenging exclusion and removing barriers within SPA provision.

⁴ www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/lords-select/equality-act-2010-and-disability/news-parliament-2015/equality-act-report-published/



Photo: Southwark Disablement Association

Current policy on SPA and Deaf and Disabled people

Current government policy on sport emphasises the need to ensure that everyone can engage in SPA: “We want everyone to feel that sport is for them, no matter if they are a seasoned athlete or a complete beginner... [B]y giving everyone the chance to participate, we can create a healthier and happier country to live in.”⁵

There is widespread acknowledgement that Disabled people are underrepresented in the sports sector at all levels. The sports workforce lacks diversity and across the entire workforce there is a lack of Disabled employees.⁶ There is also a particular lack of Disabled people in leadership roles.⁷

Sport England’s strategy ‘Towards an Active Nation’ (2016-2021) focuses on the need to engage inactive people in sport and to diversify the sports sector. It presents many opportunities for DDPOs to benefit from future investment as at least 25% (£265 million) of its total investment over the next four years will be focused on supporting inactive people to become active. DDPOs are well positioned to meet the aims of the strategy because they have

⁵ Secretary of State, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, in ‘Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation’. HM Government, December 2015, p.21

⁶ ‘Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation’, HM Government, December 2015, p.66

⁷ Ibid, p.67

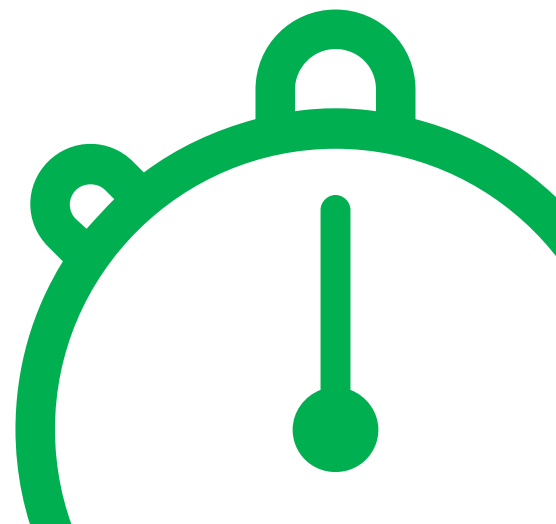
unparalleled knowledge, expertise and understanding of Deaf and Disabled people, a key inactive and under-represented group. They also support local delivery and tackle the barriers that exclude Deaf and Disabled people. Sport England believes SPA can be a force for social good and that, as well as maintaining physical and mental wellbeing, investment will also support social, community and economic development. DDPOs can help to fulfil this aim and this is explored further in Section 8 ([p. 48](#)).



Photo: Southwark Disablement Association

Disabled people are twice as likely to be inactive as non-disabled people, that is, active for less than 30 minutes a week.⁸

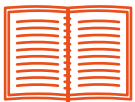
⁸ 'Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation', HM Government, December 2015, p.22



SECTION 2

What motivates Deaf and Disabled people to get involved in sport and physical activity?

Despite the fact that Deaf and Disabled people experience barriers to getting involved in SPA, our motivation to take part in SPA is nevertheless high, as the following research shows:



National Research and Insight:

- 'Disabled People's Lifestyle Survey 2013', English Federation of Disability Sport⁹
- 'Motivate Me', English Federation of Disability Sport, May 2014¹⁰
- 'Talk to Me', English Federation of Disability Sport, October 2014¹¹

Key findings in these reports include the following:

- There is a clear untapped demand for SPA from Disabled people, with **70%** of those surveyed saying they want to do more.
- The majority of Disabled people would like to do activities with their peers in inclusive sessions involving both Disabled and non-Disabled people, rather than solely disability-specific sport.
- **69%** of those surveyed state that playing sport or being active is important to them.
- The benefits that motivate Disabled people to become active are similar to those that motivate non-Disabled people, including **good health**, social **inclusion**, a sense of **community**, **learning** and personal **development**, having **fun** and feeling good, and **competition**.
- The top three reasons people surveyed gave for taking part is '**because it is fun**', '**to keep fit**' and '**to keep healthy**'
- Motivations and interests vary among Disabled people and are not specific to particular impairments.

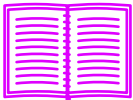
⁹ www.efds.co.uk/how-we-help/research/1873-disabled-peoples-lifestyle-report-september-2013

¹⁰ www.efds.co.uk/how-we-help/research/1874-motivate-me-may-2014

¹¹ www.efds.co.uk/how-we-help/research/1878-talk-to-me-october-2014

SECTION 3

The barriers Deaf and Disabled people face in engaging in SPA



National Research and Insight:

Despite the UN Convention and the Equalities Act (see [Section 1](#)) stating that Disabled people should be able to access SPA and despite efforts to improve accessibility of provision, national research indicates a low take-up of SPA by Disabled people. However, even though the benefits of SPA are well known, data from Sport England's Active People Survey for weekly participation in SPA in London for the year to September 2016 shows that only **19%** of Disabled people were participating in SPA on a weekly basis, compared to **40.7%** of non-Disabled people.¹² This means that slightly less than one in five Disabled people in London are active on a weekly basis and that non-Disabled people are more than twice as likely to be active compared to Disabled people.

Other findings from the English Federation of Disability Sport's 'Disabled People's Lifestyle Survey 2013',¹³ include the following:

- **64%** of Disabled people surveyed would prefer to take part in sport and physical activity with a mix of Disabled and non-Disabled people; however, only **51%** currently do. Therefore, the research highlights a clear mismatch between preference and availability.
- **Over half** of disabled people surveyed (**51%**) are not enjoying their experiences of sport in school, compared to **69%** enjoying taking part in sport or physical activity with friends outside of school.
- **Over 60%** of those surveyed claimed that either a lack of awareness of opportunities or a lack of available opportunities is what prevents them from taking part in sport and physical activity.

¹² www.sportengland.org/research/about-our-research/active-people-survey/

¹³ www.efds.co.uk/how-we-help/research/1873-disabled-peoples-lifestyle-report-september-2013

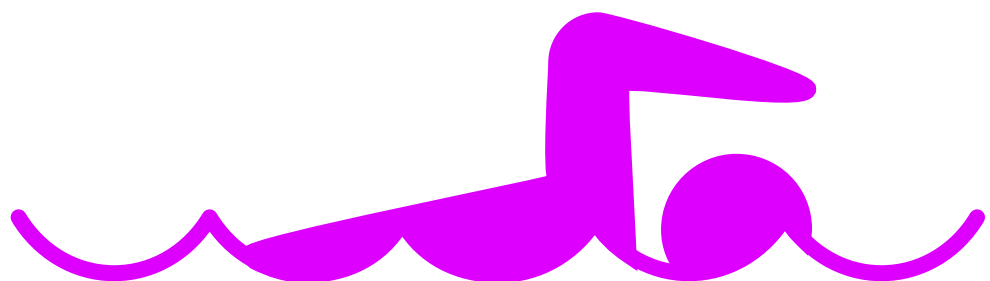
Learning from the Into Sport project supports these wider national findings. We have found that Deaf and Disabled people continue to encounter complex physical, economic and attitudinal structural barriers which significantly hinder and prevent them from getting involved in SPA, as follows:

Key barriers related to mainstream SPA provision:

- a. inaccessible facilities at mainstream SPA venues
- b. lack of disability equality awareness amongst SPA staff
- c. cost of SPA activities
- d. inappropriate/inaccessible SPA scheduling and provision
- e. lack of Deaf and Disabled people in the SPA workforce

Wider barriers to Deaf & Disabled people's participation in SPA:

- a. lack of accessible and/or affordable public transport
- b. lack of confidence among Disabled people about SPA
- c. the attitudes of other people
- d. lack of Personal Assistance to support people with high support needs to take part in SPA
- e. financial/economic barriers: Disabled people are far more likely to live in poverty than non-Disabled people.¹⁴



¹⁴ 'Disability and poverty: Why disability must be at the centre of poverty reduction', New Policy Institute, 2016, www.npi.org.uk/files/3414/7087/2429/Disability_and_poverty_MAIN_REPORT_FINAL.pdf



Photo: Disability Advice Service Lambeth

SECTION 4

From inactive to active: the role DDPOs can play in breaking down barriers to sport and physical activity (SPA) and the approaches which are most effective in supporting Deaf and Disabled people to initially get active and to stay active long term

