

Community Sport and Enterprise Evaluation Learning Set

Final Impact Report



Mid Argyll Community Pool



Summary

Over the past 2 years, 8 community sport organisations worked together along with The Robertson Trust and Evaluation Support Scotland to build our skills and capacity to measure and report on what we do and the difference we make.

This report is written from the perspective of the 8 organisations.

The learning set was successful. We all had different starting points but we have all improved our evaluation skills, knowledge and confidence. We have used evaluation to improve our work, motivate our people and attract more funding. We learned more about how we achieve outcomes and what those outcomes are.

This report tells you

- What the benefits of doing evaluation are for community sport projects
- How community sport projects can do evaluation – approaches and methods
- Some evidence of the impact of community sport on health outcomes, confidence, leadership and team-working, education and employment and community safety

By reading about how we worked together in the learning set you should also learn how to build evaluation capacity amongst community projects.

May 2013

This report and the work it describes was funded by The Robertson Trust (Scottish Charity No: SC002970)
www.therobertsontrust.org.uk

The words of the participating 8 organisations were pulled together into this report by Evaluation Support Scotland (Scottish Charity No: SC036529, Scottish Company SC284843)
www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk

1. Who we are and why we got involved

The Robertson Trust has identified a number of 'Development Areas' for strategic investment one of which is Community Sport. The Trust funds charities which seek to use sport as a vehicle to engage young people and to help in their personal development. This also includes broadening the use of facilities and increasing participation in sport through targeted work with young people who would not necessarily engage in sport and physical activity.

The Trust has provided funding in this area for a Community Sport and Enterprise programme to enable community based sports clubs to develop stronger links with their local communities and initiate income generating activities. In partnership with **sportscotland** the Trust funded Senscot to establish a Social Enterprise and Sport Network. This Network would enable similar organisations to share good practice and develop their own facilities for the benefit of the local community.

Evaluation Support Scotland (ESS) works with voluntary organisations and funders so they can measure and report on their impact and use learning to improve policy and services. Our role in this programme was to facilitate the evaluation learning set in order to achieve the outcomes below.

The **8 community sport organisations** are:

Broxburn United Sports Club (BUSC)

Inch Park Community Sports Club, Edinburgh (IPCSC)

Active Communities, Renfrewshire – previously known as Jogging Buddies

Kilwinning Community Sports Club, North Ayrshire (Kilwinning)

Mid-Argyll Community Pool, Lochgilphead (MACPool)

Reach for the Sky Basketball, Lanarkshire

Spartans Community Football Academy, Edinburgh (Spartans)

Street Soccer Scotland

The planned outcomes of the evaluation learning set were:

1. Up to 8 community sport projects will have increased self-evaluation skills.
2. Up to 8 projects will have increased ability to explain the impact of their work and to use that evidence to influence funders, stakeholders and partners.
3. The Robertson Trust will have increased understanding and evidence about the impact of their funding in the field of community sport and enterprise.
4. Other projects working in the field of community sport will have increased knowledge about how to measure and evidence the impact of their work.
5. Policy makers and funders of community sport will have a better understanding of the difference community sport can make – and how to evaluate it.

2. What did we do?

The Learning Set ran from January 2011 to spring 2013. We've met 8 times – either all of us together or in two groups of 4. Some of us hosted sessions.

Before we started, the Trust explained the purpose of the programme and our expected commitment. We completed a 'diagnostic tool' about our skills and knowledge on outcomes and evaluation. This shaped the programme and gave a rough baseline against which to show our progress.

Year 1

Our first two sessions were workshops on setting and measuring outcomes. Each of us had a one to one site visit from ESS which was more useful for some than for others. But, for some, it helped embed learning from the first two sessions and gave us specific advice on our evaluation plans and methods. It gave early feedback to The Trust about who needed more help.

After this early phase we shifted the focus of the Learning Set to peer learning. ESS's role moved from training to facilitation. Our 3rd session looked at our evaluation plans and how to tell our evaluation story so far in a case study. We found it hard to write case studies! So in our 4th session we used facilitated peer review to see the positives and negatives of our case studies. We also looked at outcomes and evaluation methods for taster sessions and using volunteers.

This session enabled each of us to write another report at the end of year 1 on what we were learning about how to evaluate. This was pulled together in our [Year 1 Impact Report](#) (available from The Trust). In summary, during year 1:

- We learned the difference between outputs and outcomes.
- Most of us improved our skills and systems for setting and measuring outcomes. This took more time for some who missed some of the learning set programme or experienced staff turnover.
- Most of us were using our evaluation skills to report on the impact of our work and provide even better services for participants.

Year 2

In our 5th session we reviewed the first year and designed the year 2 programme to meet our evaluation development needs. This gave us greater ownership. We also looked at the contribution of community sport to national outcomes.

Our final two sessions took a strong peer-led, critical friend approach. In our 6th session, we each worked together on an evaluation plan for one of our own activities. Peer feedback helped us add to our plans and include tools used by others. In our 7th session in October we "shared our data". We each fed back on how the evaluation of our summer activities had gone and what it told us about the achievement of our outcomes. Evaluation in action!

In December 2012 we wrote a final report of all our learning. This is summarised in the next section of this report.

3. What have we learned about doing evaluation?

Being part of the learning set has helped us develop into more successful organisations. We have used evaluation to:

- show the impact we are making
- improve our services to our participants, volunteers and leaders
- access additional funding
- become more sustainable as an organisation
- plan for the future
- Celebrate our achievements!



