



The Active Wellbeing Society

Promoting health and
wellbeing

Who are the Active Wellbeing Society?

Our vision: *Healthy, happy people living active and connected lives*

- A mutual, member-led cooperative
- Ethos based on removing barriers to participation
- Work in areas of high deprivation to tackle inequalities and promote wellbeing and more civically and physically active communities
- Run free activity programmes - learn to ride, group exercise, walking, running, growing, art/craft
- Food support - distribution, community cafes, cooking skills and outreach services
- Community support and engagement – active travel, activating spaces, community conversations
- Health, social prescribing and primary care-based services, Listen & Connect & Community Connect support services
- A virtual programme of activity
- Disability and Inclusion – Promoting inclusivity across TAWS and working with partners to offer accessible interventions



DESIGNING PEOPLE 'IN' TO SERVICES

Disabled people and people living with long-term health conditions are much less likely to be engaged in sport and physical activity than the general population(1). Because of this they do not benefit from the many outcomes that participation brings about: improvements to physical health, mental wellbeing and the enhancement of social capital.

Our aim has been to create the stability and space for people to be able to and want to, engage with physical opportunities and self-care. To give people a purpose, to get out again and create the conditions whereby people can participate and reverse the habits that have formed since the start of the pandemic.



The consensus statement on the risks of physical activity for people living with long term conditions determines that the benefits far outweigh the risks and it is safe, even for people living with symptoms of multiple long term conditions to be active.



OUR APPROACH

- **Co-design** – facilitate input and collaboration from service users and local partners to develop.
- **Develop** - More resilient connected communities. Improved connections & relationships.
- **Systems** – Influencing community cohesion. Social movements created.
- **Enablement** - Delivery of programmes that connect people to a wide range of activity and support in and around the local community (wellbeing activities, learning, peer support programmes)
- **Opportunity** - Create avenues for community connection, pathway into employment, peer support and volunteering.



BARRIERS TO BEING ACTIVE

Time – perception of time – virtual wellbeing/on demand options

Travel – physically unable to get to spaces anymore – loss of licence – mobility – confidence

Trust – we build and create trust with local communities and co-create interventions with them to improve accessibility

Consistency and persistence – being where you say will- showing up - Text anywhere example

Underrepresentation – we work with minority groups to ensure our offer is inclusive and accessible including in our marketing, employees and partner organisations

Preconceived ideas – we work hard to build confidence in communities by codesigning activities, listening to fears and empowering them to be able to it for themselves

Language/communication - improve communication and engagement skills of employers and the community to ensure communication is inclusive from inception to delivery of a project (marketing, language, representation)

Lack of motivation - has been so long people just haven't got the motivation anymore

Disability can be defined on two ways. Two models of disability are described here.

Medical Model

The medical model of disability presents disability as a problem of the person, directly caused by disease trauma, or other health condition.

Social Model

The social model of disability presents disability as a socially created problem. A person is disabled because their environment is not well adapted to their needs.

“Equality for disabled people,
and the removal of barriers to participation,
should be considered from
the outset of all projects, removing the need
to respond to individual disabled people

OUR PROJECTS

OUR ACTIVITIES ARE OPEN TO EVERYONE OF ALL ABILITIES, AND WE HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE TRADITIONALLY EXCLUDED FROM PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TO JOIN IN, INCLUDING THOSE WITH PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENTS.



Walk and Run

Our walk and run opportunities are a chance for people to develop friendships, improve their physical activity levels, learn a new skill and improve their overall wellbeing.



Meeting people where they are at is fundamental to our delivery offer at TAWS. Or walking and running sessions offer a pathway for physical and mental wellbeing which is more of an adventure story book as opposed to a straight line.

"Running has changed my life it's really hard and I never thought I'd be able to do it, but with support from the group I did. Then I walked up Snowden, went back to college and now am training to become a Paramedic."



To find out more visit www.theaws.co.uk or feel free to contact us on 0121 728 7030 or email the team at info@theaws.org





Virtual Wellbeing

For some, it's about convenience, whereas for many, face-to-face delivery was never the right choice, or you might simply need a stepping stone to get back out. So, TAWS is working with health and wellbeing practitioners, organisations, and communities in the delivery of a regular timetable of virtual activities to access wherever you are.

Our offer includes cardio & strength work outs, dance, yoga, adapted & chair based exercise, mental wellbeing, arts & culture events and much more!

"I absolutely adore Craftersnoon...the 'prompt' is always something that gets me thinking. The atmosphere is relaxed and welcoming, even when I've not felt great mentally, afterwards I feel all boosted for the day/week...having Craftersnoon to look forward to each week really helps me plan activities on other days too."
- Jaime, 33

"Since Covid, I have stopped going to live classes. [It was] great to experience new classes I would never have thought of trying... The teachers were friendly & knowledgeable and pitched the classes just right for me... Because the class was virtual I wasn't embarrassed at being a beginner and not very good."
- Cathy, 69



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Community Delivery

We offer a weekly programme of activities utilising our Green Spaces, GP site Community Centres, Share Shacks and our Community Cafes.