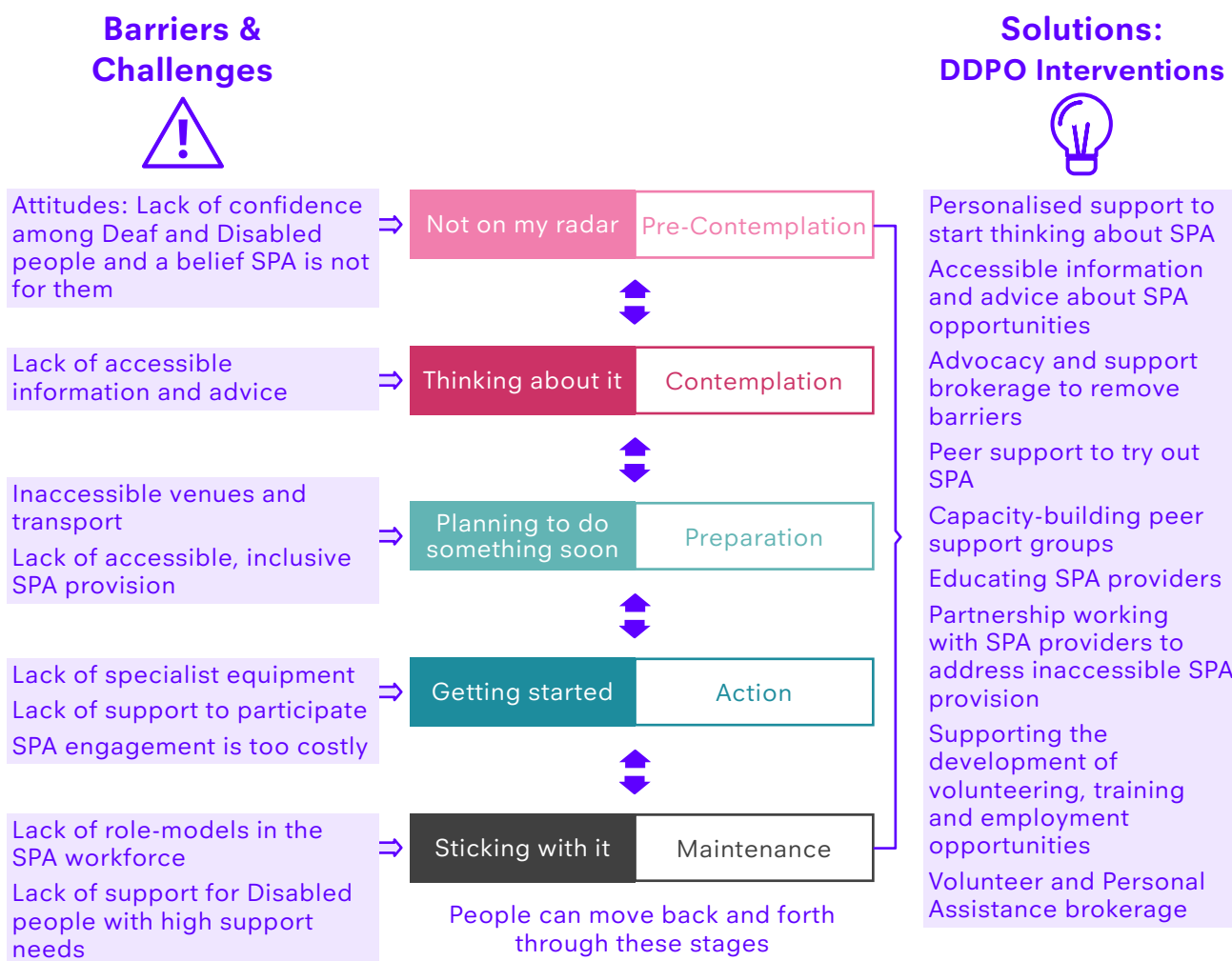
'Sport is an integral part of maintaining our well-being, connecting with people and our community. Ensuring that the culture of sport is inclusive and accessible to everyone, including Disabled people, takes commitment from the whole sports sector. As DDPOs, we can also play an important role fighting for a world where Disabled people have the same opportunities to access sport as non-Disabled people.'

Lucy Byrne, CEO of Richmond AID

The process of getting involved in SPA on a regular basis involves a journey through different stages, from not even considering the possibility of taking up SPA to maintaining SPA on a regular basis. Sport England has developed a behavioural change model to illustrate this process.¹⁵ Not everyone's journey is linear – some people move back and forth between the different stages. These stages equally apply to Disabled people.

¹⁵ 'Towards an Active Nation' strategy 2016-2021, Sport England, May 2016, p.6

However, along the way, Disabled people can encounter a range of additional barriers and challenges which hinder or prevent them from being sustainably active. We have further developed Sport England’s diagram to show this range of barriers but, more importantly, also illustrate how DDPOs are successfully developing a range of innovative solutions to address these barriers:



7 in 10 supporters think the disabled people they support would like to be more active, but there are too many practical and emotional barriers that currently exist.¹⁶

¹⁶ 'Supporting me to be active: The role of supporters in influencing disabled people to be active', EFDS, January 2016

Sometimes good quality, accessible information and advice will be sufficient for some Disabled people to start accessing SPA. However, other people have additional, long term access or support needs which require personalised solutions. Some of these interventions can be easily sustained, while others will need ongoing investment.



BARRIER 1: Attitudes. Lack of confidence among Deaf and Disabled people and a belief SPA is not for them and DDPO solutions

I don't know many other Disabled people who do SPA

I never see other Disabled people at the leisure centre!

I'm bothered by other people's opinions, including my family and my support workers, when I talk about SPA

I'm not sure if SPA is for me – I don't feel confident about it

Some Into Sport participants have reported an initial lack of belief that SPA is relevant or important to them. They experience low levels of confidence and fear in relation to:

- their ability to participate
- the ability of sport providers to meet their needs or provide appropriate equipment and adaptations
- the welcome and attitudes they will encounter from staff and members of the public at sport settings.

However, DDPOs can use their traditional models of DDPO service delivery (e.g. information and advice, advocacy, support planning and brokerage services) to successfully address these 'attitude' barriers and get Disabled people involved in SPA. DDPOs are experienced in working with Disabled people in a holistic way and offering personalised support. Into Sport has found that many Disabled people who have gone on to take up SPA initially approached their local DDPO about another more pressing issue, like welfare benefits or social care. However, during those conversations, staff were able to introduce the subject of SPA and then encourage Disabled people to think about their SPA interests, motivations and barriers and give them personalised support to find sports or activities that match these individual interests and goals.



Photos: Greenwich Association of Disabled People

Here are some ways of working that you could try to address some of the 'attitude' barriers outlined above:



Use **case studies** of real Disabled people who have been unsure about trying sport but have had positive experiences. Have a look at this case study from Disability Advice Service Lambeth (DASL) of a Disabled woman who completely changed her mind about sport by giving sailing a try: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/IntoSport_7_ChangingViewsofSPA.pdf

Easy read version: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/IntoSport_7_Of_Course_I_Can_Do_Sport.pdf



Change **stereotypes** about SPA by introducing Disabled people to a wide range of activities including non-traditional and non-competitive sports. Have a look at this case study from DASL who organised wheelchair dancing sessions to demonstrate that SPA can be fun and isn't just about football: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/IntoSport_2_BreakingStereotypes.pdf

Easy read version: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/IntoSport_2_Not_just_football.pdf



You may also need to find ways of **challenging the attitudes** towards SPA held by people who support your service users. If **family, friends and support workers** do not advocate an active lifestyle, it will be much harder for the Deaf or Disabled person to access and engage in SPA. Research by the English Federation of Disability Sport confirms the influence that Disabled people's supporters have in encouraging Disabled people to be active.¹⁷

¹⁷ 'Supporting me to be active: The role of supporters in influencing disabled people to be active', EFDS, January 2016

Some approaches do require more staff time, and may therefore need dedicated funding (see [page 43](#)), but Into Sport has successfully demonstrated how adequately resourced DDPOs can create attitudinal change:



Some Disabled people will need personalised one-to-one support to view SPA as relevant and viable, to explore different options and address some of the barriers which arise: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/IntoSport_1_PersonalisedSupport.pdf

Easy read version: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/IntoSport_1_Supportthatsuitsyou.pdf

Into Sport partners often provide one-to-one or group support for initial visits to SPA providers and when trying out new sports. To ensure participants make repeat visits you may need to provide support for more than one session and it is essential to get feedback about initial experiences. It may be that the first sport was not really what the individual was looking for and they need support to try something different. It may be that they experienced barriers and need ongoing support to address these. Some may need ongoing support to access SPA (see [page 37](#)).



CASE STUDY

A service user needed to lose weight and exercise regularly, in a way which met her mental health needs and care responsibilities. Richmond AID researched options, spent a lot of time reassuring her, arranged a tour at a local gym (which has reduced rates for Into Sport referrals) and speeded up a referral to a local healthy living service provider.

She is now going to the gym and attends companion cycling every week and says:

“A fantastic experience – after not cycling for over 30 years and being too scared to get on a bike, the kind, knowledgeable, extremely helpful and friendly staff have encouraged me so much that I managed to cycle on my own today after only 3 sessions.”

For further details of how your marketing and communications strategy can contribute to changing attitudes towards SPA, please see [Section 7, page 47](#).

Although disability specific sport (e.g. boccia) and taster sport sessions are valuable in addressing Disabled people's lack of confidence and changing their attitudes to SPA, our experience is that these activities alone do not lead to people moving on to using mainstream provision independently. We have found that additional personalised support is usually needed to help people make the transition from disability-specific to mainstream activity and to address access barriers or ongoing support needs.

