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Case Study: Breaking Boundaries in Manchester

Peer role models

Families Against Violence and Manchester Academy
June - August 2022

Detail of the Activity.

This case study looks at how through the careful selection of peers a community-based coaching workforce can be created that better matches the groups a project is seeking to work with, helping the project to engage with previously underserved groups in the Afro-Caribbean and South Asian communities.

The activities focussed on:

Building connections with the Manchester Academy School to develop a programme of Girls football sessions that brought the two communities together whilst fostering new opportunities to be physically active. Key in this has been the empowerment of the female coaches to enable them to create the safe spaces and environment in which the delivery has taken place including the facilitated social mixing.

How Breaking Boundaries Helped.

Breaking Boundaries provide a grant of £3,500 funding an initial programme of 12 sessions for this activity but also facilitated the selection and training of the female coaches that were critical to the delivery of this project.

“Since we've linked up and started collaborating and working together, I think we've opened up different markets or different demographics that we probably might not have worked with in the past.” (Community partner, Manchester)

What's Happened – Impacts on Cohesion.

The ongoing project work demonstrates outcomes against social cohesion in these areas:

Improved attitudes to diversity.

Project staff highlighted how through the safe environment created by the female coaches groups they have been encouraged to work together and discuss local issues in the sessions. This has created the opportunity for attitudes to each other to be improved because each has a shared wish to participate and learn more about the football activities the programme is providing. From this has further improved attitudes to social mixing has been encouraged because the participants see more links between themselves and thus have more things in common to have shared discussions about.

Increased empowerment.

Through the training provided to the female coaches they have been facilitated to lead on developing the activities and spaces in which they take place. This has increased their confidence to drive the activity forward as they become the 'face' of the programme. In this role they act as a potentially more persuasive face for the activity being delivered because it is represented by coaches who look very much like those they are trying to recruit. Thus, having young female coaches also meant that the participants felt more comfortable attending.

“Because I get to meet different people from different backgrounds and cultures and although I know quite a lot about that anyway it's just nice to learn something new every single day and learn different ways of communicating, handling situations, just generally widening my knowledge on how to handle certain situations and having the ability to work with a lot of other different people of different cultures, attitudes and behaviours.” (Participant, Manchester)

The Future.

The coaches created by this activity offer a future workforce that could support other activities. Families Against Violence have already been successful in securing further funding for project activities and plan to continue to use their learning in delivery going future. The project in Manchester has also created a strong legacy of new activity for girls in the area which has gone some way to addressing the previous lack of opportunity that had originally driven the set up of this project.

Top Tips.

- ✓ Hosting initial taster sessions at the school meant that initial introductions were made in a space that was familiar and seen as safe by participants helping them to engage in the first instance.
- ✓ Using the peers of the groups you are seeking to reach as some of the lead coaches helps to build connection through the group. However, this must be supported by approaches that help to empower these young people to take a lead on the design of activities and for them to be able to shape social mixing and other cohesion discussions within the activity.



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Case Study: Breaking Boundaries in Manchester

Tackling Sporting and Community Tensions

Claremont Youth and Friends Sporting Group
June - August 2022

Detail of the Activity.

This case study looks at how targeted work through two specific community organisations working with Somali and Indian young people can work in bringing together two previously separate communities whilst also working on historic tensions between them.

How Breaking Boundaries Helped.

Breaking Boundaries had been involved with both organisations over the course of the programme delivery but until this multi-sports project they had not specifically worked together because of historic tensions between them over shared facilities that each organisation used. This projects' direct delivery was funded by a £3,500 grant to provide 12 sessions of multi-sport activity, predominantly football and cricket with an explicit focus on active social mixing between the participants. These sessions were delivered in Alexandra Park and at the Manchester Academy that the Breaking Boundaries team brokered access to. Both organisations have also benefitted from Community Champion training for some of their young people which has helped to improve the leadership skills of these young people.

The work was also focussed upon alleviating tensions between two groups that had arisen between young people and coaches at each organisation through them having to share facilities over several years. In the area where the project took place there have been many examples of young people not wanting to cross boundaries into other communities and in some cases a real postcode war between different groups in addition to the tensions between these two community groups in the area.