➤ We focus on outcomes

Two years ago, some of us had never done evaluation before. Others gathered statistics on the number of classes or the number of sessions organised. But we couldn't always say what difference we made – we didn't report on outcomes.

That's changed. We understand the language of outputs and outcomes. We evidence soft outcomes as well as numbers and "a greater value is placed on recording the outcomes of our projects." *Kilwinning*

"One of the questions we now ask when we are planning or doing anything is 'so what?' It is not enough just to organise a training day for leaders / coaches. We may have 20 leaders attending a course but how do we know that they have improved their skills, or confidence." *Active Communities*

"The greatest example of this is the comparison of our year 1 annual report to year 2; we have managed to change it from a snap shot summary document to 3 dimensional report which contains quantitative and qualitative data which has sound outcome pathways meeting local and national outcome strategies." *Reach for the Sky*

➤ We build evaluation into planning and delivery

This means we "embed evaluation based tasks into the way we work." *Spartans*

"Evaluation has become an intrinsic vital component in each session and project we deliver. In the planning stage of a project we determine what outcomes we want to achieve and therefore set targets to ensure they take place and build an evaluation tool to provide information to back this up." *Reach for the Sky*

It also means we gather evaluation information as we deliver our activities.

"At the end [a block of 6-8 sessions], we issue a block questionnaire and consultation paper. The feedback from this allows us to review the success of that particular activity with each group ... coaches also reflect at the end of each activity." *Inch Park*

"We have worked with our leaders to develop tools which are quick and easy to use. For example for the ROAR programme we have developed a toolkit for our leaders to record information quickly and easily, ensuring minimum disruption to class content." *Active Communities*



➤ **We collect baseline**

It's hard to evaluate if we've made a difference if we don't know participants' starting point. So we have developed quick ways to gather baseline:

"Vision →Inputs→Outputs→Outcomes is key. At the Vision stage we think about the baseline measures and the outcomes we would like to achieve plus how to measure the distance travelled by the participants involved. Initial evaluation based information/data is captured at the consent phase from both young people and their parents." *Spartans*

"To start our programmes we now ask each participant what they know about a particular subject that relates to the project we are about to embark upon. It also allows us to understand what level of work we need to do with the young people." *BUSC*



Team working at Street Soccer Scotland

4. What are the benefits of evaluation for us?

➤ Helping to plan and meet needs

"Evaluation allows us to share information with other community groups. We now have a better understanding of what our community needs and how we can impact on young lives." *BUSC*

Evaluation helps us adjust our programmes to make them more accessible:

"By conducting a survey across the schools [we work with], we were able to identify the specific reasons for lower attendances. In one case it was down to a greater interest in one sport over another, and in another it was down to the time of the session, and a clash with other activity in the area. By changing the sports around, and moving times, we were able to increase attendance at after school clubs to across all 7 of our primary schools." *Inch Park*

"Our new Saturday night youth work provision was born out of listening to the needs of young people, followed up with conducting a more formal needs analysis exercise with them." *Spartans*

The results of Active Communities' member survey shaped the programme for the next year. They acted on feedback to do a few things differently to support engagement in physical activity. "This has resulted in an increase in members (10%), 2 new leaders being trained, and a 3K fun run added to the Bridge Buster 10K event in October." *Active Communities*

➤ Learning what doesn't work and why

For evaluation to be useful we have to be honest with ourselves and avoid bias. By looking at what hasn't gone so well we have been able to learn and improve. Here is one example. During the summer of 2012, MACPool programmed an Olympic Summer Swim Camp, which did not go ahead.

"Evaluation enabled us to understand why it wasn't successful. A number of issues including affordability, timing, the specific nature of the activities offered and problems with promotion. We found that the Active Schools' programme for the Mid Argyll area also had to cancel many planned activities during the summer, due to low take-up. As a result of this review we have changed our thinking for summer 2013, and plan a joint summer programme with Argyll and Bute Council's Active Schools' department, with an emphasis on fun." *MACPool*

BUSC uses evaluation to make good programmes even better. One teacher said their schools programme was encouraging for all children but some content was a little hard for them to understand. BUSC changed that content and children now understand it better.

➤ **Securing more funding**

Improving our evaluation has helped us secure funding. This is because

“Evaluation has provided us with the information that was missing in our funding proposals ... [such as] percentage of young people who feel we make a certain venue safe hence why they attend ... We have evidence to back up our statements such as key stats or quotations of service users, school teacher, and local authority staff” *Reach for the Sky*

Reach for the Sky has recently received 2 year funding from The Scottish Government’s People and Communities Fund (£116,000) and Big Lottery’s Young Start Fund (£50,000). This will allow them to run Coach & Volunteer Pathway project which facilitates programmes; basketball development academies, basketball development academy league, summer streetball initiative and school projects. One of the funders commented positively on the list of outputs and outcomes in the application: “*there’s so much impact in this I can’t argue with it*”

Other examples:

“We tendered for a contract with the NHS and 15% of the scoring was related to outcomes and how you would monitor and evaluate your work. We were able to give examples of tools we were currently using and how we would use them to monitor and evaluate the outcomes on our tender bid. We were successful in winning the contract and at the presentation we highlighted that we would be able to show the difference we were making.” *Active Communities*

The evaluation of a pilot programme that aimed to address sectarianism helped Kilwinning secure £5,000 from Sense over Sectarianism.