Unfortunately some Into Sport service users have had negative experiences related to their participation in SPA and continue to face challenges. Sometimes Into Sport staff have been able to resolve the problem but some attitudinal barriers persist. For example:



Some Disabled people still feel **self-conscious** about engaging in SPA with physically fit people and this continues to deter some people from engaging in SPA and/or from making the transition from disability sport into mainstream provision. This barrier needs further exploration but sometimes one-to-one support and encouragement from Into Sport staff has successfully addressed the problem. For example, since contacting Southwark Disablement Association and attending a water polo session for Disabled people only, one wheelchair-user has now got the confidence to swim five times a week independently at the local leisure centre.



There is ongoing, and understandable, fear among some Disabled people that taking up SPA will somehow get back to the DWP and be used to **justify cuts** to, or the ending of, a person's benefits. Inclusion London is highlighting this concern with Sport England and where relevant in our policy responses to DWP consultations.

Photo: Greenwich Association of Disabled People



Photo: Inclusion Barnet





BARRIER 2: Lack of accessible information and advice and DDPO solutions

I don't know what's available or where to look for information

The information isn't in an accessible format for me

The information doesn't say if the session is inclusive or accessible – is it for me? What questions do I need to ask?

Information about SPA is often produced or distributed in inaccessible formats which can make people feel that the activity is not relevant to them. In addition, access information is often not provided.¹⁸ However, DDPOs are experienced in providing accessible information and ensuring people get the information they need.



It is important to signpost people to appropriate activities. Find out whether activities are accessible and whether providers have a positive attitude towards Disabled people. An inaccessible or unwelcoming first experience could confirm people's worst fears about getting involved in SPA.



Encourage SPA providers to advertise opportunities through your membership. See Section 7 ([page 47](#)) for more details on how you can successfully market SPA opportunities to your service users, including using social media. The following case study shows how Disability Advice Service Lambeth supports Into Sport service users to access the right information: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/IntoSport_3_KeepingCurrent.pdf

Easy read version: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/IntoSport_3_Whats_going_on.pdf

EXAMPLE

Inclusion Barnet is currently developing some easy read resources for people with learning difficulties about how to engage with SPA. These will address issues like what to do if your support worker doesn't turn up, what to do if transport plans get altered, what to do if you have a bad SPA experience, how to advocate for easy read information from a venue, etc. These guides are being co-produced with Into Sport participants and will be available for other DDPOS to use as well.

¹⁸ The Get Active London website (beta.getactivelondon.com) is currently being redeveloped and will include impairment-specific search options for listed sports activities.

EXAMPLE

As a means of embedding its commitment to engage its service users in SPA, Disability Advice Service Lambeth is supporting some Into Sport participants to become mystery shoppers and assess the suitability of local SPA providers so that they can share this information with other Disabled people, as well as promote the project and the SPA message.

Other issues to consider when providing information and advice include the following:



You also need to try and assess how whether the session is at a level that will be both **fun and challenging** for the individual concerned. If the first session is inappropriately 'pitched' (e.g. it is too advanced), this could create a negative first impression and feelings of inadequacy or embarrassment or exclusion, which will reduce the chances of a repeat visit. Similarly a session that is too basic for someone's level of ability is just as likely to put someone off.



If people are attending beginner sessions, there may come a point when they are ready to progress to a more advanced session or even competitive opportunities. If this is the case, it is important that work is done to **identify appropriate follow-on activities**. Building relationships between DDPOs and local providers will help to ensure progression routes are developed.



When you work with SPA providers, try to educate them in good practice in **engaging and communicating with Disabled people**. For example, the English Federation of Disability Sport has produced a useful guide called 'Access for all: Inclusive communications' (April 2014) and a short animation video which look at reaching wider audiences, including Disabled people, which are useful resources for clubs and SPA providers.¹⁹

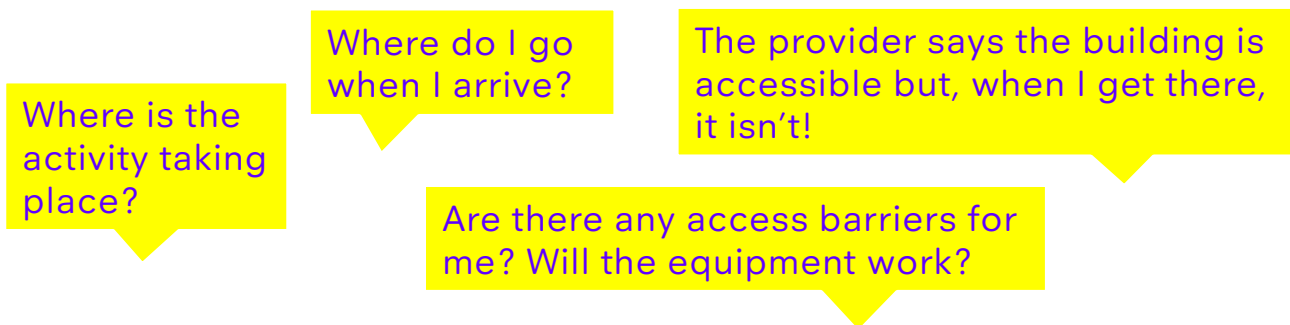
¹⁹ www.efds.co.uk/how-we-help/resources



BARRIER 3: Inaccessible venues and DDPO solutions

“Unfortunately many SPA providers still lack understanding of the practical and attitudinal barriers that prevent Disabled people from engaging in SPA activities. There is a clear need for a coordinated, Disabled-led approach to educating sports providers on how to deliver their services in an inclusive way.”

Joanne Munn, Director, Greenwich Association of Disabled People



Providers sometimes advertise a venue as being 'accessible' when it isn't. Poor physical access continues to be a barrier for some Into Sport participants who report common problems, such as:

- Lifts that are too small for users of large power chairs/mobility scooters or have weight restrictions
- Venues with complicated routes between different activity areas
- Limited signage, signage that is hard to understand or lack of staff to guide people around the building
- Loud music and harsh lighting that cause barriers for people with sensory impairments
- Lack of accessible Blue Badge parking and/or poor accessible public transport links
- Specialist equipment (e.g. hoists) that is not working or available on the day
- Lack of accessible toilets and changing rooms that do not accommodate larger wheelchairs.

DDPOs are using a variety of approaches to improve access at local SPA venues:



DDPOs can liaise with SPA providers on behalf of Disabled people who are experiencing access problems. **Brokering negotiations** between leisure operators and individual service users or **providing advocacy** can be an effective way of finding solutions which could influence long term provision. London Sport can support these discussions.



Make sure you get **feedback** from Disabled people about their experience of particular providers on a regular basis and feed this information back so they are continually improving.



Disability Advice Service Lambeth (DASL) supports Into Sport service users to do **mystery shopping** visits to SPA venues. This work is ongoing but meetings have already started to take place between DASL, Better (Greenwich Leisure Limited), the leisure provider in Lambeth, and London Sport to discuss the findings and explore possible solutions.



You can also run **consultation exercises** in partnership with local SPA providers to find out what your members want from SPA provision. For example, Fusion, a former leisure provider in Southwark, held visits to its venues and ran focus group sessions with members of Southwark Disablement Association to assist with promoting their activity programmes.



Disability equality training for frontline staff in leisure centres is a challenge, as the industry often experiences high staff turnover. Better (Greenwich Leisure Limited), which operates in three Into Sport boroughs (Barnet, Greenwich and Lambeth), is investing in the English Federation of Disability Sport's online disability equality course for frontline staff as part of its company-wide commitment to improving the customer experience for Disabled people. GLL and London Sport are working with the Into Sport partners in these three boroughs to arrange '**Meet and Greet**' sessions for Disabled and Deaf people, so they can visit leisure centres across the boroughs and view the facilities before actually taking part.



Many DDPOs provide **training and consultancy services** including bespoke Disability Equality Training – a key tool in improving access, inclusion and the customer experience for Disabled people.



Venues can be referred to the London Sport 'Funding Search Tool' ([see page 43](#)) for information about sources of funding to make access improvements.

EXAMPLE

A service user from Greenwich Association of Disabled People had a negative customer service experience when visiting a local leisure facility. The Into Sport officer and London Sport then worked with the centre's management team to provide clearer information on arrival at the centre and during telephone enquiries. Once frontline staff had received a detailed briefing and updated information, the customer experience improved and the service user is now a regular centre visitor.

EXAMPLE

Southwark Disablement Association reported to London Sport that some clients were experiencing difficulties using the swimming pool hoist at a brand new sports venue in Elephant and Castle. SDA and London Sport were able to work with the venue and Southwark Council to resolve this problem and action has been taken to source and fit a different style hoist for the pool.

It is vital that venues maintain any access equipment, such as lifts and hoists, so that Disabled people do not experience the humiliation of being unable to use the facilities. Service users should be encouraged to report faulty equipment that venue staff may be unaware of. Into Sport staff have also intervened and mediated with a venue to resolve an access problem, as the following case study shows: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/IntoSport_4_specialist_equipment.pdf

Easy read version: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/IntoSport_4_specialistequipment_er.pdf



BARRIER 4: Transport barriers and DDPO solutions

I can't use public transport independently – is transport provided or can someone help me get there?

How do I get there? Where is the nearest station or bus stop?