The activities focussed on:

Delivering the key focus of Breaking Boundaries of physical activity co-produced with the young people with specific work undertaken to facilitate social mixing between the groups and helping them have conversations with each other to better understand each other's lives and the challenges faced.

Delivery sought to provide the opportunity to understand more about each other and identify the similarities in their lives to build connection and improve relationships between the groups.

What's Happened – Impacts on Cohesion.

The ongoing project work demonstrates outcomes against social cohesion in these areas:

Social Connectedness.

Participants and coaches now have better connection with each other because they have been brought together through the activity. Through that, they have developed a much better understanding of the challenges each faces enabling them to see the similarities, rather than difference in that. This has alleviated some of the tensions between them and made the sharing of the facilities a more pleasant experience going forwards.

I think giving a voice to for them to come together. We hear a lot of laughter in our projects. We see that community cohesion coming together. We see friendships being made. which is very important as well. And also that trusting relationship that that we're building." (Project lead, Manchester)

Improved partnership working.

Although both organisations had been part of the Breaking Boundaries programme for several years, they had not previously shared delivery; this project has encouraged them to do that and work together to develop new projects for the future.

Increased empowerment.

Delivery through Breaking Boundaries has reinforced each organisations focus on co-production work and for project work to be shaped by the young people they are working with. A feature that is common across both organisations that each now appreciates about the other organisation.

"It's about speaking to the young people finding out the types of activities that they want to do, finding a neutral venue where they all feel comfortable attending and attending at the right time that suitable for them. It's also about finding an activity that they really want to take part in. I think there's definitely been an increase in trust between the community groups that we're working with at the moment" (Project lead, Manchester)

Both organisations want to continue working together but are also interested in actively pursuing further partnerships with other like-minded organisations. Claremont Youth has been successful in securing funding for another project work with Families Against Violence (also a partner in Breaking Boundaries) to run further activities illustrating the joint working opportunities that can arise from this work. Friends Sporting Group now has a better relationship with the regional ECB which has created the opportunity to develop a talent pathway into the Manchester Originals (the local Hundred cricket franchise).

Top Tips.

- ✓ Participants usually have a preferred sport/physical activity but by encouraging them to try out something with another young person who supports them in that activity is a great way to 'break the ice' and enable them to get to know each other as individuals.
- ✓ Emphasising where shared challenges and concerns can be identified helps build connection between groups allowing them to understand groups, who may previously have been rivals, and build connection through a shared focus on doing the best for the young people they work with.



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Case Study: Breaking Boundaries in Manchester

Building Cohesion Understanding and Skills of Young People

Youth on Solid Ground and MCRactive
September 2022

Detail of the Activity.

This case study provides insight into how Breaking Boundaries has supported the training of young people to be community coaches supporting some to move into new employment opportunities. It highlights how through community consultation, programme activities can be shaped to address local needs to facilitate engagement in delivery by a programme.

How Breaking Boundaries Helped.

Breaking Boundaries created the space for the local Coordinator to discuss ways of addressing cohesion through social inclusion with partner Youth on Solid Ground and consultation with young people in the target areas:

“[It was]...asking people about what they felt about the community, what they want and what they need, what is missing, etc. It was to help to get the information to inform next plans and projects.” (Project Partner, Manchester)

Through this it became clear that cohesion issues were arising from the barriers that local young people faced in being able to access employment opportunities. In partnership, the Breaking Boundaries team and the partner organisations identified the opportunity to consult further with local young people. This identified an opportunity to develop a Coach Development Pathway.

The activities focussed on:

Discussions begun through the programme with key partner Youth on Solid Ground who had previously run activities for Breaking Boundaries who identified that significant cohesion issues were the lack of social inclusion that several young people felt living in their local areas in Moss Side and Whalley Range.

The resulting Coach Development Pathway uses the power of sport and physical activity to improve the lives of children and young people and the communities they live in, and to offer a greater sustainability for the Breaking Boundaries programme.

