

Active Norfolk & Special Olympics GB Pilot Partnership – Impact Summary

Overview

- Timeline: September 2023 - present
- Purpose: Working together, pooling resources and collaborative strategies to ultimately provide people with intellectual or learning disabilities ('ID') in Norfolk access to inclusive, safe and enjoyable opportunities and pathways through local sport infrastructure, more often.
- Current reach: 183 people (128 athletes, 55 volunteers) across 6+ organisations (and counting).

Beneficiary Impact

The partnership has enabled Special Olympics Norfolk to **transform more lives through sport**:

- **Athletes**: through ongoing participation, improved physical health, enhanced confidence and social connection - with 91% reporting "having fun" as a key motivation for taking part.
- **Volunteers**: reduced administrative burden & streamlined support systems meeting needs.
- **Clubs**: streamlined processes & engagement, enhancing quality of activities & sustainability.
- **Community**: greater awareness & momentum to grow support for people with ID in Norfolk.

"Special Olympics has changed my life completely... Before skiing I did not know what I would be doing in the future, but now I have ambitions that look and feel achievable."

– Annabelle, Athlete

Goals & Achievements

1. **Growth**: new athlete and volunteer registrations, come and try events, and wider engagement.
2. **Improved Opportunities**: new sports explored, and local to international competition access.
3. **Enhanced Compliance Processes**: improved club compliance processes for clubs' easy access.
4. **Strategic Integration**: enhanced connection and collaboration in organisational priorities.
5. **Efficiency & Engagement**: registration processing time reduced from months to weeks, improving volunteer capacity, operational efficiency and member satisfaction/experience.

Context & Challenges

- **Athletes**: 20% of people with an ID meets recommended activity levels across GB.
- **Club Sustainability**: volunteer-led programmes struggle with increasing sector demands.
- **Resource Constraints**: limited funding and high dependency on volunteers is challenging.
- **Wider Sector Challenges**: there is increasing competition for resources and funding support.

Partnership Value - 'Wellbeing ROI'

- £45 wellbeing value generated for every £1 invested
- Estimated £572 million in wellbeing value from physical activity for disabled people in Norfolk
- Wellbeing benefits are three times greater for disabled participants than non-disabled people

2025 & Beyond

- **Expanding Regional Connectivity**: enhancing collaboration across organisations in the East.
- **Strengthening Compliance**: further improvements to safeguarding processes and support.
- **Local Club Growth**: developing new sports avenues and improving membership processes.
- **Marketing Strategy**: enhanced visibility through targeted campaigns and awareness building.
- **Sustainability**: securing long-term funding to ensure sustainability of delivery models.

The partnership has demonstrated **transformative impact** on individuals' lives while creating a **sustainable model for inclusive sports** delivery that addresses systemic barriers. This partnership could be replicated across other regions and organisations, which is our ambition to support.

[Get in touch](#) to find out more.