Is there any accessible parking at the venue?

Is there anyone I could meet and travel with?

Disabled people continue to have difficulty travelling to and from SPA activities (e.g. wheelchair-accessible taxis being unreliable, lack of space on some public transport for mobility scooters, and lack of door-to-door transport, etc.). DDPOs cannot eliminate these problems. However, DDPO staff have considerable local knowledge and are experienced in supporting service users who are encountering transport difficulties. For example:



Into Sport staff can provide service users with personalised support to get the necessary information about transport options and entitlements, organise transport, coordinate volunteers to accompany service users and encourage participants to support each other to get to activities.



We are supporting several peer support initiatives. These involve Disabled people sharing their 'lived experience', local knowledge and expertise with other Disabled people to support and empower each other. One of the areas the peer support focuses on is building service users' confidence to use local transport.



DDPOs can work closely with Transport for All (TFA), another London DDPO (www.transportforall.org.uk). TFA provides A-Z journey advice (e.g. step-free routes) for individuals and information and advice on concessionary travel. Into Sport service users are also encouraged to give feedback to TFA on poor travel experiences and to seek its support with following up complaints.



Metro Blind Sport (www.metroblindsport.org) routinely offers a travel buddy scheme for its programme of events. This involves 'meet and greet' points at tube stations from where its visually impaired members can be guided to and from the SPA events and be assisted during the activities. Metro Blind Sport covers every London borough.



Guide Dogs also provides a service called 'My Guide' (www.guidedogs.org.uk/services/my-guide/) to support blind and partially sighted people to get out and about (tel. 0345 143 0229, email myguide@guidedogs.org.uk)



Transport for London also provides different forms of support to Disabled travellers (www.tfl.gov.uk/transport-accessibility/), including a free Travel Mentoring Service (tel. 020 3054 4361, email travelmentor@tfl.gov.uk)



BARRIER 5: Lack of accessible, inclusive SPA provision and DDPO solutions

I haven't done sport before. Can I start off by trying something with other Disabled people?

Can someone meet me and show me round?

Will the activity meet my particular access needs?

Although mainstream SPA provision should be inclusive, sometimes it does not meet the needs of some Disabled people. When this is the case, Into Sport partners have set up their own activities as part of their personalised approach to getting people active. For example:

EXAMPLE

Sometimes the timing of SPA activities in mainstream venues does not meet the needs of Disabled people. For example, Greenwich Association for Disabled People found that swimming sessions at a local venue were not conveniently scheduled for its service users so the Into Sport officer met with Charlton Park Academy (an academy for young Disabled people with complex needs) which agreed to schedule some sessions in its pool at more suitable times. Although the Academy isn't a mainstream venue, this example nevertheless demonstrates effective partnership working and good use of local, accessible facilities. As a result, more Disabled people are now active and are encouraged to try other SPA activities as well.

EXAMPLE

Richmond AID found that existing walking groups were too fast-paced for its service users so the Into Sport officer set up a group called RAID Ramblers. It plans to support some peer volunteers to take more of a leadership role in the group.

EXAMPLE

The Into Sport officer at Southwark Disablement Association (SDA) got training to teach boccia and now runs a weekly session for Disabled people in SDA's resource centre, some of whom have high support needs. One of the aims of this initiative, however, was to cultivate interest among participants in SPA more generally. This has been successfully achieved with some service users getting sufficiently motivated to try other SPA activities.

However, some Disabled people may want to try an activity that is specifically designed to meet their access needs (e.g. boccia, wheelchair tennis or blind football) and, in such cases, they should be supported to find these.



BARRIER 6: Lack of specialist equipment for participants to use and DDPO solutions

Do I need to provide my own equipment?

Is it possible to hire equipment and how much does it cost?

How do I get funding towards specialist equipment (e.g. a sports wheelchair)?

Not all Disabled people need specialist equipment to participate in SPA. However, for those that do, lack of specialist equipment (e.g. a sports wheelchair) is cited as a common barrier. The cost of purchasing equipment can be prohibitive for some Disabled people, especially if they need the equipment to try out an activity for the first time. However, DDPOs can help with getting funding to purchase specialist equipment. For example, a DDPO could support a local club or provider to apply for funding for the equipment. A DDPO can bring 'added value' to a local project and strengthen the evidence base by demonstrating there is a real need for investment and ensuring it will benefit local Disabled people (see [page 43](#) for further details about funding sources).



If your DDPO tries to apply for funding on behalf of someone who needs specialist equipment, make the case that the equipment will increase participation by Disabled people in SPA by removing a key barrier. Always factor in the cost of storage and maintenance.



Local sports organisations that support Disabled people to get involved in SPA may have portable and accessible sports equipment that can be hired. For example, Motivate East (www.motivateeast.co.uk) has an equipment loan scheme (www.motivateeast.co.uk/get-involved/our-equipment/) for groups interested in trying new sports in the seven East London boroughs (Barking and Dagenham, Greenwich, Hackney, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest).

EXAMPLE

One Into Sport officer got funding towards a recumbent exercise bike for a service user who was housebound from a local grant-making trust. The trust was suggested by the DDPO's advice team which is experienced in supporting people in financial need (see [page 43](#) for details of possible sources of grants for individuals).



BARRIER 7: Lack of support to participate in a session and DDPO solutions

'9 in 10 supporters think it is important that disabled people are active because of the mental, social and physical benefits disabled people can get from taking part. In addition, the supporter themselves gain benefits from the disabled person being active'

EFDS, Supporting me to be active, 2016, p.7

How can I get ongoing motivation and support to keep doing SPA on a regular basis?

Will the coaches be disability-aware and be experienced in delivering inclusive sessions?

What other types of support may be available?

Can someone come with me to support me during the activity?

Some Disabled people will need support while engaging in SPA, ranging from ongoing encouragement and motivation to communication support or personal assistance during the activity itself. The following case study shows, for example, how easily a person's confidence can be boosted, with appropriate support from a trusted person: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/IntoSport_6_Buddying.pdf

Easy read version: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/IntoSport_6_Youarenotalone.pdf

SPA providers should be welcoming towards people who are providing support to Disabled people engaging in SPA. Leisure centres often have a 'carer policy' where the personal assistant /carer supporting a Disabled participant goes free (see [page 33](#)).

EXAMPLE

Southwark Disablement Association's Into Sport officer identifies potential service users for the Free Gym and Swim scheme, supports them with completing a membership form and then accompanies them on their initial visits to the leisure centres. He also provides feedback on the service users' experiences to the borough sports development team and the Disability Working Group. When he isn't available, one of his Disability Champions supports them as a peer supporter and an activity buddy.

There are many steps SPA providers can take to make their activities more inclusive and more appealing to Disabled people. The English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) has useful resources on this subject (www.efds.co.uk/how-we-help/resources) including:

- 'Talk to Me', EFDS, October 2014
www.efds.co.uk/how-we-help/research/1878-talk-to-me-october-2014
- 'Engaging disabled people in sport and physical activity', EFDS, 2014
www.efds.co.uk/assets/000/000/437/EFDS_Engagement_guide_Feb_2014_original.pdf?1463230189
- 'Fit as a fiddle: Delivering physical activity for older people', EFDS and Age UK
[www.efds.co.uk/assets/000/000/249/Fit as a fiddle resource original.pdf?1462830235](http://www.efds.co.uk/assets/000/000/249/Fit_as_a_fiddle_resource_original.pdf?1462830235)

EXAMPLE

We are also exploring how Into Sport participants themselves can become more involved in supporting other Disabled people to engage in SPA. We are organising an '[Inclusive Community Training](#)' workshop for Into Sport staff and participants in developing their SPA skills. The English Federation of Disability Sport has developed this training opportunity specifically for people who engage with Disabled people in the community, such as support workers and volunteers, but who have no SPA experience. Its purpose is to increase their knowledge, competence and confidence so that they can introduce SPA to Disabled people and support them more. We will monitor what impact increasing the skills of Disabled people involved in Into Sport has in their respective boroughs.

Encouraging peer support

DDPOs are using peer support methods to create SPA activity groups for Disabled people. These groups are providing participants with motivation to get involved in SPA, tackling social isolation and promoting community cohesion, as the following case studies show:

www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/IntoSport_5_PeerSupport.pdf

Easy read version: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/IntoSport_5_DoingSportTogether.pdf



CASE STUDY

Southwark Disablement Association's 'Peer to Peer' project involves developing local networks of Deaf and Disabled people to provide support to each other to overcome barriers which prevent them from engaging in mainstream SPA. Initially this will revolve around regular weekly sessions at local venues where peer supporters will welcome service users who are new to SPA, familiarise them with the facilities and develop their confidence to get more involved. Participants will also be encouraged to use social media to support each other, sustain interest and build the capacity of the networks.



CASE STUDY

Inclusion Barnet worked with a service user with long term mental health issues. Initially he was not physically active and struggled with loneliness. However, with the help of support groups and online forums suggested by Inclusion Barnet's Peer Support Brokerage team, he is now walking regularly and playing tennis with friends and feels that he is doing something positive for his physical health. His mental health has also improved.