Some of us have even influenced funders! Active Communities persuaded the Community Health Partnership to add another column to their reporting template so Active Communities could report not just on activities but on outcomes.

➤ **Evidence to build partnerships**

MACPool is using evidence to consolidate partnership with Active Schools.

Street Soccer’s partnership with Dunedin Canmore Housing, a large housing association in Edinburgh “is a good example of how gathering statistics from questionnaires and impact reports, presenting them in a good partnership proposal, has developed a growing relationship between our two organisations.”

Partnership is not always easy and Active Communities had to influence others to improve their evaluation!

“It has been challenging trying to get partners to work in the same way we do. This has made it difficult to gather data in some cases however we have persevered and are slowly making changes”. *Active Communities*

➤ **Engaging staff and service users**

Evaluation helps us engage and motivate our people. Spartans uses evaluation as a personal development tool for its staff. Another example from MACPool:

“In evaluating the sports sessions in the senior schools, we identified a real desire from many of the young people to get involved in delivering some activity, not just taking part in it. As a result of that, we engaged Sports Leaders UK and now have the first group of 25 16-17 year olds going through a Sports Leaders coaching qualification at our pool.” *MACPool*



The finishing post of a successful men’s health run organised by Active Communities!

5. What have we learned about how we work?

Being involved in the learning set has helped us crystallise what makes community sport different from other kinds of sport provision. The most important lesson is that community sport organisations largely use sport as a **means to an end** rather than an end in itself.

➤ Excellence isn't everything

Community sport organisations are interested in helping **anyone** get involved in sport and physical activity. Improvements in sporting competence are not end outcomes for us. We don't (just) measure our success by numbers of people who reach professional levels. We use sport to help people, for example, feel good about themselves, to work as a team or to develop life skills.

This quote illustrates our approach:

"Reach for the Sky strikes the correct balance between congratulating the winners – and not lauding them – by encouraging and supporting the losing team - without patronising them. All the participants are allowed to experience the thrill of winning or the frustration of defeat all within the context of having it reinforced to them that what's valued most highly is working hard and contributing to your team to the best of your ability. Many of the lessons children learn and the qualities they develop in the academy games are not just for basketball and are transferrable to every aspect of their growth and development off the court too." *Parent feedback to Reach for the Sky*

➤ We use community development approaches

Community sport organisations use a community development approach to reach the 'hard to reach'.

"If you want to deliver for the community you have to listen to what the community has to say" *MACPool*

"Every programme comes from consulting our community" *Reach for the Sky*

The diagram on the next page shows how community sport organisations use the method of 'taster sessions' to help get people involved in sport and physical activity who would not otherwise do so. The diagram shows the immediate and longer term outcomes of taster sessions and how we measure them. We provide evidence of the outcomes of taster sessions works later in this report.

Another lesson is the importance of building trusting **relationships**. Here is an extract from a longer reflection by, Spartans Youth Development Worker:

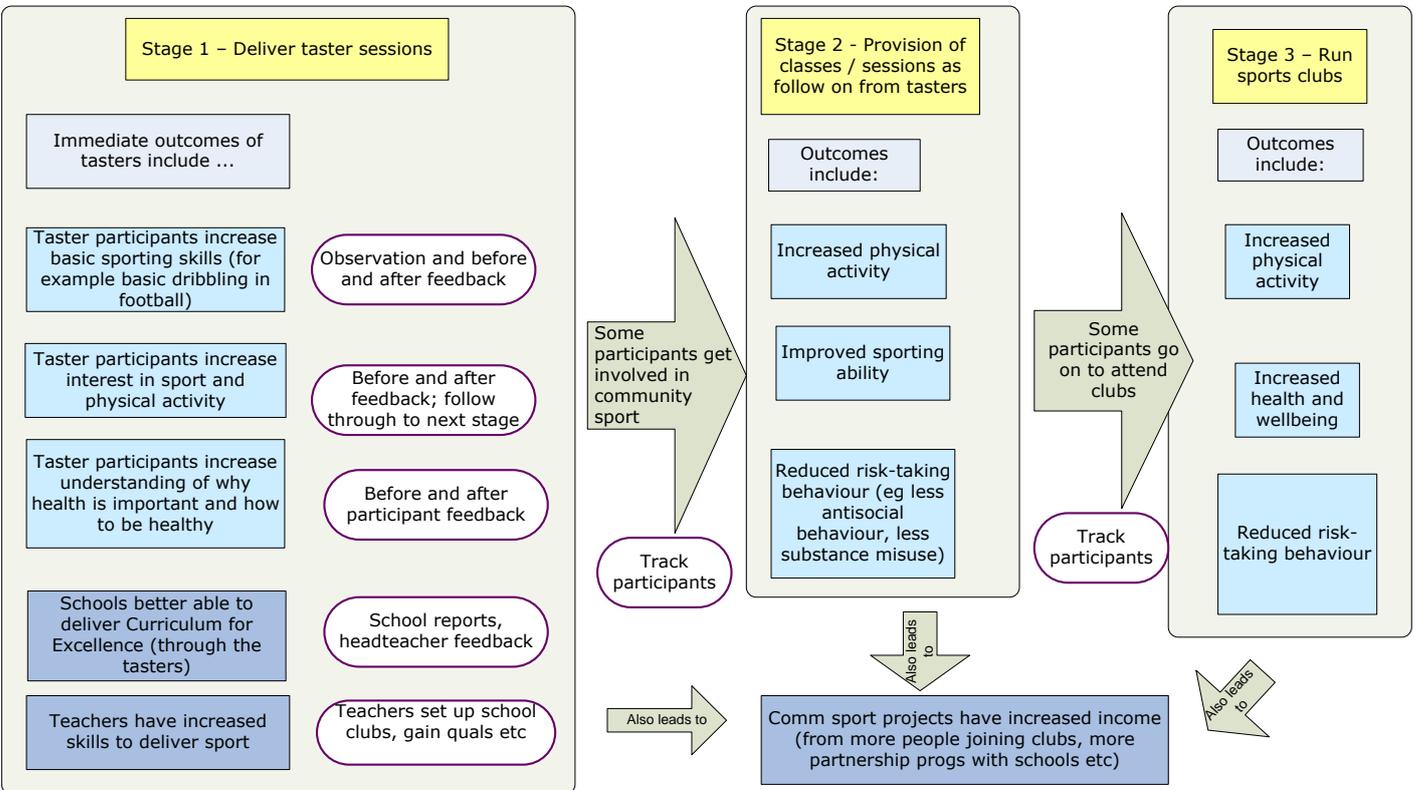
"A new young person wanted to attend the homework club we run in her school but she was really shy and nervous. She was crying from the moment she came in the classroom and stated '*she didn't want to be here*'. Another

