



London Borough of Camden: Camden Active Spaces

Inspired by ProActive Camden (Camden's strategic partnership for sport and physical activity) and funded by the Camden Clinical Commissioning Group and Camden Public Health, the London Borough of Camden is halfway through an 18 month programme to develop design options, build and install a groundbreaking new concept in bespoke facilities. Camden Active Spaces will be located in schools across the borough, with the aim of significantly increasing participation in sport and physical activity by young children and their families, both during and outside of school hours.

Camden schools where health outcomes are the poorest will receive an installation of high-quality, state-of-the-art structures which promote sport and physical activity. Drawing inspiration from the London 2012 Olympic Park, Camden Active Spaces will have flexible and accessible structures for a variety of recognised sports (table tennis, tennis, basketball) and physical activity (running, climbing, crawling). These structures are intended to inspire schools, voluntary sports clubs, volunteers and young leaders to provide more extensive and exciting programmes of activity for increased participation and healthier schools and communities.

While meeting a general need to increase levels of physical activity, we also intend to target higher risk users (specifically overweight children and young and people and inactive adults) and develop structured programmes of activity to complement Camden's National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) compliant child and adolescent weight management services.

Camden Active Spaces will also provide new and exciting opportunities for structured and supervised programmes of physical activity and casual/recreational (i.e. drop-in) use. This should be both in and out of school time (after school and holidays), for pupils, their families and the wider (catchment) community.

Schools were selected following a selection process based on indices of need (free school meals, deprivation, play provision, ward obesity), site suitability (access) and commitment by the candidate school to make the facility accessible to the community outside of school hours.

“Camden schools where health outcomes are the poorest will benefit from high-quality installations for sport and physical activity”

In April 2013, responsibility for public health was transferred to local authorities. This case study is part of a series highlighting the innovative work London local authorities have done to promote healthier lifestyles and reduce health inequalities since taking on this new role. For more information, email addicus.cort@londoncouncils.gov.uk





The project is funded by Camden Clinical Commissioning Group and London Borough of Camden (through Camden & Islington Public Health). A project management consultancy, Developing Projects, is used to manage the 'Camden Active Spaces' project plan and delivery. A Project Board oversees each stage of the project and includes internal and external partners from Camden & Islington Public Health, CCG, Culture & Environment, Children, Schools and Families and Strategy.

Seven schools across the borough have been selected (two secondary schools and five primary) and have assigned leads within the school to support the project's delivery. A competitive process has identified two organisations that will create bespoke designs to fulfil the needs and aspirations of both the school and surrounding communities. Highly successful engagement approaches and events have been organised at each site to consult with staff, pupils, governors, neighbouring community groups and local residents. These have been used to co-produce a bespoke design for each site based on the needs and aspirations of all relevant stakeholders.

London Borough of Camden and Camden & Islington Public Health are currently working on a joint collaboration with University College London to determine monitoring and evaluation processes for the project. Initial key success factors of this project would include:

- increased physical activity levels in young people attending schools hosting an 'Active Space' and young people in the local community (simultaneously supporting the Healthy Schools programme)
- increased physical activity opportunities for young people in Camden
- improved educational attainment
- 50 school staff, teachers and playground supervisors, trained
- 30 community volunteers trained and supporting sport and physical activity programmes
- 40 young leaders trained and supporting sport and physical activity programmes in primary schools
- 10 new school based sport and physical activity clubs (Change for Life format)
- 10 links with external providers of sport and physical activity such as voluntary sector sports clubs.

In April 2013, responsibility for public health was transferred to local authorities. This case study is part of a series highlighting the innovative work London local authorities have done to promote healthier lifestyles and reduce health inequalities since taking on this new role. For more information, email addicus.cort@londoncouncils.gov.uk