

April – December 2022

GEN22

Active Partnerships Programme Progress Report

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Context

Gen22 is a Legacy programme of Birmingham 2022 and provides an opportunity for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds aged 16-24 from the West Midlands to gain employability-boosting opportunities through the glow of Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. The programme provides them with the opportunity to be involved and feel part of the Games, through three strands; physical activity and wellbeing creative, and digital. Our focus is Physical Activity.

Through this approach, the Gen22 programme aims to contribute to two of the mission pillars of the Games;

- Bringing people together
- Helping the region to grow and succeed.

Active Partnerships in the region have committed to facilitating a programme of engagement with a target of recruiting 360 young people who might otherwise struggle to access Games-related opportunities; with the aim of boosting their confidence and employability skills for our sector.

Over a two-year period, each of the six West Midlands Active Partnerships will manage the recruitment of 60 Gen22 participants, into 30 hours of meaningful volunteering assignments, giving young people access to purposeful opportunities and networks with the aim of developing confidence and work-related skills to raise their aspirations.

Programme Leads are working in collaboration with local delivery partners to identify organisations best placed to nominate young people who will benefit most from the Gen22 programme and / or organisations best equipped to offer worthwhile volunteering assignments to host and offer high quality support to guide the young person through their Gen22 journey.

Participants benefit from a package of support before, during and after their assignment, delivered by programme partners, which includes employability workshops from Severn Trent Water, entry onto the Duke of Edinburgh programme, a welcome pack including kit from the B2022 Organising Committee and a guaranteed reference from their host.

The West Midlands Active Partnership Young Persons' Volunteering Gen22 programme is due to run until February 2024, and so our focus is very much on identifying high quality, carefully selected projects that individually benefit participants.

Partnerships

The West Midlands Active Partnership network comprises of 6 Active Partnerships (Fig:1).

Each Partnership has tackling inequalities in physical inactivity at the heart of their role. Individual Active Partnerships (APs) are led by the distinct needs of each 'place' featuring a set of well-defined priorities for respective localities. These differ across the broader region but include several shared objectives and priorities.

Insight across the WM partnerships consistently identifies the need for an inclusive workforce to engage and connect with people to overcome some of the underlying inequalities that prevent people being active, with cultural diversity and empathy high on the list of knowledge and skills.



Figure 1: WM Active Partnership Network

Together we recognise the significant potential of expanding our collective workforce, through advocating a people-led approach to tackling inequalities in activity.

As such, Gen22 investment aligns to the overarching role of each West Midlands Active Partnership and the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games providing an opportunity, through their legacy Gen22 team, to implement a wider volunteer programme linked to the Games' values, supporting shared desired outcomes and creating legacy benefits before, during and after the Games.

Steering Group

The West Midlands Gen22 Sport and Physical Activity Steering Group, comprising of representatives from each Active Partnership, Sport England, and B2022 Organising Committee, has been set up to provide a forum to contribute to the sport & physical activity strand of the Gen22 young person's volunteering programme, ensuring deliverers and partners engaged on the programme are providing an integrated offer, led by the distinct needs of the region. The Group aims to ensure a consistent approach between all partner organisations, act as a central forum to identify priorities and share best practice, and to collate and share learning ensuring that young people have an excellent volunteering experience and build capacity across the WM region.



Investment Outcomes

Active Partnerships have been supported to deliver the Gen22 Young Persons Volunteering Programme across the West Midlands with £250k of Sport England investment.

The purpose of this investment is to develop a better understanding of these key questions:

- 1) *Does the glow of and connection to a major sports event attract young people from under-represented groups to engage in community-based volunteering and social action?*
- 2) *Do their volunteering assignments enable young people to develop work-related skills and experience that will support them in the future?*
- 3) *Does the experience of participating in the programme empower young people to continue to volunteer or volunteer in a different way?*
- 4) *Do the organisations that host young people go on to adopt more inclusive recruitment practices?*

It is important that the learnings from all aspects of this programme are captured effectively to ensure that maximum outputs are achieved for the B2022 Organising Committee, Sport England and each Active Partnership to inform future investment into the field and the development of a framework for future delivery.



Monitoring Evaluation and Learning

Sport England have set aside £12k of investment for the Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation (MEL) of this programme. The differing requirements of key partners mean that there are complexities to the delivery of the MEL piece for Gen22. Therefore, it is key that MEL techniques are developed to capture everything required collaboratively, with efficient processes, without overly burdening the participants or hosting organisations.

Led by Active Black Country, an MEL Framework was developed to tackle the key questions posed by Sport England as part of their investment requirements. This Framework was agreed by the Steering Group in July 2022, and it was subsequently decided that an MEL specialist should be appointed to guarantee that the learnings from all aspects of this programme were captured effectively, to ensure that maximum outputs would be achieved for the B2022 Organising

Committee, Sport England and each Active Partnership, informing future investment into the field and the development of a framework for future delivery.

In September 2022, following a tendered process, a team from Coventry University were appointed to deliver this piece of work. Professor David Broom and Dr Maxine Whelan presented their research proposal to the Steering Group which has since been approved by the Coventry University Research Ethics Committee.

A programme of pre- and post-assignment surveys with participants and host organisations will be undertaken alongside a series of focus groups with participants and virtual 1-2-1 interviews with host organisations, delivered at opportune moments, throughout the remainder of the programme to gather data and learning to inform a framework for future delivery. In addition, Active Partnership Programme Leads will also be interviewed as part of the process to appraise the effectiveness of AP collaboration on the programme.