CASE STUDY

Richmond AID has developed a walking group, RAID Ramblers. The members use active travel (walking) to various venues to create confidence and develop independent travel. The social element combined with the activity itself highlights the wider benefits of being physically active. RAID also has groups of Disabled people participating in archery and companion cycling on a weekly basis. The participants are contacted frequently and get reminders so that they remain motivated to attend regularly. They have recommended the sessions to Disabled friends who have since joined the groups and they keep in contact between sessions. The coaches and volunteers are the same people each week which adds further to the friendly and sociable set-up. Some service users will also be trained to become peer volunteers over the next year.



Photos: Richmond AID

We have produced an 'Into Sport Guide to Facebook' (www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/intosportresources) to increase the use of social media as a way of encouraging peer to peer information exchanges about SPA. Each partner has created a Facebook page where Into Sport participants can upload information about their SPA activities and photos. As well as cultivating peer support at a local level, this is generating positive images of Disabled people taking part in SPA that can be used in related learning and promotional resources.



BARRIER 8: SPA engagement is too costly and DDPO solutions

How much does the activity cost?

Are there any concessions?

Does my support worker have to pay too?

Disabled adults are twice as likely to live in persistent poverty as non-Disabled adults²⁰ and face additional disability-related costs (e.g. extra heating costs, specialist equipment and additional travel costs).²¹ Meeting additional costs related to SPA could therefore be a huge deterrent to participation for some Disabled people.

In view of the financial hardship that many Disabled people face, DDPOs should inform themselves of which local providers offer concessionary rates and flexible payment plans, or even free activities. Local contacts (see [page 40](#)) and SPA providers themselves can provide this information. Costs vary between providers, however. For example, Southwark's leisure operator, Everyone Active, provides Free Gym and Swim for Deaf and Disabled residents seven days a week (and accompanying carers go free). Another leisure operator, Better (Greenwich Leisure Limited), offers Inclusive Membership (£19.95 a month) which also includes access to fitness classes and includes a free carer.

Better (Greenwich Leisure Limited) also provides a 'Meet and Greet' service for people who are unfamiliar with the facilities and welcomes Disabled people visiting the venue and potentially watching a session before paying

²⁰ Disability and poverty: Why disability must be at the centre of poverty reduction', New Policy Institute, 2016, www.npi.org.uk/files/3414/7087/2429/Disability_and_poverty_MAIN_REPORT_FINAL.pdf

²¹ Inclusion London, www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/IL_Inequalities-experienced-by-Deaf-and-Disabled-People-Factsheet-20152.pdf, p.32

to attend something they are not sure about. Borough Disability and SPA Network Groups (see [page 41](#)) have led to more venues offering introduction and taster visits and getting more Disabled people to visit; they have also contributed to developing better relationships between leisure centres and DDPOs.

Some Into Sport partners have successfully brokered cheaper rates for Disabled people to use local SPA services but this has been on an individual basis, rather than an overall policy change.



BARRIER 9: Lack of role-models in the SPA workforce and DDPO solutions

'The sport workforce lacks diversity and is drawn from a relatively small pool of talent, often without the wide range of skills it needs. For example, across the entire workforce there is a lack of disabled employees. Sport is missing out when it does not capitalise on the talent and skills of the entire population. We need a workforce that, at all levels, is reflective of our society and is drawn from the communities it serves.'

'Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation', HM Government²²

Lots of my Disabled friends are volunteers but not in the SPA sector!

Why aren't there any Disabled people working in my local leisure centre?

Why are there so few Deaf and Disabled coaches in the SPA sector?

Coaches may work on a paid or voluntary basis, doing either contracted hours with a club or provider or in a self-employed capacity. They may also do some sessions as paid and others as a volunteer. Work patterns may also vary according to the time of the year and, for example, during school holidays. If a Deaf or Disabled coach has regular paid work, it should be possible to get Access to Work support. Many coaches will do paid coaching for a number of providers and rates of pay may vary between contracts (e.g. a session in a school may pay £20 per hour but a private session for adults who pay individually may pay more). However, the standard of coaching should always be the same, whether it is a paid coach or a volunteer coach.

²² 'Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation', HM Government, December 2015, p.66

Much more needs to be done to diversify the workforce and get more Disabled people into volunteering, coaching, paid posts, leadership roles and positions of influence within SPA organisations. For example, currently only 6% of entry level coaches are Disabled people.²³ However, a more diverse and representative workforce will lead to:

- Greater awareness and understanding of the needs and barriers faced by Deaf and Disabled People
- Increased skills, capacity and expertise to tackle barriers
- More positive role models for our community
- Greater take up of SPA by Disabled people
- A cultural shift so that Disabled people being engaged in SPA becomes expected and routine

The first step is for SPA course providers to review their entry criteria and consider which criteria are absolutely essential and whether any are unnecessary or discriminatory. For example, some Disabled people may have gained relevant experience and skills as volunteers but not as paid staff and, in many cases, this unpaid experience will be equally valid. It is therefore important for course providers to show flexibility around how prospective students meet entry criteria. Once Disabled people have had the opportunity to demonstrate how they meet any entry criteria for a course, it should be the course provider's responsibility to make reasonable adjustments to meet their access needs (e.g. BSL interpreters or note takers) as it should not be the responsibility of the individual learner to meet these costs.

There are examples of organisations taking positive action to create more opportunities for Disabled people to train as coaches:

The Football Association (FA) has introduced targets to diversify the workforce within football and every county now has targets to increase the numbers of both women and Disabled coaches and referees.

The Instructability programme (www.instructability.org.uk) trains Disabled people to be fitness instructors. Participants use their own experience of addressing barriers to exercise and improving physical function and/or mental health to inspire and support other Disabled people to get involved in fitness activity.

²³ 'Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation', HM Government, December 2015, p.37

There are also some bespoke courses for people with specific impairments.

EXAMPLE

Queens Park Rangers Football Club and DASH (Disablement Association Hillingdon) supported adults with learning difficulties to complete their FA Level 1 Football coaching course and provided support during the practical coaching placement hours. The course ran over a number of weeks with a series of short sessions, rather than an intensive full weekend, which made it more accessible.

Some Into Sport participants are being supported to develop their coaching and leadership skills. For example, Greenwich Association of Disabled People is:

- supporting a service user to get her Level 1 coaching qualification, in partnership with Eltham Stingrays Swimming Club
- training Disabled people and PAs to become 'Chair-based' Exercise Instructors so they can visit housebound service users and teach them an exercise programme of wheelchair/chair-based exercises
- working in partnership with Trust Thamesmead, which runs multisport activities and coaching programmes, and supporting an Into Sport participant to become a Level 1 football coach and do football referee training.

Individuals working in sport need access to open and transparent recruitment processes, with clear career pathways and opportunities to develop and progress throughout their careers.²⁴



BARRIER 10: Lack of support for Disabled people with high support needs and DDPO solutions

Can I use my personal budget to help me engage in SPA?

How can I find a PA to enable me to participate?

Despite the government's determination that no child will leave school unable to swim, including young Disabled people and those with special

²⁴ 'Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation', HM Government, December 2015, p.66

educational needs,²⁵ there is no acknowledgement that many Disabled adults with high support needs do not have the necessary support to engage in SPA, including swimming. Disabled people who have care and support packages funded by local authorities or CCGs (e.g. a direct payment or a personal health budget) should, in theory, be able to use their funding towards SPA costs, if they have been agreed as eligible needs that must be met. However, amid very significant cuts to adult social care,²⁶ Into Sport partners report that some Disabled people, particularly those with high support needs, cannot engage in SPA on a regular basis because personal assistance support for SPA is rarely included in their individual support plans. Skills for Care research confirms that the number of Disabled people accessing SPA as part of their care packages is minimal.²⁷

Despite this evidence, we still wanted to explore whether inactive Disabled people with high support needs will engage in SPA if the right support is available, e.g. paid support and volunteers, as the following case study shows:

CASE STUDY

Greenwich Association of Disabled People has used Into Sport funding to recruit ten personal assistants (PAs) to support service users who are now participating in SPA on a regular basis. One service user has now got SPA included in her individual plan and she now attends sessions with her PA, giving her opportunities to be more active and meet new people. So, this pilot project has shown that Disabled people with high support needs want to engage in SPA and, with the right support, will do so. However, attempts to get care packages increased to include support to engage in SPA have, so far, been unsuccessful. This paid PA support is not, therefore, a long term sustainable solution beyond the Into Sport project, without ongoing financial resources.

Disability Rights UK is also currently exploring how Personal Health Budgets can be used to help budget-holders get active. For further details visit the following website: www.getyourselfactive.org.

