# Executive Summary: Active Sussex Conference - Moving to Inclusion self-reflection session

## Purpose of the Conference

The Active Sussex Conference 2024 focused on fostering inclusion to create an equitable environment for physical activity across Sussex. The event offered partners a series of sessions to explore the latest Active Lives Survey data, listen to members of our community, share experiences, and discuss some of the more stubborn challenges in the county.

The conference also aimed to support the Active Sussex Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan ambitions, which are:

- Foster an inclusive culture and support a diverse workforce.
- Drive participation and equitable access for marginalised communities.
- Strengthen partner collaboration and community relationships to deepen impact.

## Moving to Inclusion Session

The Moving to Inclusion Framework was utilised in the final session of the conference to guide reflections and foster discussion following the sharing of lived experience and community engagement examples. Delegates explored challenges against specific pillars of the framework, identifying what their success would look like, actions needed to achieve these and sharing good practice to reach inactive and marginalised groups within the community.

Find out more about Moving to Inclusion Framework - a new supportive programme replacing the 'Equality Standard – A Framework for Sport' following a review and consultation with the sport and physical activity sector.

### Self-Reflection and Feedback

Delegates engaged in conversation with their peers focusing on three of the five framework pillars - Culture, Experience, and Relationships. Questions under these pillars guided these reflective conversations, with delegates encouraged to complete a self-reflection form to capture their current status, vision for success, and potential short-term actions. Barriers and best practice to increase inclusivity for underrepresented groups in physical activities was also captured.

Responses have been compiled to provide a comprehensive overview of the network's status regarding inclusion efforts. Organisational responses have been collated for each organisation and shared with delegates from that organisation, to be used in a way most beneficial to that partner.

### Recommendations and Strategies

The full self-reflection report summarises all responses received and helps provide a picture across the network. It focuses on what success looks like under each pillar and recommendations that may help partners achieve these; supplementing any actions shared in organisational reports. It

also highlights the common barriers and strategies to address these (with linked examples), along with some good practice taking place across the county that could be adopted by others.

It is a resource for all partners, regardless of their attendance at the conference or participation in the self-reflection process.

This executive summary, summaries the common barriers, strategies and good practice from the detailed report.

**Common Barriers**

1. **Relationship and Trust Gaps**: Frequent staff turnover can disrupt continuity and trust with community partners, weakening engagement efforts.
2. **Resource and Access Limitations**: Limited staff skills, language barriers, and insufficient inaccessible environments hinders inclusivity to participate.
3. **Challenges in Engagement and Relevance**: Lack of engagement and insight into community needs reduces relevance and appeal of provision and excludes voice from decision-making.

**Recommendations and Strategies for Overcoming Barriers**

1. **Building Relationship Continuity:** Implement succession planning, mentoring, and train local leaders to ensure sustained community engagement.
2. **Enhancing Resources, Improving Inclusivity and Cultural Relevance:** Fund facility upgrades, provide interpretation services and staff training to help adapt communication methods to better resonate with diverse groups.
3. **Fostering Community-Centric Program Design:** Co-create programs with community leaders, use focus groups for tailored program development, and encourage diverse participation in decision-making processes.

**Good Practices**

Some examples of successful initiatives shared by delegates:

- **Community-Based Outreach**: Employing community members as outreach workers to connect with underrepresented groups.
- **Responsive Resource Provision**: Providing necessary gear and addressing practical barriers to build trust and increase participation.
- **Facility Accessibility Enhancements**: Installing ramps and accessible amenities to support broader community use.
- **Pupil Voice Initiatives**: Engaging students in program design discussions to enhance relevance and uptake.
- **Cultural Exchange Programs**: Encouraging cultural sharing to promote mutual understanding and inclusivity.

## Conclusion and Call to Action

Addressing the known barriers requires a sustained commitment across our network. Building trust, improving accessibility, and fostering inclusivity will help strengthen relationships with community partners and ensure organisations meet the needs of diverse groups both from an internal and external perspective.

By adopting the recommended strategies and continuing to share proven good practice across the network, together we can build a more inclusive, relevant, and genuinely responsive environment that will help empower more people in the county to be physically active.

**Call to Action:** Commit to building strong, lasting partnerships, invest in the resources needed for inclusivity, and empower communities by involving them in program design and decision-making.

## Ongoing support

If you would like to discuss the full report, executive summary or your organisational self-reflection reports in more detail, or require further support please get in touch with the Active Sussex's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion lead Gemma Finlay-Gray gfinlay-gray@activesussex.org or another member of the team.

If you require this document in an alternative format, please get in touch.