

Gateshead Place Based Expansion

Quarterly insights pack (November
2025)

Introduction

- This pack contains insights gathered between July and October 2025 as part of the ongoing place-based expansion work in Gateshead.
- The insights in this pack reflect the current scope of engagement with local organisations and community leaders. Engagement at this stage is more developed in some priority localities than others.
- These insights should therefore be seen as representing an emerging and evolving picture of the barriers to and enablers of physical activity in Gateshead.
- Insights are organised by priority locality and by enablers and barriers.

Methodology

- The Rise Active Community Engagement Lead in Gateshead logs a summary of each meeting with individuals and organisations, recording key data including:
 - Individual/organisation's target communities (where applicable).
 - Locality (i.e. all Gateshead, Dunston and Teams, Felling or Beacon Lough and Wrekenton).
 - Key topics discussed, including barriers to and enablers of physical activity.
- These logs pertain to 50 conversations/group discussions held between July and October 2025.
- Logs are collated and analysed by the Rise Research and Insight Manager (Place).

Beacon Lough and Wrekenton

Enablers	Theme
Local community organisations help residents to access gyms as a first step towards developing a regular exercise routine. These organisations are aware however that those on lowest incomes are excluded by membership/session costs.	Community hubs, inequality and cost of living.
Community venues are hosting physical activity opportunities (e.g. a local school hosting evening yoga classes). Free opportunities are better attended.	Community hubs, inequality and cost of living.
Community lunches offering individuals with drug and alcohol issues opportunities for social connection and support.	Community hubs, drugs and alcohol, mental health.

Beacon Lough and Wrekenton

Barriers	Theme
Gap in physical activity classes for older people in Wrekenton within walking distance. The nearest swimming pools for example are a car/bus journey away.	Accessibility and inclusion.
Perception that there is a lack of provision for local young people, which leads to them congregating in the streets which in turn can intimidate other residents.	Antisocial behaviour, children and young people.
Antisocial behaviour (specifically motorbike use) on bridle paths and green spaces such as Whitehills Nature Park are deterring other residents from using them more for exercise, dog walking, and family activities.	Antisocial behaviour, green spaces.

Enablers	Theme
Local foodbank is using coffee mornings to promote physical health and wellbeing and is also organising a gardening project.	Community hubs, inequality and cost of living.

Barriers	Theme
Digital exclusion is a barrier to promoting physical activity opportunities locally.	Accessibility and inclusion.
Community organisations report that physical activity opportunities that require a cost are barriers to participation.	Children and young people, inequality and cost of living.

Barriers	Theme
Community organisations similarly report that opportunities that require parent/guardian attendance are barriers to participation, despite demand from children.	Children and young people.
A high percentage of children are carers for parents and/or siblings. For some children, caring responsibilities are impacting on their school attendance.	Children and young people.
Social prescribers are reporting an increase in referrals for weight management due to the cost of weight loss medications.	Physical health, cost of living.

Dunston and Teams

Enablers	Theme
Local community venues and churches are hosting and providing physical activity opportunities. For example, community organisations are providing HAF-type programme during school holidays.	Children and young people, community hubs.
Living Streets undertook a street audit in 2024 which highlighted the need for dropped kerbs.	Accessibility and inclusion.
Local community football clubs providing opportunities for children and young people including some financial assistance.	Children and young people, community hubs.
A local community organisation is training parents, carers and youth workers to help children and young people deal with emotions develop and positive mindsets.	Children and young people, mental health.



Dunston and Teams

Barriers	Theme
Lack of a free outdoor space to play football.	Green spaces.
Families and children deterred from using local parks due to vandalism, damage, antisocial behaviour and the presence of drug paraphernalia.	Antisocial behaviour, children and young people, green spaces.
Parents report there being a lack of physical activity opportunities for older children.	Children and young people.
Public drug and alcohol use and drug dealing is intimidating other residents.	Antisocial behaviour, drugs and alcohol, safety.

Dunston and Teams

Barriers	Theme
Wheelchair users are travelling to Sunderland to attend accessible exercises classes. Wheelchair users also report that the water temperature of public swimming pools in Gateshead is too cold for disabled swimmers.	Accessibility and inclusion.
Busy main road with only one crossing prevents younger children getting to Tyne Derwent Way on their own.	Built environment, children and young people.
If physical activity opportunities are not delivered within a distance that children can walk to unaccompanied, they are unlikely to engage.	Built environment, children and young people.
Safety concerns around using subway crossing in evenings.	Built environment, safety.

Contacts

Joe Barton – Research and Insight Manager (Place) joe.barton@risenortheast.co.uk

Joanne Porter– Active Communities Engagement Lead
joanne.porter@risenortheast.co.uk

Jade Scott – Strategic Lead for Place
jade.scott@risenortheast.co.uk