

# North Lanarkshire Council Report

## Community Empowerment Committee

approval  noting

Ref LMcM/HL

Date 31/01/22

## Programme of Work (PO48) - Active & Creative Communities Strategic Activity Framework for North Lanarkshire 2020-2024

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### Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the agreed action plan to deliver and promote the Active & Creative Communities Strategic Activity Framework and its priorities of active living, sport, dance and play, creativity, and culture. The plan aims to deliver support in terms of health and wellbeing, the local economy, education, reducing inequality, and realising innovative future working with local communities.

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### Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to endorse the approach being taken by the Active & Creative Communities team to deliver on the Strategic Framework Activity Plan, promoting increased engagement on the Health & Wellbeing and Prevention agendas, improved customer participation levels across a range of activities and enhanced the delivery vehicle's contributions to the health, wellbeing, and socially inclusive ambitions.

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### The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority All priorities

Ambition statement (15) Encourage the health and wellbeing of people through a range of social, cultural, and leisure activities  
(24) Review and design services around people, communities and shared resources.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 At its meeting of 24 August 2020, the Community Empowerment Committee gave approved ActiveNL, North Lanarkshire's Physical Activity Framework. On 23 August 2021, Committee approved the associated action plan, agreeing at that time to re-name this programme of work as the Active & Creative Communities Strategic Activity Framework to better reflect the broader priorities and actions within following the insourcing of culture and leisure services in April 2021 and the combined priorities of the new Active & Creative Communities team.
- 1.2 In addition to the originally agreed priorities of active living, sport, dance and play, the new comprehensive action plan also includes the priority of creativity and culture, reflecting a broader approach to supporting wellbeing.

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## **2. Report**

- 2.1 The Strategic Activity Framework was developed within the context initially established in 2018 when Council officers, sportscotland and representatives from the then North Lanarkshire Leisure Limited, CultureNL Limited, and Community Planning Partners began initial discussions on the approach to establishing a strategic framework for sport and physical activity.
- 2.2 The insourcing of culture, sport and leisure services from 1 April 2021, under the new, focussed and integrated Active & Creative Communities (ACC) team has provided an opportunity to consider the actions needed to improve health and wellbeing in its broadest sense. While the physical activity challenges in North Lanarkshire are well understood, the balance of physical and cultural activities bring well documented benefits in improving the health of our communities.
- 2.3 Appendix One provides an update on progress to date in each of the 5 priority areas. Ongoing restrictions related to COVID 19 have made some actions difficult to achieve – this is reflected where appropriate. However, opportunities arising from external funding have also allowed acceleration of some actions. Highlights over the first 9 months of Active & Creative Communities include:
  - launch of the Active 65 membership which offers one year access to all sports facilities for £50 for those aged 65 and over;
  - launch of Active Teen, which offers free access to the gym for 11-15 year olds from Monday to Friday. Analysis of weekly numbers shows many young people attending on Friday afternoons as part of their Future Friday option;
  - encouraging return of the public entertainment programme, with higher than expected support from the public to attend musical, comedy and theatre events. Our schedule for 2022 (subject to any additional COVID restrictions) will continue to offer a varied and diverse programme of events; and
  - opening of the new Cumbernauld Theatre. The council is working in partnership with Cumbernauld Theatre Trust to offer a cultural and community hub, providing a varied and quality cultural programme and support to the creative industries.

- 2.4 The team is currently working on two exciting new projects which, subject to approval of funding, will offer further possibilities for the communities of North Lanarkshire. Firstly, the Summerlee Masterplan which will see redevelopment of the open space, enhancement of the tram facilities and the creation of a new heritage row, offering space for local business start-ups, an enhanced visitor experience and provide further job opportunities for local people. Secondly, the development of a hi-tech inclusive digital environment within Motherwell library that is accessible to local community groups, businesses, schools and individuals. A space that encourages innovation and effective learning experiences and supports basic to advanced digital skills development approaches. Once the outcome of these funding applications are known, further details will be provided to Committee.
- 2.5 As was originally highlighted to Committee, the council's ongoing partnership with other key stakeholders is key to the delivery of the Strategic Framework. In addition to continued close working with internal colleagues, ACC continue to meet regularly with NHS Lanarkshire Health Improvement team, Sportscotland, the Scottish Football Association and representatives from local community groups and clubs.
- 2.6 Looking ahead to the Programme of Work (POW) for 2022/23, it is recognised that many actions within the current plan will continue, but an opportunity will be taken to refresh plans for next year, with a further update to be provided to Committee in due course. Additional POW actions will continue to reinforce the overall aims of the Strategic Framework while promoting nationally agreed priorities as set out in the Culture Strategy for Scotland and sportscotland's Sport for Life strategy.