worker comforted her and I gave her a thumbs up every 5 minutes to make her feel valued and show that someone was interested in her. When she was leaving she gave me a massive hug and said 'thanks'. I said 'I'll see you next week'. The following week, she came back and had the biggest smile on her face, looking confident and feeling comfortable with the environment ... Relationships create the opportunity for positive learning in life, create togetherness and social cohesion, and change people's lives." *Amy Henderson*

Community Sport Taster sessions
What difference do they make?
How do we evaluate them?

The words in these shapes are about what evaluation is needed

A taster is a structured and fun one off session or short programme which gives a basic introduction to sport or clubs activity. Taster sessions are often provided through outreach - for example into schools or community settings. Tasters may also happen at the community sport facility itself.

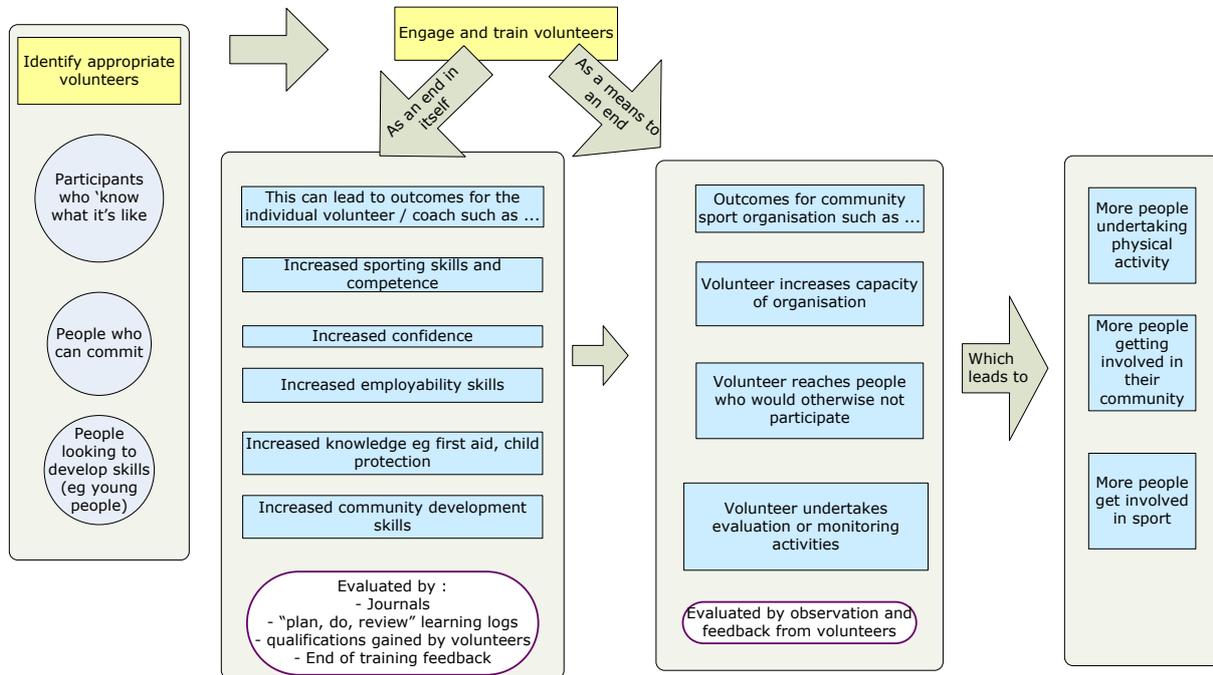


As a specific example of tasters, Active Communities started 2012 by organising a launch and a series of community road shows to promote opportunities. They took time at the road shows to talk to people about their health and wellbeing and what types of activities they were looking for. Feedback at the road shows led to Active Communities offering new classes for older adults, families and intergenerational events. This community led approach is helping to address the needs of local communities by providing services shaped by the community.

