

B Active

Overcoming inequalities through sport and physical activity



SUNTORY
BEVERAGE & FOOD GB&I



Active
COMMUNITIES NETWORK

Overcoming inequalities through sport and physical activity

Suntory Beverage & Food GB&I, November 2021

Executive Summary

- B Active was created to boost physical activity among young people living in socioeconomically deprived areas in five cities across the UK.
- The programme reached over 10,000 young people over three years. Almost 4,000 took up opportunities to volunteer in their local communities and over 2,300 young people achieved accreditation in vocationally recognised qualification.

- Academic research shows the programme positively impacted participants physically, psychologically, socially and vocationally.
- Young people felt happier and more motivated through their participation – 94% said that B Active had been a positive turning point in their lives and 74% thought they had greater career opportunities because of their participation.¹

The Issue

Health inequalities remain stubbornly high in Britain. Men living in the most deprived areas of the country live for nine years less than their counterparts in the best-off areas; for women, the gap is seven years.²

We also know that people living in socioeconomically deprived areas are less physically active and that the problem gets worse as they get older – particularly as they leave school.³ This contributes to obesity and increases the risk of chronic ill health. Lower levels of activity also correlate with lower incomes and poorer educational outcomes.

Taking Action

Suntory Beverage & Food GB&I (SBF GB&I) is committed to having a positive impact on the lives of our consumers, providing them with a responsible choice of great tasting drinks and enabling them to lead more active lifestyles. Our company was founded on a 'Growing For Good' belief that means the bigger we grow, the bigger our positive impact should be.

Since 2016, we have reduced sugar by 57% on average across our core product range while still delivering great tasting drinks. And we've inspired 1.5 million people around

the nation to move through our £30 million 'Made to Move' campaign fronted by Anthony Joshua OBE.

Wanting to make a difference in communities with lower levels of physical activity, in 2018 we launched B Active. Delivered in partnership with Active Communities Network (ACN), the three year programme targeted young people aged 16 to 24 in some of the most deprived areas in five cities around the UK: London, Manchester, Hull, Newport and Belfast.



¹B Active: An independent research study, Leeds Beckett University. All statistics are based on a sample of 1,470 participants.

²What are health inequalities? The King's Fund

³Poorer people are less physically active, Economic & Social Research Council, 2014

Designing a Programme to Boost Physical Activity Rates in Deprived Areas

B Active was designed with localities in mind, with bespoke programmes offered in each city. We were determined to achieve behaviour change with young people whom traditional approaches had often failed to engage.