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### **3. Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty**

#### **3.1 Fairer Scotland Duty**

- 3.1.1 As the project develops, consideration will be given to the potential for socio-economic impact resulting from the proposals contained within this report. Input from the community on the direction of service development will continue to be sought throughout.

#### **3.2 Equality Impact Assessment**

- 3.2.1 An Equality Impact Assessment will be required for the developed options informed by the community engagement referred to in section 3.1 of this report.

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### **4. Impact**

#### **4.1 Financial impact**

- 4.1.1 The services to be delivered will be within the available revenue and capital cost envelope. The Framework will guide future spend.

#### **4.2 HR policy / Legislative impact**

- 4.2.1 None specifically linked to the Framework.

#### **4.3 Technology / Digital impact**

- 4.3.1 None specifically linked to the Framework.

#### 4.4 Environmental Impact

4.4.1 The strategic objectives and priorities set out within the Framework recognise the importance of the environment within which physical activity takes place and make the appropriate links to other key strategies, such as the Open Space Strategy, Parks master planning and active travel . Specific environmental impacts are indicated in the following Framework objectives:-

- support and promote green health programmes;
- increase the levels of active travel to work or education; and
- develop active environments across North Lanarkshire in a sustainable way to provide equity of access to North Lanarkshire citizens.

#### 4.5 Communications impact

4.5.1 The Framework and action plan will continue to be shared with communities and stakeholders as part of the drive to increase overall physical activity levels in North Lanarkshire by 6.15% by 2030.

#### 4.6 Risk Impact

4.6.1 Ongoing risk reviews will be carried out on the action plans for delivery in accordance with the Council's project management process, and the associated risk register kept updated.

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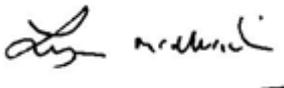
### 5. Measures of success

- 5.1 Increase overall physical activity levels in North Lanarkshire by 6.15% by 2030.
- 5.2 A broad range of activities to support the development and maintenance of positive physical and mental health among the communities of North Lanarkshire.

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### 6. Supporting Documents

- 6.1 Appendix 1 – Active & Creative Communities Strategic Activity Framework for North Lanarkshire 2020-2024 – Action Plan Update at Jan 2022



**Lizanne McMurrich**  
Head of Communities

## Active &amp; Creative Communities Strategic Activity Framework for North Lanarkshire 2020-2024 - Action Plan Update at Jan 2022

	Action	Outcome	Progress to Date
	<b><i>Active Living - incorporating physical activity into their daily routines through simple changes, for example by cycling or walking to work or school, taking the stairs more, active gardening and work around the home. This will include providing opportunities to help people to better manage their health in a community setting, encourage socialisation and improved wellbeing.</i></b>		
1.1	Extend the Weigh to Go Product to target specific low participant groups.  Targeted initiatives to encourage increased participation using focussed communication strategies, engaging with a range of community groups to understand and respond to perceived barriers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of men participating in weight management programmes.</li> <li>• Increase the number of BME participants on weight management programmes.</li> <li>• Increase number of pre/post-natal activities available.</li> </ul>	4 new pre- and post-natal projects launching for Weigh to Go new mums.  New class aimed at male Weight to Go participants – this will be held at the Aquatec when it re-opens. Aim to increase the number of male participants which currently stands at just 8%.
1.2	Create a bespoke walks programme with Get Walking Lanarkshire to integrate walking programmes more fully with NL specialist health customer base.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased physical activity.</li> <li>• Link to other Programme of Work activities.</li> </ul>	Bid made to Scotland Loves Local to support launch was unsuccessful – currently exploring other options. Launching specialist health Nordic Walking training programme – January 2021.
1.3	Link with NHS (Rehabilitation Teams) to establish use of NLC venues for rehabilitation services on a service level agreement basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bridging a gap between clinical setting and community-based activity. Integrated approach to encouraging physical activity. Reducing pressure on space in hospitals.</li> </ul>	Initial discussion with the Adult Child and Weight Management Team and 50% discount at off peak periods agreed for future bookings linked to the programme.  Current NHS services already being delivered with in partnership in NLC Leisure Facilities include:- Pulmonary Rehabilitation Classes, Adult and Child Healthy Weight Programmes, NHS Circ-8 Classes for Young People with Disabilities, Diabetes Clinics at Time Capsule and Wishaw, Maternal Infant Weight Clinics at Wishaw
1.4	Extend range of Active Health (Specialist Health Classes) being delivered in local community settings to include libraries/community halls. This will include Gentle Movement/Chair exercises in libraries with appropriate space available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase local access to activity for NLC residents</li> <li>• Ideal for those with long term conditions, cancer or with mobility issues could improve their health and mobility by attending these.</li> </ul>	Pilot programme for 3 new classes for individuals affected by Parkinson's disease commencing from 1st Feb 2022. Training complete with Specialist Health Team in November 2021. One session being piloted in a Community Centre setting.