Working in partnership with StreetGames, it was launched in January 2022 at Denmark Road Sports Centre, and brought together young people from Moss Side and Whalley Range. Many of these young people were members of clubs and organisations already involved with Breaking Boundaries (Youth on Solid Ground, Families against Violence and Claremont Youth).

16 young people aged 16-24 initially enrolled on the programme. They then took part in the first 6 monthly module culminating in the completion of a L2 Certificate in Coaching Multi Sports.

Delivery of these courses aimed to provide a pathway for young people so that by the end of the programme they can increase community participation by delivering sport and physical activity in their neighbourhoods. There are also further opportunities to gain work experience with MCRactive (host of Breaking Boundaries) in supporting their holiday programmes, which may also lead into paid work.

What's Happened – Impacts on Cohesion.

14 young people completed the training and attained a Level 2 Certificate in Coaching Multi-Sports with two individuals went on to apply for a coaching opportunity with GLL who run the leisure facilities for MCRactive, although these individuals were unsuccessful in securing employment on this occasion. Interviewees identified that the shift in focus brought some good cohesion benefits:

“Because in the end we listened to the communities and did what they wanted to do rather than it being dictated to them by us as delivery partners.” (Delivery Partner, Manchester)

These areas have resulted in the following key outcomes:

Increased community participation and sense of belonging

The interviews highlight how programme staff have seen greater engagement by the young people involved in the Coaching Pathway in other activities being run by the programme and supporting some of the other activities run by MCRactive. Participants highlighted their training had helped them to:

“Invest more back into the community needs and reach out to young people my age” (Participant, Manchester)

“To inspire others to do what you love doing for a living” (Participant, Manchester)

Improved partnership working

The interviews highlight how groups were talking more extensively with each other around the Coaching Pathway and were building stronger connections and contacts as a result.

However, it is clear this is strongest where the programme has put trust in the community groups to lead the development of the ideas and been encouraged to move beyond approaches that are only focussed upon delivering sport activities.

“The biggest successes we have had is where groups have been able to have ownership over the project which could have happened earlier” (Project Lead, Manchester)

Improved knowledge and skills to support community cohesion

delivery of cohesion workshops as part of the training activities has meant these young people better understand how to consult and address some of these issues. They also have the coaching skills to deliver their coaching to support the development of cohesion.

The Coordinator and Line Manager identified that they improved their understanding of the challenges facing some young people and the contribution social exclusion can make to cohesion challenges.

The Future.

A further cohort was due to begin the Coaching Pathway in October 2022 whilst the programme lead identified that many of the partnerships developed through the programme will continue beyond Breaking Boundaries. This is because groups have continued working collaboratively to create a sustainable way for them to carry on delivering sport in their communities.

Top Tips.

- ✓ Trust is key, stepping back and allowing community groups to shape delivery and approaches can support the biggest successes. By avoiding too much prescription groups can use their expertise in their communities to identify the best options for project delivery and build strong links with the communities to share their lived experience of local cohesion issues. This also enhances engagement and recruitment strategies.
- ✓ Avoid ‘pigeon holing’ groups and issues into delivery framework imposed from outside. Co-production processes help build trust and empower communities to drive forward delivery. This helps to build delivery that is directly relevant to local needs and empowers participants to see outcomes from.
- ✓ Cohesion issues may not just stem from conflict between, or the separation of communities such challenges maybe driven by the lack of social inclusion of individuals.



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Case Study: Breaking Boundaries in Manchester

Creating new sporting opportunities to tackle cohesion issues

Friends Sporting Club and Whalley Range School for Girls
June - August 2022

Detail of the Activity.

This case study looks at how by brokering new relationships between community organisations and schools through the cohesion lens can open new participation opportunities for groups traditionally underserved by other provision. It also highlights how such approaches can help tackle a lack of social mixing between Christian and Muslim communities and bringing together those of Indian and Pakistani background.

How Breaking Boundaries Helped.