Another example is MACPool, in partnership with Active Schools ran an Aquathon which became a whole community event involving parents and volunteers. Using volunteers is important in community sport. The diagram on the next page shows how we achieve outcomes for volunteers and outcomes for people that we reach through volunteers.

Delivering through other people (such as volunteers or coaches)
What difference does it make?
How do we evaluate?

This model shows the outcomes when community sport organisations recruit and train volunteers, sessional staff or coaches.



➤ **Nevertheless we do create pathways to participation in sport**

This quote from a head teacher shows how community sport projects like Reach for Sky strike this balance:

“The academy structure created by Reach for the Sky is an excellent model. They encourage a wide base of players who can enjoy the sport and ensure that they all gain a sense of achievement. At the same time there is an opportunity for talented players to be nurtured and have a chance to shine!”
Primary School Head Teacher

The following 2 quotes from Active Schools Co-ordinators show the importance of community sport in providing sporting opportunities for young people:

“IPCSC has been absolutely critical in the development of rugby at all levels within Liberton High School ... It’s given our boys the opportunity to start playing, keep playing on a regular basis and has removed the real and perceived barriers to participating in Rugby ... which I do not believe would have happened if it hadn’t been for the programme.” Ellie Forgan, Active Schools Co-ordinator about Inch Park

“[Reach for the Sky’s] girl's project has been fantastic. We often find that girls fall away from physical activity towards the end of primary school and as this is a crucial stage of our work, it's great to have the girls’ project to offer them.” Katy Reilly Active Schools Co-ordinator on Reach for the Sky

6. What have we learned about the outcomes of community sport?

This section of the report pulls out some of the outcomes we have achieved through our work and provides some example evidence to back up our claims.

➤ Participants live healthier lives

Community sport helps people of all ages feel better about themselves and live more healthy lifestyles.

Example evidence

BUSC ran a programme for 200 children to encourage active healthy lifestyles. Schools said many children were missing out on the 60 minute activity they should have each day. The programme was based on a pilot and delivered through 5 weeks of presentation and games. Children said

- "Encouragement makes you happy"
- "I learned about brushing my teeth".

The teachers said the sessions addressed Curriculum for Excellence and added:

- "Lots of opportunities for raising self esteem and confidence"
- "The children could clearly link the healthy lifestyle choices and activities"
- "This programme exceeded my expectations, I have learned a lot in terms of delivering health & well being"

Example evidence

A recent Impact Report carried out by Queen Margaret University of 200 participants in Street Soccer showed that as a result of being involved:

- **96%** of participants reported improvements in their fitness
- **82%** felt attendance had improved their confidence and self-esteem
- **46%** of participants had reduced their substance misuse/intake.
- **76%** said they enjoyed the opportunity to be part of a team
- **62%** felt it gave them the chance to meet new people and make friends
- **42%** attendance at weekly drop-in sessions was their only access to sport

Example evidence

Active Communities provides physical activity sessions in 12 ROAR clubs on a fortnightly basis reaching over 200 older adults. Feedback from 4 participants:

- "I had no energy and was short of breath. This gentle exercise class has helped me to improve my breathing and I have more energy to do things around the house."
- "I fell outside my house and I had lost confidence and was frightened to go out. The ROAR gentle exercise class has helped me back on my feet and improved my balance. It has helped me get my confidence back."
- "Although I have difficulty standing, the chair based exercises have been fun and I have muscles I didn't know I had!"

- “My eyesight is bad and I keep bumping into things. The chair based exercises have helped me to strengthen my arms and legs.”

