

# BREAKING BOUNDARIES

## Breaking Boundaries City Summaries

February 2023

**wavehill**  
Social and economic research



**Sporting Equals**  
Promoting ethnic diversity in sport & physical activity



**Breaking Boundaries aimed to socially connect young people, their families, and communities together through regular cricket and multi-sport themed engagement, fostering mutual respect and friendships by playing, spectating, and volunteering.**

Funded by Spirit of 2012, it was delivered from 2018 to 2022 and in 5 cities: Bradford, Birmingham, London (Barking and Dagenham), Manchester and Slough. Led by the Youth Sport Trust in partnership with Sporting Equals and a consortium of organisations including Cricket Trusts and Foundations, Local Authorities, and Community Groups.

The purpose of the project was to provide social mixing between target communities using cricket and multi-sport as a tool to inspire, engage and reduce tensions/parallel lives. Working with community groups and city cohesion and integration teams, the project had delivered regular activity sessions, social action support and provided platforms for young people to have their voice heard, bringing different communities together.

## **Barking and Dagenham (Targeted Wards: Abbey and Mayesbrook)**

### Vision

Delivery for young people aimed to join community groups across cultures and languages to improve community cohesion, and improve the education and employability of young people, enhance family health and wellbeing, and celebrate different cultures through cricket.

### Outputs

Barking and Dagenham						
	Number of Champions	Total volunteer hours	Number of regular participants	Number of regular sessions	Number of one-off events	Number one- off attendees
Year 1	24	43	22	95	12	485
Year 2	28	79	48	136	27	525
<b>End of the programme (2022)</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>548</b>

## How Barking and Dagenham extended Partnership Working

Barking and Dagenham ran an online T20 talk for the Jo Cox Foundation Great Together Weekend in June 2020. Groups they were already worked with were asked to come on a call and have a chat about their current situations and how everyone was coping through the lockdown. The call had representation from different organisations including, TKO Boxing, the Al Madina Mosque, Barking Salvation Army, Barking and Dagenham Youth Dance (BDYD) with members from Barking and Dagenham Council and Sporting Equals.

Each organisation was able to give an update on the work that they had been completing during lockdown and how they were supporting the local communities in different roles. This included them supporting their existing members to continue to be active, providing general support to their existing members, or working with other community organisations across the Borough to provide food parcels and meals to the vulnerable residents. The event demonstrated how partners had begun to work together because of the Breaking Boundaries programme.

## Lessons learnt:

- ⇒ Working with the groups on their strengths and weaknesses;
- ⇒ Helping groups to continue their legacy and grow as a project;
- ⇒ Building trust with local groups is a great way to end up collaborating work with them;
- ⇒ Encouraging groups to take part in activities;
- ⇒ Meeting people face-to-face is more effective than phone calls/emails;
- ⇒ Being proactive and keeping chasing (with emails for instance).

## Delivery examples:

- They ran a multisport session with Youth Spot Bar and Barking & Dagenham Tennis Club. Fifteen young people attended with four completing the participant forms (as the others were under age). The breakup of the groups involved were White British and Black Caribbean and aged 10-18. The rationale is to make them grow together and understand different cultures.
- They ran a 10-week-long archery session for young people and their families from Al Madina and the Hive in Barking. There was a mix of Black African and Pakistani backgrounds together. The sessions lasted an hour and a half each and it was a chance for both groups to not only take part in sports but have key discussions with one another about their backgrounds and give them a chance to talk about some of the similarities between their beliefs. Al Madina also led Community Champion training in archery and social integration workshops.
- The programme also established links with new groups including Sikhs in the City, a Sikh running club, and Shpresa, an Albanian Integration charity.



“We've learnt that getting our cohesion team on board early was key, making better connections with community settings and groups.”

**Host Organisation, Barking**



“This was a wonderful opportunity for people from different faiths and backgrounds to get together in a spirit of friendly sporting rivalry and to forge new friendships on and off the pitch. All those who took part soon realised how much they had in common and how united they were in their enjoyment of the game of cricket.”

**Local Councillor, Barking and Dagenham**

## **Birmingham (Targeted Wards: Edgbaston, Sparkbrook and Balsall Heath East, and Balsall Heath West)**

### Vision

The project aimed to develop a community hub around Edgbaston cricket ground and other local settings to engage local community groups in cross-community engagement through cricket activities and other community events/festivals. Delivery will focus on personal development for young people, tackling exclusion from activities poverty/deprivation, and through this improve community cohesion.