After Breaking Boundaries staff had had conversations with Whalley Range High School for Girls, the head of PE at the school had highlighted they were concerned about the lack of opportunities for local girls to take part in extra-curricular sports, as well as a lack of mixing with girls of other backgrounds. Through the programme, they were introduced to the Friends Sporting Club whose primary focus is as a cricket club but they also run other activities (Dance and some multi-sport

activities throughout the year. Consequently, Friends Sporting Group (Indian) ran a cricket taster session with girls at Whalley Grange High School (predominantly Pakistani). Further sessions were scheduled through Breaking Boundaries taking place in Alexandra Park which also attracted other participants from other neighbouring schools. These sessions were supported by a Breaking Boundaries grant of £3,500 funding an initial programme of 12 sessions.

The activities focussed on:

Improving attitudes to diversity amongst participants through facilitated social mixing but also providing the first opportunities some of the girls have had to take part in cricket. There was also an emphasis upon encouraging regular participation with the aim that this will then generate interest in the girls in playing more regularly through accessing the regular cricket offer provided by Friends Sporting Club.

What's Happened – Impacts on Cohesion.

The ongoing project work demonstrates outcomes against social cohesion in these areas:

Improved attitudes to diversity.

Coaches noted that over the weeks the participants have shown stronger appreciation of the diversity of the groups they are working in. Initially, this was focussed on bringing Indian and Pakistani girls together but since the taster sessions other groups have been involved as participants have come from other neighbouring schools. The regular engagement has facilitated this change in attitudes as the girls get to know each other better through the activities the project is providing.

“we think it's good that we met here because I don't think we would have met anywhere else”
(Indian Participant, Manchester)

Increased community participation.

Since the taster sessions the girls have continued to take part in the activities run by Friends Sporting Club in the community. Many of these players have now transitioned into the women and girl's section at Friends Sporting Club bringing greater diversity to what was a predominantly Indian heritage club. Thus, the girls are now engaged in community cricket when that opportunity was not as easily open to them prior to the arrangements that have come from the Breaking Boundaries project. This was because many of the girls from the high school had never taken part in cricket before and had never been a part of a club. These sessions have allowed them to take part in sport in a safe place in their community, and in many cases it has completely changed their perceptions of sport and the other participants.

“It is a great way to introduce people to each other and when there are any issues supporting and helping them to deal with them” (Pakistani Participant, Manchester)

The Future.

The success of the partnership between the school and Friends Sporting Club has encouraged further discussions around other activities that they could work on together. This has identified an opportunity for Yoga and Bollywood sessions to be supported at the school by the Friends Sporting Club. With a focus on activities for Women and Girls in the last few months of programme delivery there has been a real interest in young females participating, coaching and officiating in sport, many of whom are coming from communities where traditionally there have been barriers preventing them taking part in sport and physical activity. This shows that there remain further opportunities to provide specific physical activity offers for girls in the area.

Top Tips.

- ✓ Engaging with schools requires ongoing dialogue and persistence to secure participation. Schools though are key routes into communities if those planning activities pay close attention to the profile of the student population.
- ✓ Venue and hosting arrangements are key and any setting must be suitable for the activity being delivered, able to cater for the numbers, but crucially able to provide a safe and supportive environment to encourage regular participation especially for those unused to taking part in such an activity.



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Case Study: Breaking Boundaries in Birmingham and Manchester

Facilitating Partnership Development

Breaking Boundaries City Teams
July 2022

Detail of the Activity.

This case study provides useful insight into how by actively facilitating community organisations to come together can create opportunities for new delivery partnerships to be formed . It illustrates how through facilitation work, Breaking Boundaries City teams can enable other organisations to work together, often with new organisations, to identify joint working opportunities and shared agendas on common cohesion issues to support deliver through the programme..

How Breaking Boundaries Helped.

The link up of organisations has been facilitated through Breaking Boundaries staging the forums with the best examples involving the active facilitation and outreach work by Breaking Boundaries Community Coordinators to inform potential participants about the events but also to address any concerns/challenges organisations might have in attending or understanding of/working on local cohesion issues.