²⁵ 'Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation', HM Government, December 2015, p.33

²⁶ www.adass.org.uk/media/4340/adass-budget-survey-2015-report-final-v2.pdf
Between 2010 and 2015 ADASS tracked a total of £4.6 billion budget reductions for Adult Social Care. ADASS Budget Survey 2015 Report, June 2015, p. 7

²⁷ 'Sports, leisure and social care: Moving towards a joint workforce development programme', Skills for Care, 2013

In summary: the DDPO spectrum of support

The above examples illustrate how DDPOs can provide solutions to many of the barriers which prevent Disabled people from participating in SPA. They reflect DDPOs' innovative approaches to service delivery. They also highlight the wide range of support needs that Disabled people have and show that further investment is needed to enable DDPOs to explore more long term sustainable solutions and continue to pilot new ways of working, particularly in relation to supporting Disabled people with high support needs. The following diagram illustrates this wide range of DDPO interventions:

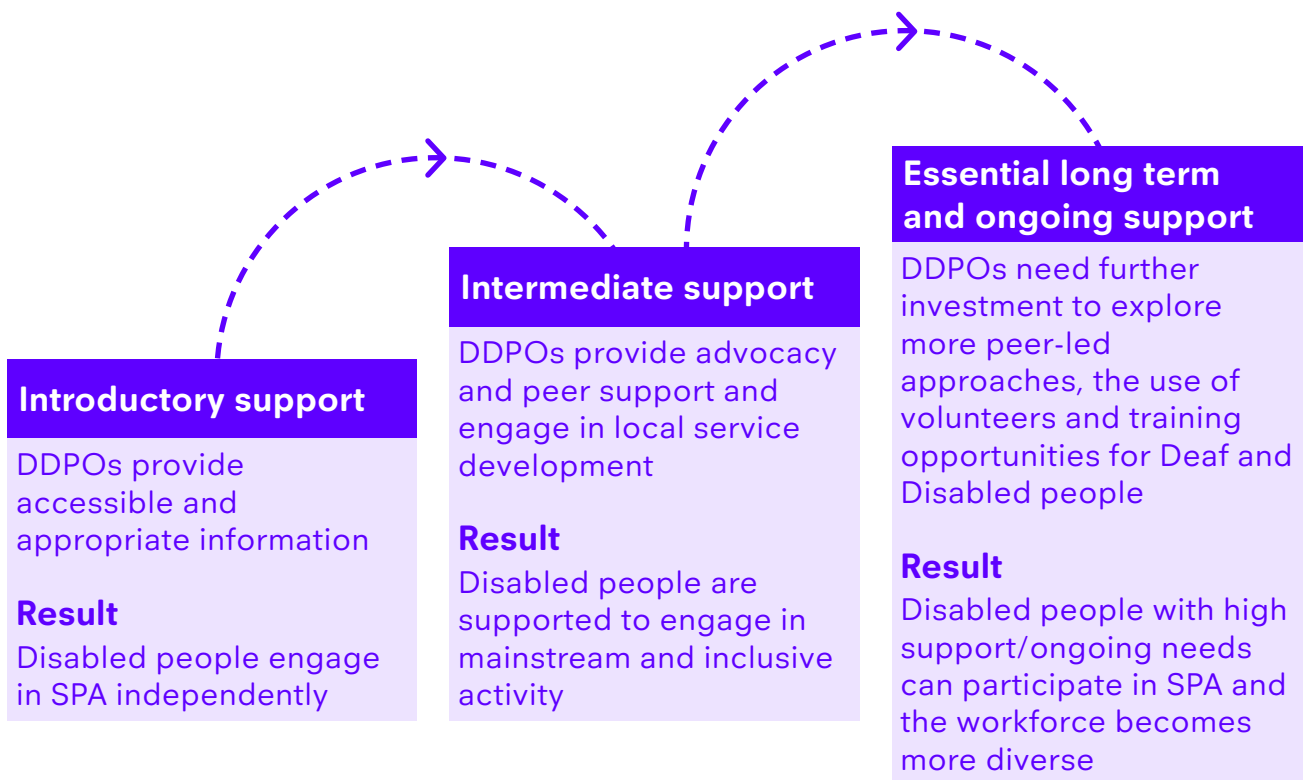




Photo: Southwark Disablement Association

SECTION 5

Getting SPA on your agenda: initial steps for DDPOs, including funding opportunities

There are some steps your DDPO can take to increase your chances of getting funding to support your organisation to get SPA on its agenda. Firstly, you need to gather some evidence about the unmet SPA needs of local Disabled people. For example, you could carry out a survey and organise a focus group to capture what local people's experiences of SPA are, what works well and what prevents people from taking up SPA. This will help you to:

- see where the gaps are locally
- identify what percentage of your members and service users take part in SPA
- identify some of the key barriers that Disabled people currently face trying to engage in SPA
- spot opportunities you can build on and potential partnerships
- identify the unique contribution that your organisation can make to improve and increase existing SPA provision.

There are other things you can do, as follows:

1. Develop your SPA connections

Try to build some relationships with key local contacts and other SPA providers, just like you did when you started planning every other service you offer. Just like you, our Into Sport staff did not have loads of SPA knowledge and expertise when they started working on this project – it takes time to build it up.

Your local authority will have staff who are responsible for SPA in your borough; some may even have a lead officer for disability sport. They will have an interest in SPA and information on current provision, local take-up and funding sources.

London Sport (www.londonsport.org) can provide information on the lead contact in each London borough. Here are the contact details for the Disability Team at London Sport:

- Kate Budd, Disability Development Officer (Community Sport)
kate.budd@londonsport.org
- Josef Baines, Disability Development Officer
josef.baines@londonsport.org
- Alex Gibbons, Disability Programme Manager
alex.gibbons@londonsport.org
- Main switchboard:
Tel 020 7868 5055 / info@londonsport.org / SMS 07872 380 509

LONDON SPORT

Our Vision

To make London the most physically active sporting city in the world

Our Target

To get 1,000,000 Londoners more active by 2020

Our Mission

To help inspire more Londoners to be physically active

2. Get to know what opportunities are available

To be able to offer good quality advice and support for Disabled people who want to get involved in SPA, your staff need to know what opportunities are available. Try the following:

- contact your local sports providers to see whether their facilities are accessible
- ask if they provide any sessions specifically for Disabled people and/or inclusive sessions (NB Disabled people often want to attend sessions with their friends and family members)
- ask your service users and members for information about good and poor SPA provision locally.

3. Local networks and relationships

Your borough may have a Community Sport and Physical Activity Network or even a dedicated Borough SPA and Disability Network. Get involved so that you can feed in your knowledge of SPA barriers and solutions and be a voice for local Disabled people on SPA issues. These networks vary from borough to borough. For example:

- Southwark has a long established Disability Working Group, with a current membership of over 60 different organisations or services. The group meets quarterly and is the point of information for SPA for Disabled people in the borough.
- Greenwich has an Inclusive and Active Forum (GIAF) which represents various council departments and community providers. Greenwich Association of Disabled People has been part of this group for a number of years – it represents the disability sector and is a voice for Deaf and Disabled people in the borough. The forum delivers a disability-focused activity festival each year to promote local SPA opportunities and allow people to try activities in a fun and informal way.
- Inclusion Barnet has been involved in setting up a borough-wide Disability SPA Network Group. Existing provision is being mapped and a disability/SPA strategy for Barnet is being developed. London Sport facilitated the formation of this network and continues to provide support, advice and guidance. It also encouraged Inclusion Barnet to chair the network. The network is based on good practice from other networks across London and it brings together statutory services,

disability organisations, local providers of SPA and local leisure centre operators. The network will share information, best practice and explore funding opportunities.

Contact Kate Budd at London Sport (see [page 40](#) for contact details) to find out if your borough has a network and/or to get further advice and support about setting one up.

THE BARNET EXPERIENCE

Setting up a Disability SPA Network Group in Barnet was a straightforward process which could be replicated in other boroughs:

- London Sport (on behalf of the Into Sport project) discussed good practice in other boroughs with both the DDPO (Inclusion Barnet) and the local authority's (Barnet Council) Sports Development Team
- Following initial discussions it was agreed there was a need for a strategic Disability SPA Network in the borough
- The first meeting was attended by various local partners: local authority, DDPO, leisure centre operator, local providers and local Disability organisations
- There was group consensus that the borough would benefit from a Network; Inclusion Barnet was selected to chair the Network
- The second meeting was held approx. 8 weeks later
- The third meeting was held in January 2017, after lead officers from the local authority and the DDPO had attended a meeting of Southwark's Disability Working Group, to see how the group operates and share good practice. Southwark Council is sharing its own terms of reference and advising the Barnet Network as appropriate
- Future format: the Network will meet quarterly.

Planned development work includes:

- identifying other providers and interested parties to join the Network
- formalising this group as a strategic sub-group of the overarching Borough Strategy and Sports Network, as part of the new 'Fit and Active Barnet' network.

