



Photo credit: <https://bit.ly/2kBKmvH>

Theme(s): Partnership

Type of initiative:  
Active Parks

Year: 2013 - till present day

Location:  
Birmingham  
United Kingdom

Owner: Birmingham Wellbeing Service

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### DESCRIPTION

We wanted to remove all barriers to physical activity, to encourage people to get active at a grass route level, which meant carefully selecting deprived communities where people don't have access to services. By offering a wide range of activities in people's local parks, they have the opportunity to try something new, or something they otherwise would have been unable to do due to cost implications, location, or fear. Some of the sessions we offer are aiming at specific groups. Tai Chi is aimed at an elderly group, however we have no restrictions and keep it inclusive to everybody, meaning if a grandad is looking after his grandchild, they are both welcomed at the session and able to participate. By offering a wide choice of activities there is something for everybody to join in with, we have walking groups, zumba sessions, Green fit baby, Tai chi, walking football, Free family fun sessions (which entail a whole range of activities targeted at the whole family), bush craft, forest school, den building, and running groups. These are just some of the many activities we have to offer, and our programme gets bigger, with more new activities added regularly.

### SUCSESSES

Active parks has had many successes, as we listen strongly to what the community wants, we have established great community links within local organisations and offer participants a way to get active by removing all barriers.

### CHALLENGES

The main challenges have been establishing what works well, and how to change what isn't working well. For example, if a session isn't well attended we have to look at if it is at the right time, if it is the right activity, or if it is the right instructor for the session. If we are targeting the right people or if we are just putting these sessions on because we think they will work. This is why its so important to listen to our outside partners and participants, to encourage good communication and establish good practice.