	Action	Outcome	Progress to Date
			<p>Escape Pain (For Knee/Hip Arthritis sufferers) new programme being delivered in partnership with MSK Physiotherapy Team from NHS Lanarkshire which could be Community Centre based following pilot programme.</p> <p>Training Programme for volunteers complete but still to be delivered – awaiting volunteer recruitment programme to start.</p>
1.5	<p>Facilitating access to archives and local studies materials. This service is already available, but work is underway to improve accessibility across a range of local settings.</p> <p>Interest in family/local history has increased significantly during the lockdown period.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carrying out research in person encourages active living and creates opportunities to meet new people and feel part of the community.</li> <li>• Genealogy and local history research engender a sense of belonging and wellbeing.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing – service operated on appointment only during the recovery period – this approach has now been removed and the public have the benefit of open access to our records.</p> <p>Increased use of social media to promote archive services and promote family history stories – this continues to generate interest in local history.</p>
1.6	<p>Providing cultural learning opportunities (talks, courses, tours). This will include development of local heritage trail leaflets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending events in person and online creates opportunities to meet new people and feel part of the wider community.</li> <li>• Walking the heritage trails encourages active living and creates opportunities to feel part of the community.</li> </ul>	<p>Limited progress made – this will carry forward into the action plan for 22/23.</p>
1.7	<p>Book Blether – face to face (or online) book club. Work with colleagues to identify groups that may benefit from increased socialisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved mental health and wellbeing through socialisation.</li> <li>• Safe space to discuss (through books) any issues or themes that arise.</li> </ul>	<p>Number of online and group activities have been held to support Book Blether. Growing interest from new participants.</p> <p>We have been using social media to promote services provided by the library and highlight connections with local authors. Leading question/answer sessions online to stimulate discussion.</p>

	Action	Outcome	Progress to Date
<b><i>Sport - As well as improving overall physical fitness, sport can empower, inspire and motivate participants. It can provide pathways to professional level and opportunities to develop lifelong engagement as well as opportunities for volunteering.</i></b>			
2.1	Review ACC activity programme to allow children to access and participate without barriers in physical activity for at least up to one hour per day. Ensure services and programme are accessible to young people living in poverty throughout North Lanarkshire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved physical activity levels.</li> <li>Diverse programme which offers opportunity for structured and informal physical activity levels.</li> </ul>	<p>Over 750 young people across Lanarkshire participate on a weekly basis at Ravenscraig. There was no structured football provision throughout lockdown.</p> <p>Return to playing games and training has allowed young people to be more physically active and increases amount of time outdoors being active in safe environments thus reducing time spent on consoles and iPads whilst maintaining structured daily lifestyles and more regular sleeping patterns. Working closely with CLD on support to young people.</p>
2.2	Review membership scheme for ActiveNL users – ensuring the offering is affordable and competitive to encourage increased usage of our sporting and leisure facilities for all groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased user numbers.</li> <li>Increased physical activity levels.</li> <li>Seek to remove barriers to participation.</li> </ul>	<p>Currently reviewing overall pricing structure to both offer simplified options for customers and encourage increased participation across all areas. However, Usage figures have risen since from P8 2020/21 = 172,919 to 2021/2022 = 227,348 indicating a 23.94% recovery rate.</p> <p>To ensure customers have a positive experience in our venues and provide the opportunity to address areas of concern, we continue to undertake quarterly customer surveys – this is complemented by the council's CRM system.</p> <p>Development of a comprehensive Customer Service Strategy for Active &amp; Creative Communities will take place in early 2022.</p>
2.3	Continue to support the development of local leagues and clubs to meet their needs within North Lanarkshire. This will include influencing and supporting new and existing partners, both locally and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting club development helps to create pathways for the ongoing development of sporting activity.</li> <li>Working with governing bodies allows the council to access available funding and</li> </ul>	<p>On a daily basis, the ACC teamwork with local clubs to facilitate access to facilities or to support local initiatives wherever possible.</p>