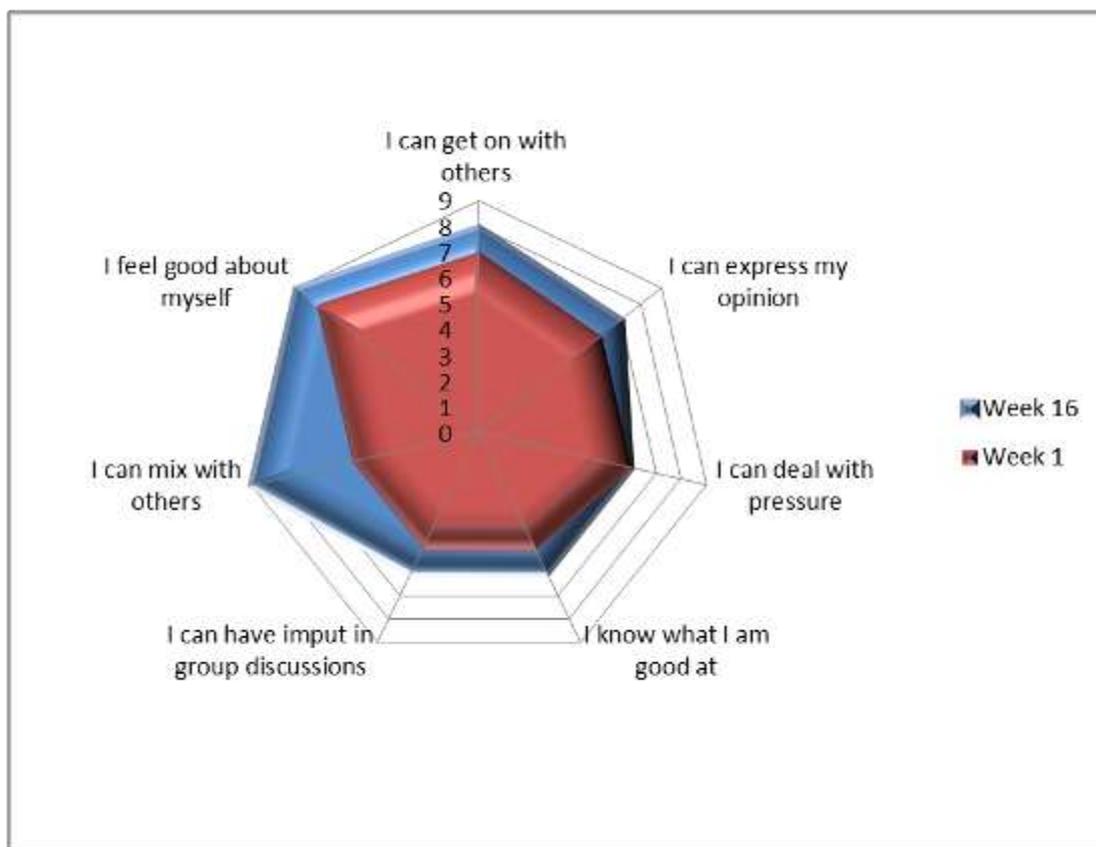
➤ **Participants feel more confident**

Example evidence

Below is a typical example from results carried out with 8 participants on the Street Soccer Plus programme using a radar chart. Each participant filled out two radar charts – one at the start of the programme and one at the end (after 16 weeks). The participants plot their own response to each of the statements with 0 meaning this is not true for me and 9 meaning this is strongly true for me.

The diagram shows the ‘before’ and ‘after’ results together for one participant. ‘Before’ (week 1) is in red and ‘after’ (week 16) is in blue. All participants equalled or bettered the first result. They felt better about themselves, mixed better than at the beginning and gave more positive input into discussions.

This visual shows how, *you were* and how, *you are now*. There has been a significant improvement in this person’s well-being. This is a typical result in the group Street Soccer worked with and along with fitness testing that we did separate, shows that the majority of people who attended the course become fitter and feel better about themselves.



Example evidence

"My son has never really been a sporty boy, although he would try to get involved in whatever sports were being played. He would rarely get picked by the other kids to join in and as a result of this and a terrible year of bullying in school, his confidence was nil. Since he started basketball, his whole outlook has changed. He has found his sport, he fits in with the team and his fitness level has increased. He can't wait till the next session and never has a basketball out of his hands. It's just done so much for him and his self confidence that it's hard to put it into words." Parent feedback to *Reach for the Sky*

"My daughter first was coached at her school during the 4 week programme by Reach for the Sky, she has always been a very shy girl and because of this she hadn't previously enjoyed taking part in any sports at school. She found the basketball classes so much fun that she wanted to join a club which was close in East Kilbride. It has been a very big boost for her confidence thanks to the way coaches have taken her under their wing; they really helped bring her out her shell. This encouragement has made a big difference to her and it has led to her doing more activities out with the club due to her confidence growing." Parent feedback to *Reach for the Sky*

➤ **Participants have increased leadership skills**

By engaging young people as volunteers, coaches and team leaders, community sport projects are using sport as a means to develop leadership skills.

Example evidence

Kilwinning's young people committees involve 50 young people. They have taken responsibility for planning and run fitness and gym based activities and team games and events. They take part in fundraising, grounds maintenance and media work. 8 young people presented at a high school assembly which led to 40 more young people getting involved in Kilwinning.

Example evidence

Reach for the Sky's Volunteer/Coach pathway worked with 37 young people from South Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire and Ayrshire. The project produced 6 new UKCC Level 1 Basketball coaches and 2 UKCC Level 1 Referees. As well as creating new coaches, 2 participants became qualified first aiders, 3 participants were trained in safe guarding & protecting children. 4 participants have gone on to employment and the other 33 are in higher education with many of them still continuing to coach as volunteers. 1 volunteer progressed through every challenge and training course and now is a full time member of staff.

Some of the volunteers were referred by the University of the West of Scotland:

"The students have helped develop hundreds of athletes from grass roots to excellence levels in an inclusive environment ... I could not highlight the impact enough that this placement experience has had on their overall degree." University of the West of Scotland programme leader

Example evidence

Inch Park’s Sports Leaders programme has had 25 sports leaders ‘graduate’ from their Level 2 award and 4 returned to complete their Community Level 2 Award this year. A further six are pursuing further education in a sport related field.

One young woman said of the volunteer experience, “I would never have picked up a rugby ball before, however, I have been helping out with Lismore Mini section and I am even thinking of starting to play.”

One young man is starting an Access to HND Sports Coaching course and said: “The Sports Leaders course helped me to get into College as we completed several different coaching courses and we had a lot of practical work through our Festival and the Easter Camp.” He has been helping out at Edinburgh South Football Club and has achieved a number of coaching badges.