4. Funding opportunities

There are several places you can find out about funding sources that could help your DDPO to get involved in SPA. You may want to get funding for a dedicated member of staff or to meet the costs of specific activities or equipment. Here are some useful tools:

- For details about a range of funding streams relating to SPA, visit www.sportengland.org/funding.
- London Sport has a 'Funding Search Tool', which is a free, online service for anyone seeking funding for SPA in London: www.londonsport.org/training-and-support/funding-search-tool/. This facility will allow you to look at all the grants available but also you can do more specific searches, by location, for example, or capital/revenue sources, by age-range, or by size of the grant, etc. The facility is free to use but, to get maximum benefit from the service, you should sign up to use it.
- 'Disability Grants' is an online guide to grants available for Disabled people. It has a section dedicated to sports-related grants for individuals and for clubs and groups: www.disability-grants.org/grants-for-sports.html.
- Inclusion London's website has a funding directory which includes funders with disability among their priorities, as well as funders with specific interests (including those who support 'sports, leisure and cultural activities'): www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/funding/.
- Your local authority officers who are responsible for SPA will have information on any local sources of funding. For example, some local authorities have, on occasions, made funding available to set up new sessions and provide funding towards initial equipment costs. The Community Sport Team in Southwark has created a 'SportAbility' grant, a scheme which is designed to offer local clubs and SPA providers funding towards the costs of running inclusive or disability sport (i.e. for Disabled people only) sessions. The grant covers both coaching costs and the equipment needed. London Sport can provide information on the lead contact in each borough (see above, [page 40](#)) so you can find out if any local funding is currently available.
- Your local Community & Voluntary Service organisation (which supports the voluntary sector in your borough) will often have details about local grants for local people in need and will provide information bulletins that you can sign up to.
- There are also sources of information on grants for individuals in financial need that DDPOs may be able to access, such as Turn2Us (www.turn2us.org.uk).

5. Local, Regional and National organisations

Our Into Sport partners work in partnership with a range of organisations whose remit is to support Disabled people to get engaged in SPA, such as:

- Disability Sports Coach (www.disabilitysportscoach.co.uk)
- South London Special League (www.sl-sl.co.uk)
- Motivate East (www.motivateeast.co.uk)
- RISE (Disability and Inclusive Sports) (www.richmond.gov.uk/home/services/sports/disability_sports_and_activites.htm)

You can also find out about other DDPOs which already provide SPA support from Inclusion London, which holds information on over 70 DDPOs working in London. For further details about these organisations, please call 020 7237 3181 or email info@inclusionlondon.org.uk

EXAMPLES

Action on Disability (www.actionondisability.org.uk) and
DASH - Disablement Association Hillingdon (www.dash.org.uk)

Photo left: Richmond AID. Photo right: Southwark Disablement Association



SECTION 6

How DDPOs can embed SPA issues into other services (e.g. information, advocacy and advice)

DDPOs are highly effective at engaging with local Disabled people, and providing information, advice and support to enable people to access their rights, entitlements and opportunities. And yet, despite the fact that DDPOs are one of the preferred sources of information and support for Disabled people, the same research shows that DDPOs are often unable to provide good support and advice in relation to SPA. ('Disabled People's Lifestyle Survey 2013', The English Federation of Disability Sport).

Given the cuts to DDPO funding and the simultaneous increase in demand for DDPO services from Disabled people needing support with issues like social care, housing, welfare benefits, hate crime, discrimination and employment, it is not surprising that SPA doesn't feature on the agenda of many DDPOs.

However, it is still possible for DDPOs to incorporate SPA advice and support into your core service provision, help to remove barriers to local SPA participation, and open up a whole new area of life and enjoyment to Disabled people. This can be done by:

- increasing your staff team's awareness of SPA as a rights and equalities issue (see [Section 1](#))
- actively including SPA issues in your information, advocacy & advice offers
- including SPA in your strategy and policy work, such as including SPA in your mission statement, strategic objectives and business plan and whenever you talk about rights and exclusion/inclusion.

Into Sport DDPO partners have found ways of encouraging both trustees and other staff to engage in SPA work, as follows:

- It is important to get your CEO on board and engaged with SPA so that he or she shares information about your SPA work at board level and keeps this work on the agenda.
- Include progress updates on SPA services and case studies in reports to trustees and in annual reports so that it is seen as a valued part of your services.
- Give regular briefings about SPA work to advice and advocacy staff, and support them with introducing SPA into their conversations with service users.

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- Try to get trustees and staff involved in SPA opportunities so they become active role models, passionate and committed to the idea of Disabled people being involved in SPA
 - Encourage staff to take SPA up as a policy and campaigns issue, just as they would do so in relation to other local facilities and services. Raise issues through local forums which bring together SPA providers and policy makers (see [page 41](#)). London Sport can also introduce you to the right people in your area

EXAMPLE

Richmond AID ensures that all its teams can make referrals to the Into Sport officer, whatever the individual's reason for originally engaging with the organisation, whether it is for advice and information, benefits, the Job Club, travel buddy schemes or anything else. This system of two-way referrals also connects Richmond AID's Into Sport officer into a wider range of Disabled people.

CASE STUDY

At Inclusion Barnet the Into Sport officer attends monthly SMT meetings, bi-monthly staff meetings and the Steering Committee, and has done an Into Sport presentation at a board meeting. Into Sport is now embedded in the Peer Support Brokerage offer so that SPA is considered as one of the outcomes that a service user might like to engage in. The CEO includes 'Into Sport' in staff supervisions and it features under one of Inclusion Barnet's four key corporate values ('Support to fulfil potential'). Into Sport packs were also provided at an AGM.

For more information about why Inclusion Barnet wanted to get involved in Into Sport and the difference it has made to their organisation, follow this link to read a blog by its CEO, Caroline Collier, and watch a video: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/training-and-support/consortia-working/into-sport-consortium/inclusion-barnet-involved-sport/

SECTION 7

Cultivating interest in SPA among Deaf and Disabled people: Marketing and communications

Some service users will not see engaging in SPA as relevant to them and achievable. So, how your DDPO markets its SPA services and manages its communications strategy will be crucial to successfully engaging large numbers of inactive Disabled people in SPA. There are different ways you can maintain a strong SPA profile, as follows:

- Make information about your SPA services and local SPA opportunities available immediately as people enter your premises, in reception and advice giving areas, for example.
- Use your website and newsletters to raise the profile of Disabled people involved in SPA and the fun and benefits they get from it. All the Into Sport partners have set up Facebook pages for service users to share photos of their SPA activities and we ran a photo competition across the whole partnership.
- Ask people you have successfully supported to get involved in SPA to spread the word – word of mouth is a powerful way to reach new people! People who have had positive SPA experiences are the best people to promote the benefits of getting active and to share positive experiences about local venues and opportunities with other Disabled people.
- When you advertise your SPA services and opportunities keep the photography real: use images of people of all shapes and sizes, of different ages, with a range of impairments and backgrounds, non-disabled and Disabled. Avoid images of elite or competitive sports or sport celebrities.
- Use images in your marketing materials that potential participants can identify with and which show the range of activities they could get involved in. Into Sport is developing an image bank of Disabled people doing SPA which will be held by Inclusion London for use by DDPOs.



SECTION 8

Arguments for DDPOs to use with funders, SPA providers and other stakeholders about the important role DDPOs can play in SPA

This section outlines many reasons you can use with SPA decision makers and SPA providers to show why DDPOs are effective at engaging inactive Disabled people in SPA.

Inclusion London's most recent research shows that there are 71 DDPOs in London.²⁸ In 2014/15 these organisations had a combined turnover of at least £24,301,597²⁹ and they provided services to at least 64,729 Disabled people,³⁰ the overwhelming majority of whom are inactive. It makes sense, therefore, for the SPA sector to work with DDPOs because they have unparalleled reach into their local communities of Disabled people.

Harnessing DDPO skills, knowledge and experience to make the SPA sector more inclusive

DDPOs are essential to ensuring that local SPA provision becomes fully inclusive. The additional value you bring to service delivery can be harnessed to also benefit the SPA sector. By 'additional value' we mean the extra benefits that DDPOs bring to service delivery due to your unique ways of working and your values.

Your unique contribution

Expertise of lived experience

In London's DDPOs the majority of trustees and employees are Disabled people (currently 84% of trustees³¹ and 71% of staff³²). This means that the people making decisions and delivering services have got lived experience of the barriers Disabled people face.

²⁸ This figure represents 66 known, or actively developing, DDPOs and 5 organisations we think are DDPOs but do not hold data on.

²⁹ Based on data from 65 DDPOs.

³⁰ Based on data from 56 DDPOs. Using this data it can be assumed that London DDPOs collectively had 76,287 Deaf and Disabled service users.

³¹ Based on data from 65 DDPOs.

³² Based on data from 63 DDPOs.



Photo: Inclusion Barnet

This unique insight into issues affecting local Disabled people means that DPPOs are well positioned to find innovative ways of overcoming barriers, using their extensive user experience and knowledge. There is a body of evidence that documents the additional value that DDPOs bring to service delivery in relation to adult social care, for example.³³ This knowledge and experience can also be applied to SPA providers and services.

Peer support

As well as employing Deaf and Disabled people, most DDPOs use peer support models of delivery for at least some of their services. Buddying and befriending services, where Deaf and Disabled volunteers support their peers to get involved in local activities, are proving very effective in SPA:

- By sharing their own experience and knowledge of the local SPA sector, peers can increase other Into Sport service users' confidence and skills in a way which gives them choice and control over their lives and empowers them.
- Peer support contributes to the growth of strong communities and reduces social isolation by linking people into wider SPA networks, local services and support.