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	nationally, to ensure that strategic plans and policy positively reflect the role that physical activity and sport can play to improve health and strengthen our communities.	ensure fit for purpose facilities for the whole community.	We meet regularly with Sportscotland, now in conjunction with colleagues in Education & Families and more recently with the SFA. The SFA are proving to be an excellent source of advice in the production of the forthcoming Sports Pitch Strategy – project now underway.
2.4	Continue to deliver and develop inclusion projects such as Friday Night Project, Saturday Sportscene and Street Soccer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful delivery of all inclusion and diversionary projects in partnership with CL&amp;D and the Health Improvement teams throughout Lanarkshire.</li> <li>• Increased participation within projects at all 8 venues across NL by providing young people with the opportunity to engage in free sports and physical activity whilst engaging in youth work.</li> </ul>	<p>Over 700 young people attend our projects on weekly basis across 9 venues. The young people in attendance have an opportunity to participate in a safe environment and try new activities such as football, badminton, basketball, netball, dance and swimming. As the programme is free this results in participants being more physically active, increased fitness levels and opportunity to meet and make new friends. This removes any financial barriers and allows young people from low-income families the opportunity to participate in sport.</p> <p>All staff are trained on various topics such as alcohol, drugs and smoking to allow them to educate young people on positive life choices as well as having the opportunity to speak to coaches if they have any concerns or questions on current topics or issues they are facing.</p> <p>Street Soccer - This programme helps remove any barriers for young people accessing football in a fun, safe and structured environment. The project is transported throughout North Lanarkshire allowing young people in potentially deprived areas the opportunity to play football in our custom-built football arena.</p> <p>The project is delivered in partnership with CL&amp;D and NHS Health Improvement Teams and targets specific groups of young people and give the</p>

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Progress to Date</b>
			opportunity to make better life choices and increase physical activity through NL.
2.5	Increased opportunities for men and women to participate in walking football and Kickstart programme (this programme provides opportunities for those recovering from mental health and addictions to play football).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An increased number of participants per week attending our venues to help aid their recovery through sport.</li> </ul>	<p>With an average of 60 participants per week playing Walking football and 45 participants per week involved in our Kickstart programme we are providing additional activity for men and women throughout NL to keep fit and active as well as socialising with others of similar ages and backgrounds.</p> <p>After every session all groups sit together and have a tea/coffee creating an opportunity to socialise and prevent people from feeling isolated within the community. This also gives us a chance to put on workshops or have guest speakers along to communicate with participants. Most recently Macmillan Cancer has been along to speak to our Walking footballers to help raise awareness amongst men of the signs/symptoms of cancer.</p>
<b><i>Dance - Dance is an inclusive creative, physical and social activity appealing to a wide range of people and is a fun, enjoyable way to exercise, which can deliver wellbeing benefits. The approach taken will offer options to different age groups and incorporate wider activity including drama.</i></b>			
3.1	Little Groovers - re-establish Little Groovers and develop throughout North Lanarkshire area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Under 5's creativity/physical exercise once a week.</li> <li>Parents/carer engaging in shared experience with child.</li> <li>Positive contribution to community experience.</li> </ul>	<p>Little Groovers will re-launch in April 2022.</p> <p>Recently carried out a recruitment of new staff to support the delivery of the programme which has always been very popular. We will begin engaging with local nurseries/toddler groups in early 2022.</p>
3.2	Strictly Stretch Ballet Group - re-establish Strictly Stretch and develop throughout North Lanarkshire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over 50 activity on a weekly basis.</li> <li>Positive impact on mental health.</li> <li>Improving on individual strength, fitness tone.</li> <li>Learning new skills/styles.</li> <li>Engaging socially with other participants.</li> </ul>	<p>This group continues to meet with numbers increasing. The group provides an excellent way for over 50s to continue to be active and support their mental and physical health.</p>