Example evidence

“Kris has a dyslexic profile which somewhat hinders his academic learning capabilities, however, the confidence that Kris has gained since being awarded volunteer status at the Academy has been significant. Kris’s social skills have improved considerably lately which has allowed him to transfer a new confidence to his classroom environment. I regularly take time to speak to Kris regards his Academy volunteer activities, the consistent feedback I get is that he believes himself to be appreciated and valued by all the Academy staff resulting in him feeling extremely proud of his role.” Parent feedback to Spartans

➤ **Participants have improved team-working**

Example evidence

“From the first game to the last the kid’s appreciation of using teamwork to overcome the opposition developed considerably. Every game was played like the world cup final, which made it a pleasure to be a part of. The enjoyment was clear to see for all involved. The location the pitch was situated in could not have been better, sitting just outside the local community centre, which seemed to be the social meeting point for just about every kid in the estate.” Police feedback to Spartans

These photos are of t-shirts young people made at the end of a Spartans residential to capture their achievements against the planned outcomes. Young people gave each other feedback on the back of the t-shirts!



➤ Participants have increased employability

Example evidence

In an evaluation of Street Soccer's Street Soccer Personal Development programme 100% of participants gained qualifications and were engaged in providing coaching at drop-in sessions. All participants felt the programme had given them the skills and confidence they needed to progress in their lives and 70% of participants felt attendance at the programme had significantly increased their motivation. Of the people who participated:

- 33% were able to secure employment immediately after the programme.
- 17% made significant improvements in previous high risk behaviours.

Example evidence

Most of the community sport projects provide work experience. For example Kilwinning provided 60 young people with work experience in a single year.

Example evidence

Feedback from BUSC work experience young person:

"I learned a lot from my work experience, I enjoyed training twice a day and learning to become a coach, the coaching points were good and I liked the constructive feedback, it was fun and very interesting."

Example evidence

A volunteer at Reach for the Sky said:

"As I was part of the project I was able to get a reference regarding my work experience/volunteering with Reach for the Sky. I have now gained employment as an activity instructor/group leader for children."

➤ Participants have improved education attainment

Example evidence

In a recent sample of evaluations completed for a survey conducted in respect of Spartans' Homework Club provision, 9/9 young people surveyed stated that they were completing their homework more often since joining the Homework Club and would attend the Homework Club again if the opportunity arose to do so.

Feedback from different pupils:

"I like getting my homework done. That's the best thing"

"It's fun, exciting active and it helps me. I didn't used to do my homework. I just used to go home and play outside. It's too noisy at my house. 'cause of on line bingo."

"I've got dyslexia. I come so I get help. Dyslexia means I'm very clever but there is no point in giving me a book."

"I come because my Mum told me. I'm very lazy. Homework club is alright cause we get football. I'd like to get hockey"

➤ **Participants feel safer**

Example evidence

Reach for the Sky’s summer Streetball was set up in response to a community consultation that showed young people were too scared to use basketball courts in their communities. The project, in partnership with Strathclyde Police Community Partnership and South Lanarkshire Council, ran outdoor basketball sessions across the community (including using mobile basketball courts in, for example, car parks).

168 boys and 76 girls took part. 107 young people completed evaluation feedback. Although only a 1/3 said they did not normally feel safe to hang out in the area, some of the remainder had only felt safe when other youth projects were around. So it’s reasonable to say that Streetball was making the area safer. In addition 79% made new friends through taking part. 22 spectators completed questionnaires and comments included:

“It really helps kids mix together; it’s a really good and positive project.”

“The project benefits the community and increases children’s health and it also gets them focused plus they make new friends”

“It’s brought lots of kids from other areas out to participate”

One of the areas that Reach for the Sky went to was Greenhill. A comparison of statistics on youth disorder for the same time period in 2011 shows a decrease in youth disorder of 33%. One young person commented: “feel safe now, when coaches are here because you’re adults and can help if anything happens”

Streetball also provided a transition for some young people to get involved in sport more routinely. For example one young woman - Jennifer joined her local basketball academy 2 miles from where the Streetball session took place in Greenhill. The aim is that Jennifer will qualify as a coach and will be able to run sessions herself more regularly in Greenhill including joining the coaching team for Streetball in 2013.



7. Reflections

"At the start I was 'oh no it's evaluation!' And now I've changed my attitude – I can see the value" Helen from Active Communities

Here are our reflections about the community sport evaluation learning set.

- 1. Be clear about the purpose.** In this case it was made clear that the Learning Set was about evaluation and how to self-evaluate. This was not about being a Social Enterprise as such, although the added value of evaluation for improving their efficiency and effectiveness was reinforced throughout the programme. This helped to maintain buy-in.
- 2. Build trust.** We had to be honest with each other and share ideas. We became critical friends and sounding boards about each other's evaluation methods and ideas. As one of us said "It has been like a therapy session at times!" What helped create this 'safe space' included the following:
 - We prioritised getting to know each other. We began to look forward to hearing how each other was getting on. Some of us kept in touch between sessions and even developed joint projects
 - We made the Learning Set sessions increasingly interactive. By year 2, sessions were facilitated discussions to enable peer learning and critique. We moved from a position where the sessions were largely one-way information giving by ESS to one where ESS empowered us to learn from each other.
 - We sometimes split into smaller groups to reduce travel burdens.
 - We were honest with ESS and the Trust about how to improve the Learning Set and they took on board our feedback. This increased enthusiasm and ownership of the programme.
 - The Trust and ESS were available for support and were happy to review draft reports. Where there have been difficulties for us in meeting deadlines, there was flexibility. This has enabled a few of us to submit reports slightly later without disrupting the programme. This flexibility has worked both ways. Where reports have not met the Trust's guidelines we could resubmit following our feedback.
- 3. Keep it practical.** We use real examples, not case studies to get to grips with evaluation. We used the methods we designed. We shared our data. We told each other how evaluation had improved aspects of our work such as staff working practices, funding and improved the difference we make.
- 4. Evaluation is worth it.** Despite the difficult economic climate all 8 of us are stronger position now that we were 2 years ago. That's not just thanks to evaluation. We've worked hard, we've built relationships, we've got community support and we've got fantastic staff and volunteers. But all of us have used evaluation to improve the way we work, attract funding and make ourselves more sustainable.