³³ 'Confident Commissioning: Building relationships between local authorities and Disabled People's User Led Organisations', SENDPO, 2014

-
- Peer support helps to cultivate a voice for Deaf and Disabled people at a local level and provide opportunities for service user feedback, which helps to strengthen relationships between DDPOs and SPA providers.
 - DDPOs are also skilled at providing ongoing and sustained support across a broad range of activities and these skills can be applied to SPA.

Accessibility

The lived experience of Deaf and Disabled trustees and staff gives DDPOs a much better understanding than other organisations of how to create accessible environments and accessible models of service delivery:

- DDPO services are shaped by service user and 'lived' experience.
- DDPOs are skilled in providing personalised support to Disabled people with a wide range of access and support needs, making the whole experience more efficient and smoother.
- DDPOs are connected into the local community and this leads to a higher take-up of services by Disabled people who non-DDPOs find it hard to reach and who are often excluded from mainstream SPA provision (including those who have high support needs).

These effective ways of working can be equally applied to the development of SPA services. This approach to service delivery also has wider community benefits because it increases the awareness and understanding of barriers which prevent Disabled people's participation in the wider community.

Holistic approach

DDPOs view Deaf and Disabled people's needs holistically and work in a flexible way. This means that their services address a range of needs, like 'one-stop shops'. For example, a service user may be able to access advice about benefits, support with direct payments, volunteering experience, and casework support with finding employment all within one DDPO. Meeting the needs of each person as a whole:

- has a greater positive impact on them as individuals
- allows for more cost effective and efficient interventions
- creates opportunities to engage Disabled people in SPA who previously did not consider it to be a viable activity.

Local knowledge: Being an authentic voice of local Deaf and Disabled people and a community asset

London DDPOs tend to be fairly small and focus their service delivery on small geographic areas, such as a single borough or a small number of neighbouring boroughs. Some DDPOs focus on a particular issue (e.g. Deaf forums or groups set up to give people with learning difficulties a voice in local decision making). This local focus increases the quality and authenticity of DDPO services because they are informed by, and can voice, the needs of local Disabled people:

- DDPOs can inform, shape and co-design local SPA services and contribute to the development of local SPA strategies.
- DDPOs engage with large numbers of local Deaf or Disabled people and, therefore, have a more comprehensive understanding of local issues, barriers and opportunities in relation to SPA.
- DDPOs can provide more appropriate and tailored advice and support to Disabled people who want to engage in SPA.
- DDPOs are skilled at increasing the quality and choice of local SPA services by working in partnership with SPA providers.
- DDPOs are skilled at identifying service gaps and overcoming barriers to SPA by creating new, innovative approaches to service delivery.

By increasing Disabled people's participation in decision making, service delivery and development, DDPOs become an important community asset:

- By campaigning to promote equality of opportunity for Disabled people in all aspects of their lives, DDPOs improve the accessibility of the wider community and can make existing SPA provision more accessible and inclusive.
- DDPOs contribute to reducing the social exclusion of Disabled people.
- DDPOs can lever in significant additional resources for individuals and the wider community.
- DDPOs create employment, training and volunteering opportunities for Disabled people to help make the SPA sector more diverse.
- DDPOs help public bodies meet their Equality Act duties.

Towards an inclusive active nation

It is also important to know that current government policy emphasises not only the benefits of engaging in SPA to people's physical and mental wellbeing and individual development, but also its positive impact on the broader outcomes of social, community and economic development.³⁴

This outlook is reflected in Sport England's strategy 'Towards an Active Nation – Strategy 2016-2021' which presents many opportunities for DDPOs to benefit from investment in sport and activity. At least 25% (£265 million) of its total investment over the next four years will be focused on encouraging inactive people to become active. In addition 20% of Sport England's total investment during 2016-2021 will be for new ideas and innovation. DDPOs are great examples of the type of organisation which can successfully progress the aims of this strategy because they support local delivery, tackle inactivity and work with a group of people under-represented in the SPA sector. This makes them an essential delivery agent for Sport England, as follows:

- As well as understanding the needs of their service users, treating them as individuals and valuing them as 'customers', DDPOs have a reputation for piloting new ideas and developing creative and innovative solutions to local service delivery.
- Sport England believes sport can be a force for social good and wants to achieve the following outcomes through its investment:
 - physical wellbeing
 - mental wellbeing
 - individual development
 - social and community development
 - economic development

This view reflects the aims of The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 which requires local authorities to consider the additional social value of commissioned services. DDPOs are already skilled at demonstrating their 'additional value', particularly in relation to adult social care, which is based on their ability to develop 'social capital' (e.g. building social networks, fostering community cohesion, developing people's skills, building local knowledge and expertise, and tackling social exclusion, etc.). It is these benefits that Sport England also wants to harness through its investment strategy.

- Sport England wants to create a sustainable sector. Into Sport's work with DDPOs shows how DDPOs style of working helps to develop sustainable models of delivery (e.g. by building peer support networks).

³⁴ 'Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation'. HM Government, Dec 2015, p.18

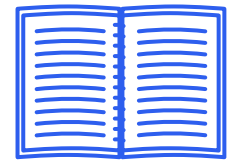
-
- Sport England acknowledges that it is important to diversify volunteers across the SPA sector and engage more underrepresented groups (including Disabled people). Not only do many DDPOs have a track record of successfully supporting Deaf and Disabled volunteers to develop their skills and experience, due to their understanding of disability equality issues, but they also create employment opportunities.
 - The Into Sport model of engagement developed by DDPOs, which draws largely on a peer support model of service delivery, represents an efficient use of resources and can be effective in supporting behavioural change by increasing Disabled people's confidence in engaging in SPA, providing encouragement and sustaining their engagement (see [page 16](#)). This model of engagement also provides Disabled people with support to tackle barriers they encounter at every stage of their SPA journey.
 - Sport England believes inequalities can best be tackled at a local level and that local infrastructures need to change, a view shared by DDPOs. It wants to see organisations working with SPA providers to make them more welcoming/inclusive, a role that DDPOs are skilled at fulfilling.
 - Sport England does not expect organisations it invests in to all be deliverers of SPA as it recognises that a range of organisations have the skills to engage local communities and create networks which will support engagement in SPA, as do the Into Sport partners.
 - Sport England is committed to diversifying the SPA workforce and creating a workforce which can tackle the barriers that limit engagement in SPA. A diverse leadership which is more representative of the community is needed. DDPOs can provide expertise in addressing the barriers that Deaf and Disabled people face in relation to skills development and career progression.



Photo: Southwark Disablement Association

SECTION 9

Resources



Inclusion London resources available on our website include the following:

- Into Sport resources: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/intosport
- Funding opportunities, with a sport-specific section: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/training-and-support/information-and-resources/funding/funders-with-specific-interests/#sport
- Directory of London's DDPOs: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/directory/
- Social Model of Disability: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/socialmodel
- Deaf and Disability Equality Facts: www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/disability-in-london/deaf-and-disability-equality-facts/deaf-and-disability-equality-facts/

EFDS resources:

The English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) provides many useful resources (www.efds.co.uk/how-we-help/resources) including the following:

- 'Access for all: Inclusive communications', EFDS, March 2014
www.efds.co.uk/assets/000/000/020/EFDS_Inclusive_comms_guide_accessible_PDF_APRIL_2014_FINAL%281%29_original.pdf
- 'Me Being Active', EFDS. Films about five disabled people with a range of impairments who all lead active lives. They discuss how they became active and how it makes them feel. EFDS created the films in partnership with Sport England and Disability Rights UK.
www.efds.co.uk/how-we-help/resources/page:2
- 'Fit as a fiddle: Delivering physical activity for older people', EFDS and Age UK: [www.efds.co.uk/assets/000/000/249/Fit as a fiddle resource original.pdf?1462830235](http://www.efds.co.uk/assets/000/000/249/Fit_as_a_fiddle_resource_original.pdf?1462830235)

EFDS's website also includes a section on research (www.efds.co.uk/how-we-help/research), such as:

- 'Talk to Me', EFDS, 2014. Aims to understand the needs and wants of Disabled people in relation to SPA and provides examples of ways in which providers can make their activities more appealing to Disabled people: www.efds.co.uk/how-we-help/research/1878-talk-to-me-october-2014

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- ‘Disabled People’s Lifestyle Survey 2013’, EFDS - a helpful starting point in understanding Disabled people’s lifestyles, interests and hobbies and the extent to which sport and physical activity is part of their lives: www.efds.co.uk/how-we-help/research/1873-disabled-peoples-lifestyle-report-september-2013

Other useful reports include:

- ‘Being Active: An every day guide for people living with an impairment or health condition’, Disability Rights UK, EFDS, and Sport England www.disabilityrightsuk.org/news/2014/december/being-active-guide
- ‘Doing Sport Differently: A guide to exercise and fitness for people living with disability or health conditions’, Disability Rights UK www.disabilityrightsuk.org/sites/default/files/pdf/Doing%20Sport%20Differently%20pdf%2017042012.pdf

Useful websites:

- ABLEize: www.ableize.com/recreation-sports
This website is owned and run by Disabled people. Its sports section includes links to other sites and information
- DisabledGo: www.disabledgo.com
Includes access information about sports facilities
- Disability Rights UK: www.getyourselfactive.org
Using personal budgets to get active



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