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Progress to Date</b>
3.3	NL Studio/NL2 all ability drama – development of all ability drama groups for adults.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reestablish connections/friendships post covid</li> <li>• Skills for life-based learning</li> <li>• Promote confidence through development</li> <li>• Explore thematic/issue-based theatre and positive impact on group</li> <li>• Create a safe, positive working space for participants</li> </ul>	Groups are re-established and very busy with participants. Feedback from participants is extremely positive with the group offering a welcome return to “normality”.
3.4	Drama Masterclasses, holiday projects for young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a safe space for young people to share ideas.</li> <li>• Learn transferable life skills.</li> <li>• Encourage leadership skills with peers.</li> <li>• Promote confidence through development of creative content.</li> <li>• Tackle isolation by creating a space to make new circle of friends.</li> </ul>	<p>A number of holiday clubs have been held with further planned for the coming Spring/Summer period.</p> <p>During the Summer of 2021, the team were heavily involved in offering activities as part of the offering for Club 365.</p>
<p><b><i>Play - Physical activity through play can support children's mental and cognitive development as well as their physical health. Evidence suggests that children who are physically active when young are more likely to adopt healthy lifestyles as they grow up. Play is, however, important at all ages and the actions below seek to stimulate residents of all ages.</i></b></p>			
4.1	Active & health themed Bookbug (as previously done during Love Life Love libraries). Local NHS Health Promotion Officers will come along to support parents by being there to chat, promote current initiatives around health & wellbeing e.g. vitamins, food, vouchers, support groups etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support parents and carers on possible activities to do regularly with their children. These events will include targeted health promotions - e.g. teeth cleaning etc.</li> <li>• Early start promotion of exercise and activity for babies and toddlers.</li> </ul>	<p>Discussions are underway with NHS Health Promotion officers but dedicated health themed sessions are yet to commence. This will carry over into next year's action plan.</p> <p>To support a wider approach to promoting health and wellbeing through literary means we will be launching Fit Stop in early 2022. As part of our #OneTeam efforts, NL Libraries are supporting a collaborative effort with a development to benefit the users of our leisure facilities. New fitness and nutrition focussed literature has been purchased for a FIT stop initially outside Ravenscraig Gym to ensure residents have access to health information.</p>
4.2	Story walks from Libraries (Trail tales)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting family activity.</li> </ul>	Story walks launched during 2021, primarily focused on walking trails around Summerlee Museum of

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Progress to Date</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase family quality time with children as well as health benefits of reading</li> </ul>	Industrial Life. Around 12 participants take part in each walk. We will continue to promote to encourage more participants, moving into other areas.
4.3	Implement a House of Games style board game club. This will be targeted at older residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage older members of the community in activities that stimulate the brain either via logic or strategy or from the social interactions.</li> </ul>	House of Games will formally launch in January 2022. A taster session has been held as part of the New Tricks club and received very positive feedback.
<p><b><i>Creativity &amp; Culture - Engaging with arts and culture is central to the mental health and wellbeing of our communities. Getting involved in, an arts or ceramics class, participating in a film workshop, visiting an exhibition or volunteering in a museum can have a powerful and lasting effect on physical and mental health. The benefits are well documented; it can help protect against and manage a range of mental health conditions, alleviate loneliness and isolation, allow participants to express their experiences, learn new skills and build confidence.</i></b></p>			
5.1	Continued development and expansion of in-person art classes for adults & children with an increased focus on the physical experience of artmaking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve physical dexterity, intellectual focus and mental health &amp; wellbeing.</li> </ul>	<p>We continue to offer a range of in person classes for a range of age groups and abilities. On a weekly basis, the following are on offer:</p> <p>Visual Arts = 11 classes  Pather Arts = 8 classes  Photomedia = 4 classes</p>
5.2	Dedicated creative space/ facility in each local area (multi-use community space using existing facilities in a new, co-produced approach).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared community spaces dedicated to creativity and community collaboration.</li> <li>Improved mental health and wellbeing.</li> </ul>	Discussions around expansion of the creative space continue and will form part of wider plans for the establishment of Town & Community hubs. In the interim, options to establish a creative space in facilities across our estate will continue to be explored.
5.3	Photography Walks. Available at Photomedia studio at Summerlee and as an outreach activity to groups/centres in NL area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased physical activity.</li> <li>Increased socialisation and improved mental health and wellbeing.</li> </ul>	Photography walks are established and are popular.
5.4	Work with local communities to involve them directly in decisions about their cultural heritage – seek opportunities to provide local access to local interest projects, celebrating the heritage of the communities of North Lanarkshire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More people engaged with their heritage in a meaningful way; foster community cohesion and capacity building.</li> </ul>	As part of ongoing plans to refresh and review our offer at both Summerlee and NL Heritage Centre, members of the public have been invited to give their views through our public surveys. These have been promoted on social media and are supplemented by facilitated conversations with local groups.

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Progress to Date</b>
			All of the ACC team participated in the recent community listening events and have continued to respond to the feedback we received.