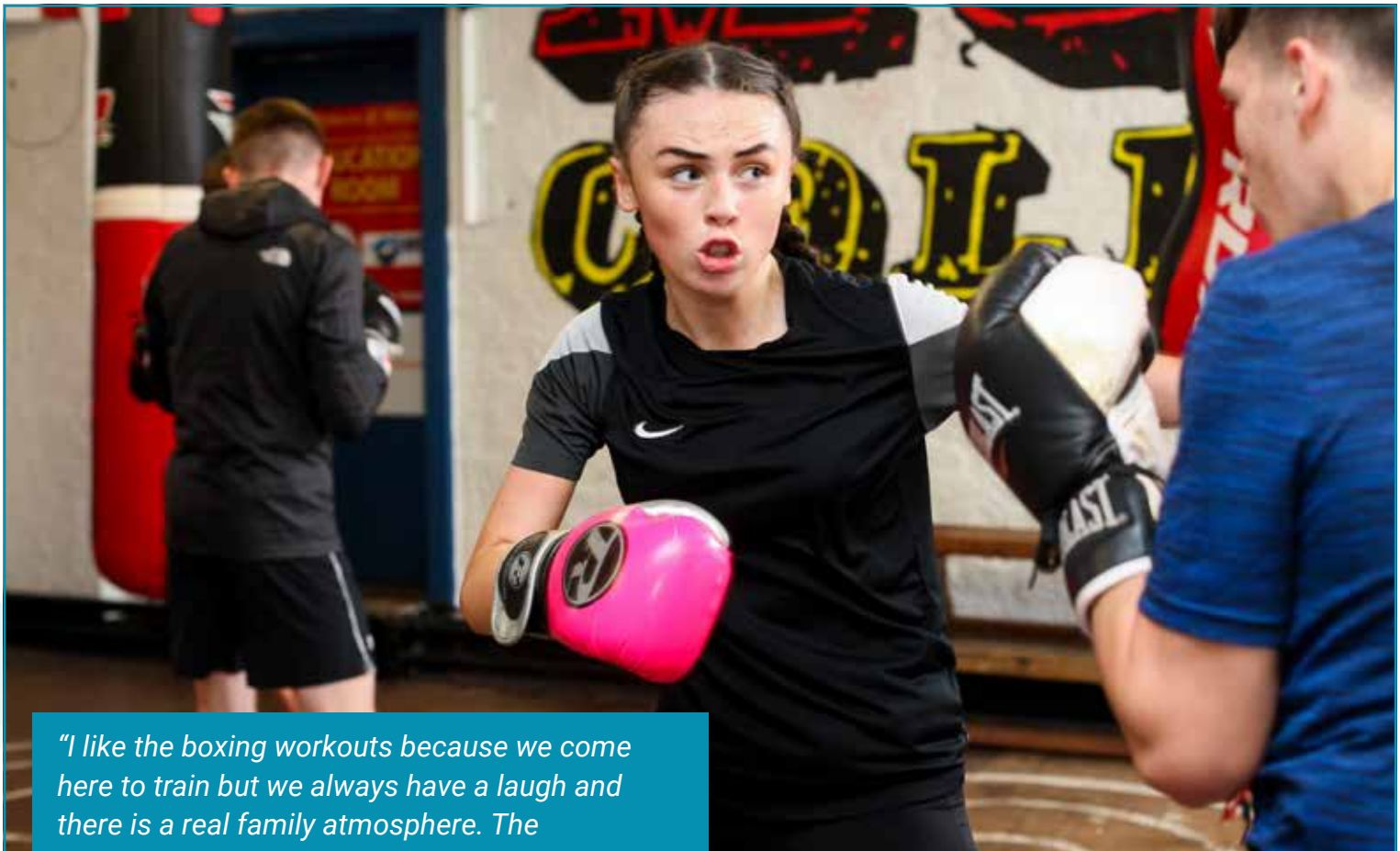
To objectively evaluate the programme's impact, and draw out lessons that could be applied more broadly, we engaged researchers from Leeds Beckett University to measure the results. Crucially, B Active was set up as a peer-to-peer sport for development programme, with classes and activities run by young volunteers.



Case Study: Ellie, Manchester

In May 2018, B Active launched a new, free, open access boxing session for young people at the Moston and Collyhurst Boxing Club, which Ellie started attending. Initially Ellie engaged with the idea of improving her physical health and learning a new skill, but she soon realised that these weekly sessions became a highlight of her week and somewhere she felt safe and positive.

As the only female at these sessions, Ellie was initially quite shy and lacked confidence. However, as the weeks developed and with support from the coaches and peers, Ellie became more confident within the group, building her self-esteem and communication skills. Ellie viewed the female coaches as role models, and went on to complete her Sport Leader Level 2 Award. She now coaches her own boxing sessions and eventually wants to work in the sport for development sector.



"I like the boxing workouts because we come here to train but we always have a laugh and there is a real family atmosphere. The programme keeps you disciplined and if I wasn't coming to these sessions, I would probably be hanging around on the streets so it's good that we are given a purpose."

Ellie, Manchester

The Results:

Transforming young peoples' lives through sport and physical activity

The results

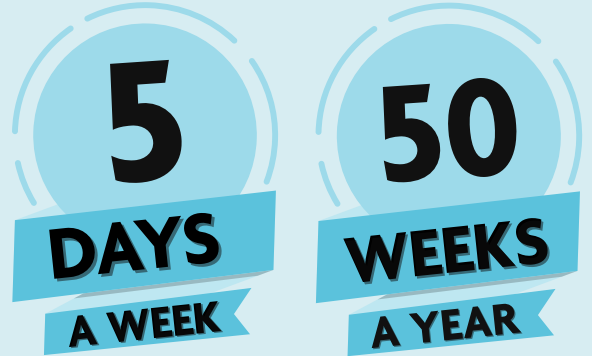
B Active reached and surpassed the expected number of participants by over 570%, with the number volunteering in their local community nearly 640% greater than initial targets.