8. Have we achieved our outcomes?

1. Up to 8 community sport projects will have increased self-evaluation skills.

Achieved: as this whole report demonstrates.

2. Up to 8 projects will have increased ability to explain the impact of their work and to use that evidence to influence funders, stakeholders and partners.

Achieved: section 4 of this report in particular provides evidence.

3. The Robertson Trust will have increased understanding and evidence about the impact of their funding in the field of community sport and enterprise.

Achieved: the Trust's increased understanding has fed into its own decision-making, briefing papers it has produced and partnership working with, for example, sportscotland.

4. Other projects working in the field of community sport will have increased knowledge about how to measure and evidence the impact of their work.

Partly achieved: dissemination, for example at the Senscot Sport and Social Enterprise conference, has helped other projects understand evaluation. Spartans benchmarking visits have involved sharing evaluation and approaches. We have plans to do more to raise others' understanding in the future.

5. Policy makers and funders of community sport will have a better understanding of the difference community sport can make – and how to evaluate it.

Partly achieved: our submission to the Scottish Parliament's Community Sport inquiry for example has raised awareness with some policy-makers. The dissemination of this report we hope will do more.

Annex – tools we use to evaluate our work

Weaver's Triangle¹ (Kilwinning)

Weavers triangle is a favourite tool I now use in meetings to develop an initial idea/concept with partners such as active schools coordinators and schools.

Balance scorecard (MACpool)

We use a balanced scorecard which enables us to measure progress against targets set out in our 2013-2016 strategy document, thus keeping the organisation focused on meeting its objectives.

Measuring physical fitness - Cooper Test (Street Soccer)

Participating clients from our data bases or ones who are on an existing programme we would look at tools such as Cooper Test (run as far as you can in 12 minutes) or press-up and sit-up testing. Using a clear baseline at the start of the course and then again near the end of the course to see if their fitness has improved during the period they are on the course. Each participant can see their own development and if funders are interested in, "Health and Fitness statistics", this gives a clear indication of the importance of a healthy body.

The resting heart rates were taken prior to any activity. The working heart rates were taken immediately after they finished the Cooper Test and show how much effort was put into the run. Use of heart monitors would be a more accurate way of measuring this. We would also measure the time it takes to get the heart rate down to the resting rate. The quicker it gets back to normal the fitter you are.

Radar charts – see main report (Street Soccer)

For softer outcomes such as, how they feel about their selves or do they mix with others, what they are good at or expressing their opinions, we would look at Radar Charts. Again charting their position at the start of the programme and how they perceive their selves near the end of the course. This is a self-assessment which if backed by a progress report by a tutor or coach and can produce a strong endorsement for the success of the programme.

'Goal'den moments (Spartans)

A "Goal'den moment provides personal moments from their participation, a certain day or event which stands out in their mind.

Involving children to set outcome indicators (BUSC)

Children were asked what makes you happy? Playing games with my friends was the answer. This information is vital, we know we will improve the child's mental health, if we play fun games with their friends

Evaluating the benefits of volunteering (Active Communities)

At a recent volunteer event we gave teams a 5 min challenge to list "what volunteering meant to them" or "if you had a magic wand" what would you like to see us achieve in 2013. This provided valuable feedback without participants realising what we were trying to achieve.

¹ A planning and evaluation tool adapted from the Charities Evaluation Services Planning Triangle, originally developed by Jane Weaver.

Measuring mental health (Active Communities)

We use pictures to make it easy and fun to collate mood changes before and after taking part in exercise

How are you feeling??

 HAPPY	 TIRED	 STRESSED
 ENERGETIC	 SAD	 WONDER WOMAN

Spectator questionnaires (Reach for the Sky)

Our spectator questionnaire started is an open ended short questionnaire to capture views of bystanders, parents, teachers, community workers. This has been very effective and provided us with a large number of incredible quotes which have helped illustrate what we have achieved.

Leaders Log Book (Active Communities)

When working with older adults it is more effective for the leader to record participants' comments and to record progress they see on a weekly basis.

Vox Pod (Kilwinning)

Vox Pod unit is a brief case with a laptop and camera that asks participants a series of questions. This gives a real feel for the impact our activities before during and after the project. The information gathered can be viewed in two ways with each child's comments running through start to finish or the different answer to one question of every child's answer to that same question. We made a slight change to the format or amount of participants questioned as it was quite a time consuming process having to sit each candidate down in front of the unit to go through the question and answer process. Other children can comment through the more traditional method of questionnaires.

Other tools used by Spartans:

- ✓ Parental Consent Forms used to capture outcomes baseline
- ✓ Journals and Log Books (for example for work experience placements)
- ✓ Hand held video interviews
- ✓ Photos to record participant achievements
- ✓ Peer feedback and awards
- ✓ University placements to conduct evaluation projects
- ✓ Scale based questionnaires