

# Physical Activity in Libraries Project Profile



## Overview

The aim of Active Norfolk's partnership with libraries is to build physical activity into the library service model. Due to being community hubs, libraries are a great resource to interact with the public and encourage people to improve their physical and mental health. Embedding physical activity within library services' approach enables a wider access to the public and can influence people's quality of life and reduce the cost of social care in later life. The project serves as a partnership between Public Health and the Library Service which has more recently involved funding and guidance from Active Norfolk to help steer and sustain the delivery of the activities.



As part of the partnership, Active Norfolk has helped to write physical activity into the Healthy Libraries Workbook that has been created for libraries to refer to in order to keep track of progress being made and the impact activity sessions are having on attendees and the wider community. Active Norfolk provided guidance on the content of the workbook to ensure it is fit for purpose and innovative in its approach. The workbook serves as a valuable evaluation tool for libraries to amend future programmes to better suit the needs and availability of the target group.

Because of the Healthy Libraries programme the relationship between Public Health and the Libraries Service has been strengthened and the Libraries Service has increased its role in helping people take more responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.



## The Healthy Libraries Workbook

Through Active Norfolk's assistance on the Healthy Libraries Workbook, physical activity has become a major section of the tool, complementing the reading element of the workbook. Active Norfolk found that working in cooperation with the Libraries Service and Public Health to help produce an effective document was the most direct route to the establishment of physical activity within the Healthy Libraries strategy. This work has led to a community librarian and member of the Healthy Libraries Team working directly with Active Norfolk to ensure the aim of physical activity in every Norfolk library becomes a reality.





## Outcomes

**As a result of Active Norfolk's input into the Healthy Libraries project the following outcomes have been achieved:**

1. Library Managers and librarians have received physical activity delivery training resulting in an upskilled workforce across Norfolk libraries who are able to run, promote and evaluate physical activity sessions within their community libraries.
2. Active Norfolk has begun mapping activities in Norfolk libraries to discover where there are gaps in provision which could be better served. This process will enable Active Norfolk to help implement physical activity sessions in areas which are not currently served.
3. Further provision is also being sought to upscale delivery in libraries across Norfolk, particularly in those covered by the SAIL programme, along the North Norfolk coast line. Seed money will be granted to establish delivery.
4. The integration of physical activity into the Healthy Libraries Workbook and a designated relationship manager to ensure evaluation of the Healthy Libraries project is monitored and acted upon through input provided by Active Norfolk.



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## Sustainability and Looking Ahead

The sustainability of the Healthy Libraries programme has been achieved through upskilling librarians and library managers and providing them with the resources and ideas to continue to deliver activity sessions. The workforce development programme uses training to establish further provision and their own delivery which is offered by volunteers and paid staff.

The successful implementation of physical activity within the Healthy Libraries Workbook has also made it possible to accurately monitor attendances and impacts of activity sessions in libraries. This information will be used to find out what works in certain libraries and to gather feedback on sessions to make incremental changes to delivery to improve the format of a certain library's activity programme.



Active Norfolk is undergoing an ongoing mapping process to accurately identify areas of the county where provision of activity sessions is low in order to allocate funding and make physical activity in libraries accessible to more people. By integrating Healthy Libraries with other projects, Active Norfolk will be able to increase funding and secure the future of the Healthy Libraries project for the long term.