Working with clinical leads, health professions, community groups and other stakeholders we help people manage their pain, develop confidence and new friends through inviting them to sessions that include;

- Pain management
- Seated exercise
- Post Natal Exercise
- Gardening groups
- Coffee mornings
- Hybrid Virtual/Face to Face
- Support walks
- Weight management support
- Long term health condition support
- Family sessions
- Disability & Inclusion sessions
- Women's Wellbeing



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Virtual Wellbeing

Voices from our Virtual Community

“

As a disabled & unemployed person. Having Wellbeing Crafternoon to look forward to each week really helps me plan activities on other days too...I've attended when I've felt like I don't have the energy to spend, but by the end of the hour I was talking and smiling...
Jaime

”

“

I'm 69 and in good health. Since Covid I have stopped going to classes in Sports centres.
It was great to experience new classes I would never have thought of trying.
Because the class was virtual I wasn't embarrassed at being a beginner...
Cathy

”

We have nurtured partnerships with the physio team at The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Birmingham Museums Trust, Witton Eco Hub, The Menopause Charity, #ANDYSMANCLUB, WE:ARE, Birmingham & Solihull Women's Aid, Drum n Bounce and so many more local and national charities, GP surgeries and community connectors, helping us to either deliver new events, support other organisations in the delivery of their own virtual events or connect people with what's on.

VIRTUAL WELLBEING

17th May - 23rd May

For more information about our Virtual Wellbeing offer, please email: virtualwbtheaws.org

MON	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
9:15am Soca Caribbean Dancing	9:15am Zumba	9:15am Active mums	9:15am Yoga Meditation	9:15am Menopause Matters	10am Cardio Combat
10am Chair Based exercise	9:30am Sahel Hub Crochet, Chat and Exercise	10am Sensory Walk	12pm Sahel Hub Crochet, Chat and Exercise	10am Chair Based Exercise	11:30am Dance Fitness
6pm Beginner's Salsa	5pm BollyFit	6pm Yoga	5pm Live Cook-a-long	10am Fit over 40	SUNDAY
		6pm Beginners Afro Beats	6pm Zumba		2:30pm Footsteps Interfaith walk



Community Connect

Community Connect is a mental health and physical activities engagement programme for individuals, young people and families. We aim to increase levels of connection, belonging and movement.

We offer individualised support through a combination of telephone, direct support and groups; working towards understanding what is important to you.

Community Connect is a new project, please do contact us on listenandconnect@theaws.org to share your ideas and get involved.

We are currently working in the following areas:
Ladywood I Druids Heath

Traditional mental health approaches are predominantly individually therapeutic in nature and set within a health model that serves to treat a specific mental health ailment. Whilst the specialist intervention is necessary the link between mental health and physical health is still approached separately. We want to disrupt this silo approach and use trauma sensitive practice to strengthen the connection between sport, physical activity and positive mental health – so people can communities can feel the benefits of being active upon their body and mind.

<https://theaws.co.uk/community-connect/>

LORRAINE'S STORY

Lorraine has suffered from depression and uses a wheelchair. she felt that there was nothing available that could support her, and she was just living from day to day until she was referred into our seated exercise group.

Being a part of the group has already helped her in countless ways, including with her physical fitness and weight loss journey. the group is so much more than an opportunity for her to be active. coming to our sessions is an important way she can meet up with others, in a safe environment.

At the moment, it is the only time she is without her carers and out and about, but it is helping build back her trust and confidence so that in the future she can do more.



Lorraine says because of the nature of the group, the location, and the instructors she feels comfortable being there, and included in the sessions.



ACTIVE TRAVEL PROJECTS – BIG BIRMINGHAM BIKES



Hockley Day Centre for those with learning difficulties

- TAWS provided 9 Adapted bikes for service users

Bikeability

- Delivered to children in school and in the community
- 5 Adapted Bikes in fleet
- Engaged with 12 schools throughout Birmingham in 12 months inc; Queensbury, Baskerville, Dovedale, Kings Edwards, Billesley, Calthorpe Academy, Selly Oak Trust, Hallmoore Academy, Heathfield, Longwill School for the deaf, Hive 6th Form, Mayfield

Cycling for Everyone

- Funded by WMCA, delivered by TAWS
- Provision of 25 Adapted Bikes available for long term loan
- Across 7 West Midlands Local Authorities

Ebikes

- 9 patients referred (7 Women and 2 Men) aged between 30-60 years

All participants drawn from surgeries in highly deprived areas of Birmingham. 8 out of 9 participants live in IMD 1 or 2 postcode areas.