### Outputs

Birmingham						
	Number of Champions	Total volunteer hours	Number of regular participants	Number of regular sessions	Number of one-off events	Number one- off attendees
Year 1	26	59	61	12	3	106
Year 2	43	175	89	27	7	151
<b>End of the programme (2022)</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>274</b>

## How Birmingham empowered young females

Birmingham wanted to identify ways in which they could bring more female participants into programme delivery. It was a cohesion issue because consultation work identified that women felt isolated and removed from their community with limited engagement in some of the community developments and activities in the area. They sought first to bring girls together to help initiate consultation with them to identify ways young females could be better involved in Breaking Boundaries. This brought together young females from different schools and different ethnicity groups to feel more socially connected with each other. The delivery took place initially through a Female Empowerment Event leading into regular multi-sport activity groups provided through Breaking Boundaries delivery. The girls present were able to speak with others who they would not ordinarily associate and start connections that could be developed through future planned work together.

### Lessons learnt:

- ⇒⇒⇒ Community organisations are still rebuilding from post-COVID and welcome support in this challenging work;
- ⇒⇒⇒ Face-to-face community champions training helps young people build affiliation with the project;
- ⇒⇒⇒ Allow time for community groups to develop trust with new people approaching them about projects;
- ⇒⇒⇒ Community groups need to be told how projects and programmes can benefit their service users;
- ⇒⇒⇒ What works for one community group may not always work for another group, so solutions need to be tailored.



“ There's a lot of Asian communities here and a lot of Somalian communities so it is breaking down boundaries and it's for us women to go out there who are restricted due to child commitments, due to social and economy kind of pressures but this was one hour free of charge... where I can bring the kids and play cricket with them in a safe environment without being judged and also having the opportunity to meet other people as well, like-minded people.”

**Female, Cricket Participant, Birmingham**

## Delivery examples:

- Pakistani and Bangladeshi Women attended 12 weeks of Bhangra Dancing, which allowed them to socialise and make new friends. The environment was friendly and supportive. The women proudly shared and learned with no judgment or correction despite different beliefs.
- From July to October 2022, they ran 12 ladies-only sessions of Bhangra Blaze at Sparkbrook Community Centre. They were led by Jasu Bokhiria, who is a qualified Bhangra Blaze coach. The aim of the sessions was to bring together women from different backgrounds, where there is historically tension and no opportunity to mix (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi). Each session included a dance class followed by the opportunity to socialise and was regularly attended by 10 women. The sessions have improved attitudes to diversity and generated a safe space for women, emphasising a sense of belonging and improving attitudes to diversity.
- Other examples included The Muath Trust (Pakistani) and Sport for Life (Black African) delivering a young people Wickets activity; Saheli Women (South Asian) Anawim (white) running Wellbeing walks and accompanying talks for women; and Community Champion workshops led by The Feast and Bahu Trust to increase skills and knowledge using sport as a tool to bring people together whilst discussing knife crime and local tensions.



“ I think some of the things that we continue because of Breaking Boundaries are definitely putting young people at the forefront of a lot of decision making and a lot of opportunities. Being able to meet young people, leaders within their communities is really important and a really big driver for the city moving forwards.”

**Stakeholder, Birmingham**

## Bradford (Targeted Wards: Bowling and Barkerend, Great Horton, and Little Horton)

### Vision

The project aimed to develop the sense of local identity for targeted community groups. It sought to address lack of integration between these groups by tackling language barriers through a focus on cricket. The project aimed to reduce prejudice, negative attitudes of others, and promote friendships between groups. It aimed to create a safe environment for those in the community to feel confident to engage/interact with people of all backgrounds.

### Outputs

Bradford						
	Number of Champions	Total volunteer hours	Number of regular participants	Number of regular sessions	Number of one-off events	Number one- off attendees
Year 1	29	385	53	146	10	910
Year 2	55	515	70	158	41	977
<b>End of the programme (2022)</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>931</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>1,070</b>

## How Bradford made use of activation grants

Two prominent community groups within the same ward (Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups) who do not mix, and live parallel lives joined together to play in a friendly interfaith cricket festival held at a neutral ground, Park Avenue during a cricket festival week. The social event involved children and young people from both community groups coming together and participating in cricket activities during the morning followed by the interfaith cricket match. The social event helped change some negative perceptions and attitudes to local issues that were contributing to some tensions between the two groups.

It allowed the community voice to come together and organise an intercultural event which overcame the local tensions between the Bangladeshi and Pakistani community groups. Working with a local partner, the two teams now access the cricket ground for other events.

## Lessons learnt:

- ⇒ To foster new partnerships initial meetings should always focus upon identifying where objectives overlap and identify initial activities where this crossover can be used positively particularly in relation to where project activities are already being run. New project activity isn't always needed;
- ⇒ It is critical to be clear about project expectations for groups and new partners, especially about where key responsibilities will lie for running activities, marketing and image use, specific requirements of funding and what role and responsibilities different partners will take
- ⇒ Building trust within communities by providing support and partnership working with Yorkshire Cricket Foundation after the racism enquiry at Yorkshire County Cricket Club.