While we hoped to see some broader benefits from the

programme, the knock-on impact on confidence, mental health, social cohesion and volunteering, and future outlook on life chances were also much stronger than we expected.

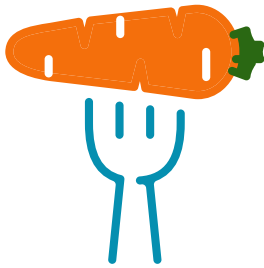


Programmes ran



and were free to attend!

Boxing, basketball, dancing, football and tennis were among the sports offered, and sessions on...



Nutrition



Mental Health



Wellbeing

Summer showcases and tournaments engaged hundreds of young people in each city, with celebratory events held to mark their completion. In total:

10,000+



young people took part in B Active in three years, far above the demand we initially expected

Over a third



of young people took up opportunities to volunteer in their local communities

2,300+



young people achieved accreditation in vocationally recognised qualifications

Leeds Beckett University's assessment of the programme found B Active positively impacted participants and coaches in a number of ways:

Physically



- Participants said that engaging in the activity sessions enhanced their cardiorespiratory fitness, with many reporting to be more physically active as a result
- 85% of participants thought they would not have had the opportunity to engage in the activities if it were not for the B Active programme
- 97% agreed that B Active promoted healthy habits

Psychologically



- Participants reported positive mental health and wellbeing benefits including increased satisfaction, self-esteem, confidence and an improvement in their overall mood
- 78% of participants stated that they can better manage their emotions, including temper anxiety and stress, because of B Active

Vocationally



- Over 700 young people gained qualifications through B Active
- 72% reported it increased their desire to stay in school or college
- 74% of participants suggested they have greater job or career opportunities due to their engagement in the programme

Socially



- Participants developed a range of social skills including trust, teamwork and collaboration
- 82% of participants agreed they had developed a wider circle of friends through B Active
- 94% said that B Active had been a positive turning point in their lives

The Secret to Success

B Active's success was down to a number of factors:

- ✓ The **peer-to-peer** nature of the programme, with young people coaching and training other young people, helped to build trust and social capital. This approach showed that no young person is hard to reach – they can be hard to engage, and this can be overcome.
- ✓ B Active did not take a “timebound” approach. **Young people participated and progressed along pathways at their own pace** – not being forced to go beyond their capabilities, levels of interest or time available to commit.
- ✓ Making opportunities available to volunteer and to gain qualifications helped give young people something to aspire to, beyond passive participation. Physical activity proved itself to be at the start of a **virtuous circle**, not just of volunteering and coaching but also increasing young people's desire to stay in education.



Next Steps: Unlocking the potential of physical activity around the country

We believe the success of B Active demonstrates there is pent-up demand in more deprived areas to engage in physical activity, but that the right opportunities are not being made available for young people. Sport and physical activity can be a catalyst for improving young peoples' lives, reducing health and wider inequalities, and helping give them more determination to pursue education, work and volunteering.

What's next?

Leeds Beckett University identified that a key challenge to the programme's sustainability and scalability is the provision of a support network to coaches. SBF GB&I is working with ACN and Apprentice Nation to develop a 'Coach the Coaches' programme. This is launching in 2021 and is being designed to:

- Introduce a sustainable coaching model to increase knowledge and skills
- Create a mentors' network support group
- Create collaborative frameworks for volunteers to use to drive positive impacts in their local communities

APPRENTICE NATION

Further information

- [Suntory Beverage & Food GB&I – Health and Wellbeing Hub](#)
- [Active Communities Network](#)
- press.office@lrsuntory.com

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