These organisations often do not have the time to arrange such events themselves and the Co-ordinators through proactive outreach can, with support of local cohesion teams and other local contacts find organisations to attend that might not have otherwise been involved. Once signed up, regular one to one contact with the organisations helps to secure their attendance:

"I gained ideas from them...[other attending organisations]. It also gives you a little push and motivation as to why you do what you do and relights your fire as you realise there are others interested in what you do and what to draw on your expertise. Plus it helped with my own CPD." (Delivery Partner, Birmingham)

Notes from each city show that those leaders of organisations attending the forums seemed keen to talk to each other, recognised their work had a lot in common, and were eager to all share contact details at the end.

The activities focussed on:

City leadership forums were undertaken in all of Breaking Boundaries cities to support the restart of the programme. Events held in Birmingham and Manchester were particularly well attended and were highlighted in partner interviews as the catalyst for activity by the programme being driven forward. They also highlighted examples of where new partnerships were built because of the events that had led to specific activities being added to implementation plans.

What's Happened – Impacts on Cohesion.

The ongoing project work demonstrates outcomes against social cohesion in these areas:

Improved partnership working

The activities that resulted from the forums would not have happened without the organisations being brought together without Breaking Boundaries action:

"It comes from experimenting; every city is different...it helped us focus on hitting requirements to ensure it has cohesion impact because we started talking about the local issues that were being faced." (Project Lead, Birmingham)

It was also notable the initial establishment of contact to start the partnership building process was particularly facilitated by the face-to-face contact that was possible in the forums and that it needs to be actively facilitated and encouraged by Breaking Boundaries – some communities remain nervous around in-person meetings. This backs up findings from a case study on the Youth Sport Bar in Barking and Dagenham with a Manchester lead noting:

"Meeting people face to face helps build the trust and focus on ways to work together to deliver, especially when we haven't worked together before. That being facilitated by BB (Breaking Boundaries) helps that happen. We're not always good at doing that ourselves." (Project Lead, Manchester)

Attendees at both sessions also highlighted how it helped them avoid duplicating existing provision so additional cohesion focussed activities were added rather than a whole new activity being created

that offered a similar opportunity to something another partner was already offering. The sessions built connectedness between attending organisations.

Improved knowledge and skills to support community cohesion

This was noted occurring for both the delivery partner leads and the Coordinators. This was particularly identified as occurring around the opportunities the partnership working provided to share skill and expertise and seemed to work best where partners had a specific expertise for instance sports delivery v. community engagement or involvement specialisms:

“[At the forum]...I got to share what I did but listen to other people. When you get to share. The conversations that were going on before we even started was really valuable. It’s always difficult to bring people together because people have different timetables” (Project Lead, Birmingham)

Coordinators identified that they improved their understanding of the challenges in dealing with the community groups that their delivery partners had built up over time.

In Birmingham, delivery by a local partners supported a targeted training session at the Forum around cohesion and guidelines for dialogue to help facilitate conversations throughout project delivery. By using a cohesion expert the session got leaders thinking about how to facilitate conversations between young people from different backgrounds. It was also a chance to reflect on conversations that they had been involved in and how these could be improved in future to lead to positive outcomes in the future.

The Future.

Both Birmingham and Manchester have highlighted how the forums have helped cement their partnership development work that has then helped the development of activities they have highlighted on their implementation plans.

Top Tips.

- ✓ Engage local partners based on their expertise and how they can develop other local partners, developing a mixed partner profile with some expert in physical activity and some in cohesion related work is especially important in cohesion work. This allows activity delivery to be enhanced such that sport delivery can include more cohesion impacts, whilst existing cohesion work can incorporate more physical activity. Partnerships made in this way can then refine existing delivery rather than duplicating or creating new activities with the resource requirements that might be needed.
- ✓ Proactive and ongoing engagement on a one-to-one basis helps ensure attendance at forums and other partnership events. This helps to build trust in the value of Breaking Boundaries whilst also creating a forum where initial concerns about linking up with new organisations can be addressed. City teams can also collect insight into how partnership events can be best structured to facilitate the best quality partnership development work through them.