## Delivery examples:

- The Neighbourhood Resource Centre and British Asian Rugby Association merged together to deliver eight cricket sessions for individuals from Bangladesh and Pakistan backgrounds to improve wellbeing by making them understand each other's cultures and values. On top of cricket sessions, coffee sessions and food competitions were held with the aim to socialise and make new friends. Improved attitudes to diversity were developed towards the end of Breaking Boundaries programme where both demographics (12 individuals) between ages of 16-25 years old combined into teams for a cricket match at Park Avenue.
- Other examples included PHAB (White British/Disabled) and East Bierley Cricket Club (White/Pakistani) young people taking part in inclusive cricket sessions; Motive 8 college (Indian) and Club Ekta (Pakistani) delivering multi-sports sessions for girls; and Park Avenue Cricket Club (Bangladeshi) and Club Ekta (Pakistani) running cricket and multi-sport sessions for young people.

no

“It was seeing a group of children of diverse backgrounds coming out and doing something collectively. It shows if we put our energy and we dedicated ourselves to it, we can make a difference and that was the biggest impact for me, realising we can do something.”

**Parent of Participant, Bradford**

no

“I know that it's opened my eyes a bit because I know more about what's going on in the community and stuff. Like before it used to be that all the youth clubs for example used to be based on your culture, so now we've had activities with Breaking Boundaries too, we've learned how to mix in with other religions and stuff, it's made me a lot happier to know that I have friends that aren't just my religion and stuff.”

**Community Champion, Bradford**



## Manchester (Targeted Wards: Moss Side and Whalley Range)

### Vision

Young people/local partners will use cricket to engage/unite people from different backgrounds/faiths/communities and support them to come together to increase tolerance, shared values, and commonality. Cricket was used to promote social cohesion by bringing together people who had not previously engaged collectively. The project aimed to be a vehicle for a wider partnership to influence change/create opportunities for different backgrounds/cultures to mix, share time together and increase social cohesion.

### Outputs

Manchester						
	Number of Champions	Total volunteer hours	Number of regular participants	Number of regular sessions	Number of one-off events	Number one-off attendees
Year 1	23	124	41	18	5	153
Year 2	45	212	51	96	16	340
<b>End of the programme (2022)</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>836</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>675</b>

## How Manchester built partnership connections

After a successful City leadership event in Manchester, the Breaking Boundaries team engaged all community organisation leads to come together monthly for social cricket themed get togethers. Each get together involved a cricket themed activity, lunch, and an opportunity for organisations to share their programme views, 'hosted' at a different venue, and background on the work their organisation does.

The first meeting was based at St Edmunds Church with a Christmas theme which involved a talk on the Spirit of Christmas, Christianity, and a tour of the church. The second meeting was held at the British Muslim Heritage Centre which included a tour of the venue and a talk on the contributions of British Muslims to UK society. The get togethers provide an opportunity for organisations to connect better with each other and increase attitudes to diversity by learning about other cultures and religions. These have continued via virtual means during lockdown with good attendance at the two meetings to have taken place.

## Lessons learnt:

- ⇒⇒⇒ Face-to-face meetings, if feasible, tend to be best;
- ⇒⇒⇒ Capacity/priorities of groups need to be carefully considered to deliver the programme effectively;
- ⇒⇒⇒ Structure of groups is crucial for them to receive the appropriate funding;
- ⇒⇒⇒ Listen to the needs of the groups – use this to shape your delivery plan;
- ⇒⇒⇒ Building relationships – try and keep a dialogue open and check in with partners regularly to build rapport;
- ⇒⇒⇒ Venue choice is key – any venue must be suitable for activity being delivered, as well as being able to cater for numbers and be relevant to the group you are targeting.



"I've improved my team working skills, communication, building confidence and leadership skills which I'm using everyday talking to my friends and just by being better in social situations now."