Health Conditions:

The participants had a range of health conditions including:

- Obesity
- Diabetes, High Blood pressure
- High Cholesterol Fibromyalgia
- Anxiety Depression



Need for Bikes on Prescription

Wider determinants of health and deprivation

Impact of Covid-19

Complex, interconnected issues

Loneliness, isolation, mental health

Long-term health conditions

NHS resources

Physical/cardiovascular fitness/health

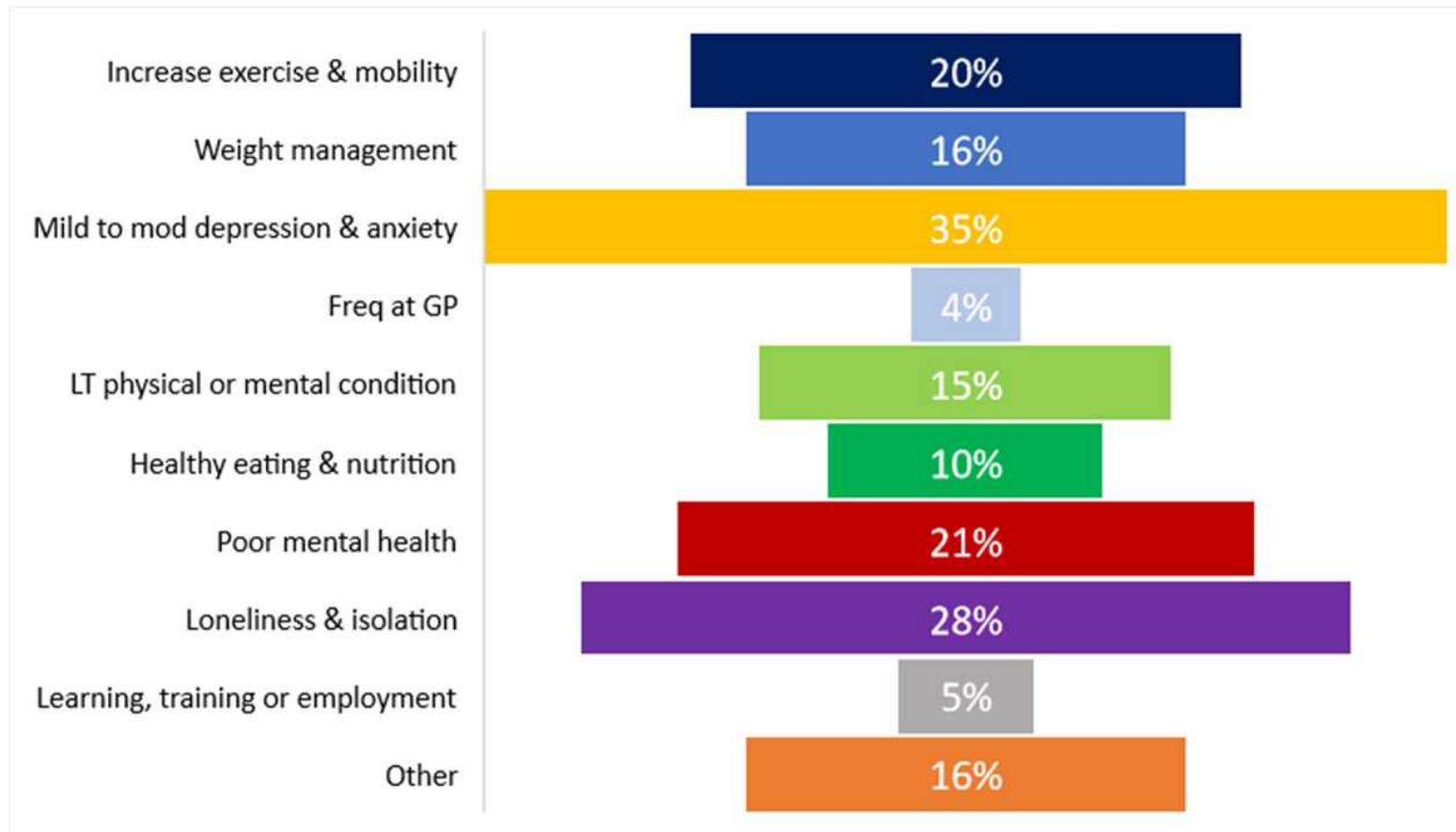
Poor air quality and congestion in city

Exclusion from active travel (e.g. can't afford bike)



Referred participants to Social Prescribing.

Out of a total 3,447 referred patients since April 22, below is a breakdown of reason for referral:



Primary Care Pedals

- Partnership with Omnia Medical Practice
- 1st Primary Care based Cycle Hub
- The offer: Learn to Ride, Confidence Sessions, Led Rides, Cycle Fix it/Maintenance
- 1:1 support, group interventions
- Connecting with local assets, green and blue spaces – parks, cycle routes, canals, other practices
- Community cycle club/social group - a chance to connect and be active





KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Understand the whole person
- Representation (marketing, volunteers, participants)
- Design people 'in' to services not out of them
- Develop a buddy scheme – people with lived experience to support
- Meet people where they're at
- Inclusive communication
- Co-create with communities
- Be open to learning, always