**Community Champion, Manchester**

## Delivery examples:

- Sri Guru Gobind Singh Gurdwara Educational & Cultural Centre (Sikh) and Gita Bhavan Hindu Temple (Hindu) came together to hold weekly football sessions. The groups that partook in the programme have learnt about each other's cultures, beliefs and differences;
- Coach Development Pathway was launched to upskill young people in Moss Side and Whalley Range and provide some sustainable outcomes to the Breaking Boundaries programme. Sixteen young people have attended the monthly modules focusing on issues such as mental health, coaching in communities, and engaging to reach groups with 14 achieving the qualification;
- Over 90 people attended the Celebration Event held at Denmark Road Sports Centre with a wide range of sporting activities as well as a bungee run, inflatables, and free food and refreshments for everyone that attended. A cricket session was delivered by professional players from Manchester Originals, and there were local organisations such as Be Well offering mental health and wellbeing support.
- Other examples include Families Against Violence (Afro Caribbean) and Whalley Range High School (Pakistani) running new girls football sessions; Friends Sporting Group (Christian) & Whalley Range High School (Muslim) running girls Cricket and Bollywood Dance; and Community Champion Cohesion Education Workshops to discuss local tensions, needs and gain coaching and first aid qualifications.



"I think there's definitely been an increase in trust between the community groups that we're working with at the moment and ourselves. A lot of these groups are sort of hard-to-reach groups. We've built a real strong rapport with some of these groups, to the point where we know we've got their trust now, and some of these groups are continuing to work with us on a local level."

**Community Coordinator, Manchester**

## Slough (Targeted Wards: Chalvey, Baylis and Stoke, Britwell, and Wexham)

### Vision

The project aimed to deliver a range of fully inclusive opportunities for different communities/ages/genders/disabilities to enjoy cricket and develop social cohesion through coming together through a range of cricket activities and community events/festivals for those who are new to cricket.

### Outputs

Slough						
	Number of Champions	Total volunteer hours	Number of regular participants	Number of regular sessions	Number of one-off events	Number one-off attendees
Year 1	41	258	45	126	10	1,307
Year 2	66	518	157	169	26	1,520
<b>End of the programme (2022)</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>1784</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>1,858</b>

## How Slough joined previously divergent community groups

The Roma have experienced prejudices from across Slough from native White British and new-native South Asian population. To address this, sessions were scheduled by Chalvey 360 a group representing Roma community and Paving the Way representing the Pakistani community, to bring the two groups together. So far there have been two sessions attended by 39 young people from both groups, they have been partaking in physical activity, planning sessions and eating together.

Fernando and Isa, from C360 (Roma) and Paving the Way (Pakistani) respectively have met each other on a few occasions now but never really communicated without prompts or ice-breaker activities. However, at one recent event they were confident enough to spend lunch together without any prompts, introductions or icebreakers. Staff observed it was just two young males talking about sport, cracking jokes and getting to know each other.

### Lessons learnt:

- ⇒ Trust young people to lead mapping as they have fantastic anecdotal information of the area;
- ⇒ Bigger projects are not necessarily better projects. It is best if they are small and precise with outcomes;
- ⇒ Supporting active social mixing in an informal group setting enables a sense of belonging and confidence to be developed relatively easily. New physical activity opportunities can help foster this as all participants are at a similar level and can learn the new activity together;
- ⇒ Seeking out existing activities to enhance to have a new focus on cohesion issues is usually a better way forward than creating new activities avoiding the need to find new settings and the set up and marketing needed for newly created activities.



“ I have really enjoyed seeing people come out of their shell, I'm used to doing other voluntary things...I enjoy being part of something and helping to make a difference, helping to organise things, I just enjoy it”

**Project Lead, Slough**

## Delivery examples:

- Partnership working in collaboration with Slough Youth Offending team and a local Grassroots inclusive sport club to bring forward an offer to improve wellbeing through inclusive table tennis known as Polybat for people with disabilities. The session features an hour of supported Polybat at a local space that provides warm food, cakes, coffees and teas for participants. Increased community voice was crucial in the development of this offer. Social mixing also occurs;
- In partnership with She is Someone and Slough Disability Sports Group, Slough has run a six-week project around improved social connectedness. The offer consisted of a dance/movement session to engage disabled South-Asian females who are supported by their parents with the aim of improving attitudes to diversity and increased sense of belonging.
- Other examples included the Ujala Foundation and Wrexham Bowls Club, (Pakistani and White British) offering Women's Bowling, Coffee and a Mosque Visit; Raabia Eden Tournament (Pakistani, White British Indian and Black) a post-curricular tournament for Schools in wards to break down tensions between Schools + Postcodes; and She is Someone, (White British) and Renaissance Readers Group (Pakistani/Indian) offering Women and Girls inclusive dance and socialising opportunities.



“ JJ, a female Hijab wearing young Black person and Community Champion delivered a speech at LETGIRLSPLAY. She said she wrote a letter to her Dad and explained everything whilst offering a compromise to complete a Degree, this worked and she is now a sponsored referee with big goals. As she was speaking to a group of girls from different ethnic backgrounds you could see heads turning and looking at each other to show a real interest in how JJ story could be similar to theirs and how to overcome that situation.”

**Community Coordinator, Slough**

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