Progress

The Gen22 programme has been underway in earnest since the beginning of April 2022 for Active Partnerships. AP Programme Leads, supported by the WM Young Persons' Volunteer Lead overseeing the rollout of the Gen22 programme, have been working to identify new and existing organisations within their networks who can support the identification of young people who would benefit most from the opportunity, and to uncover high quality and worthwhile volunteering opportunities to ensure each young person individually benefits from their involvement in the programme.

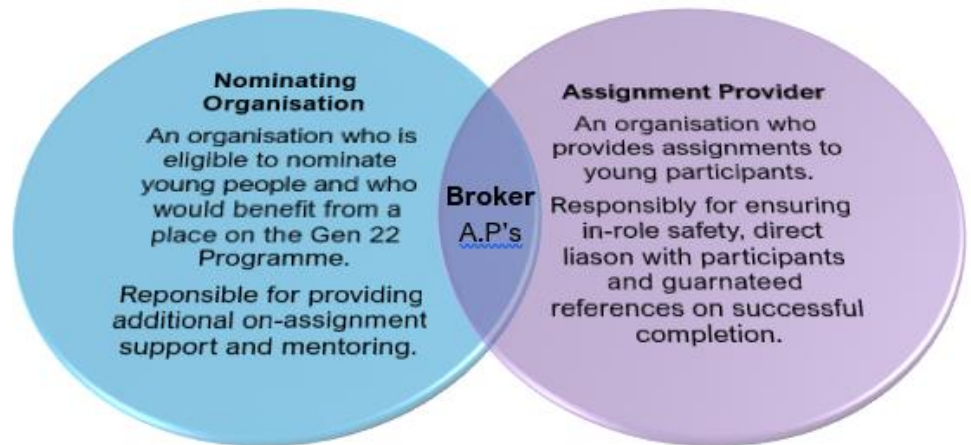


Figure 2: The role of Active Partnerships

The first £90k of delivery funding has been transferred to Active Partnerships and is in the process of being allocated to projects across the region. To date, WM Active Partnerships have registered 131 young people aged 16 -24 to participate in the programme which is a third of the way to our 2-year target of 360.

Progress Overview

The first £90k of delivery funding has been transferred to Active Partnerships and is in the process of being allocated to projects across the region. To date, WM Active Partnerships have registered 131 young people aged 16 -24 to participate in the programme which is a third of the way to our 2-year target of 360.

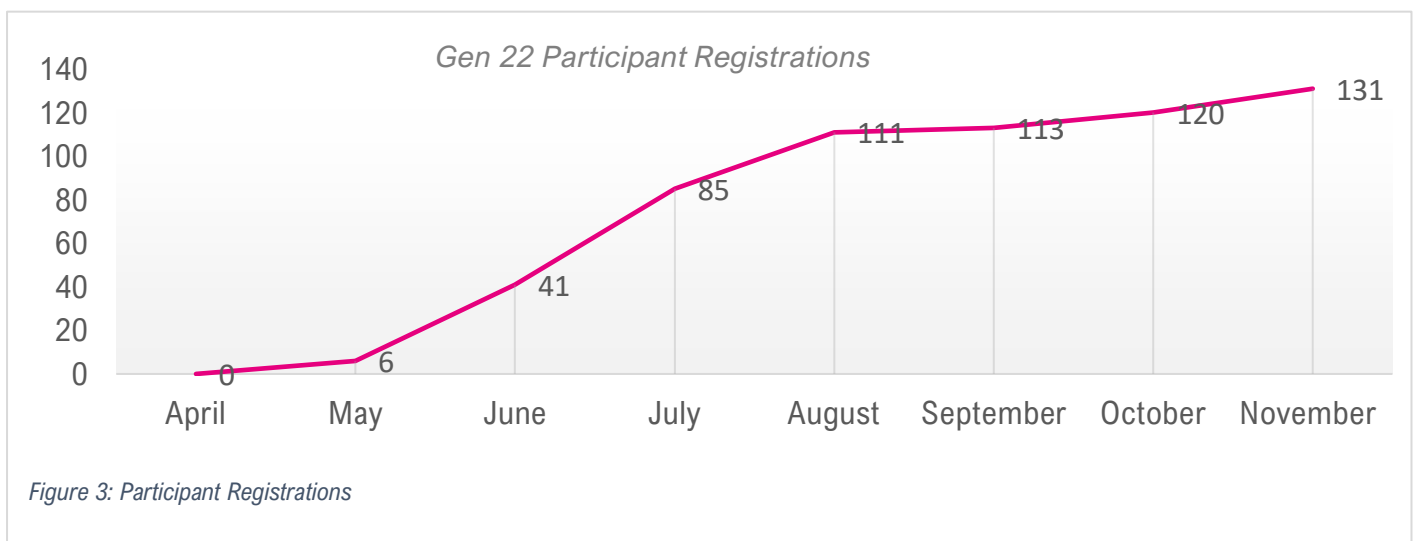


Figure 3: Participant Registrations

Focus has been directed towards building relationships with organisations that are able to ‘nominate’ young people to access volunteering opportunities through the programme. Seemingly, volunteering opportunities are easier to identify than are the participants to fulfil them, particularly considering the cohort we are aiming to work with.

Projects are underway with over 20 different hosting organisations in the West Midlands region. Organisations range from leisure operators, youth groups, SEND focussed organisations and more traditional voluntary sector sports clubs. This figure does not include those organisations who have or will be supporting Active Partnerships to nominate young people to take part in the programme.

Active Partnerships have utilised the capabilities of partners (new and existing) to identify young people who would benefit the most from participation in this programme and have focussed on recruiting from priority areas within their respective regions. Figure 4 (below) highlights that Gen 22 participants are largely resident in areas of socio-economic deprivation:

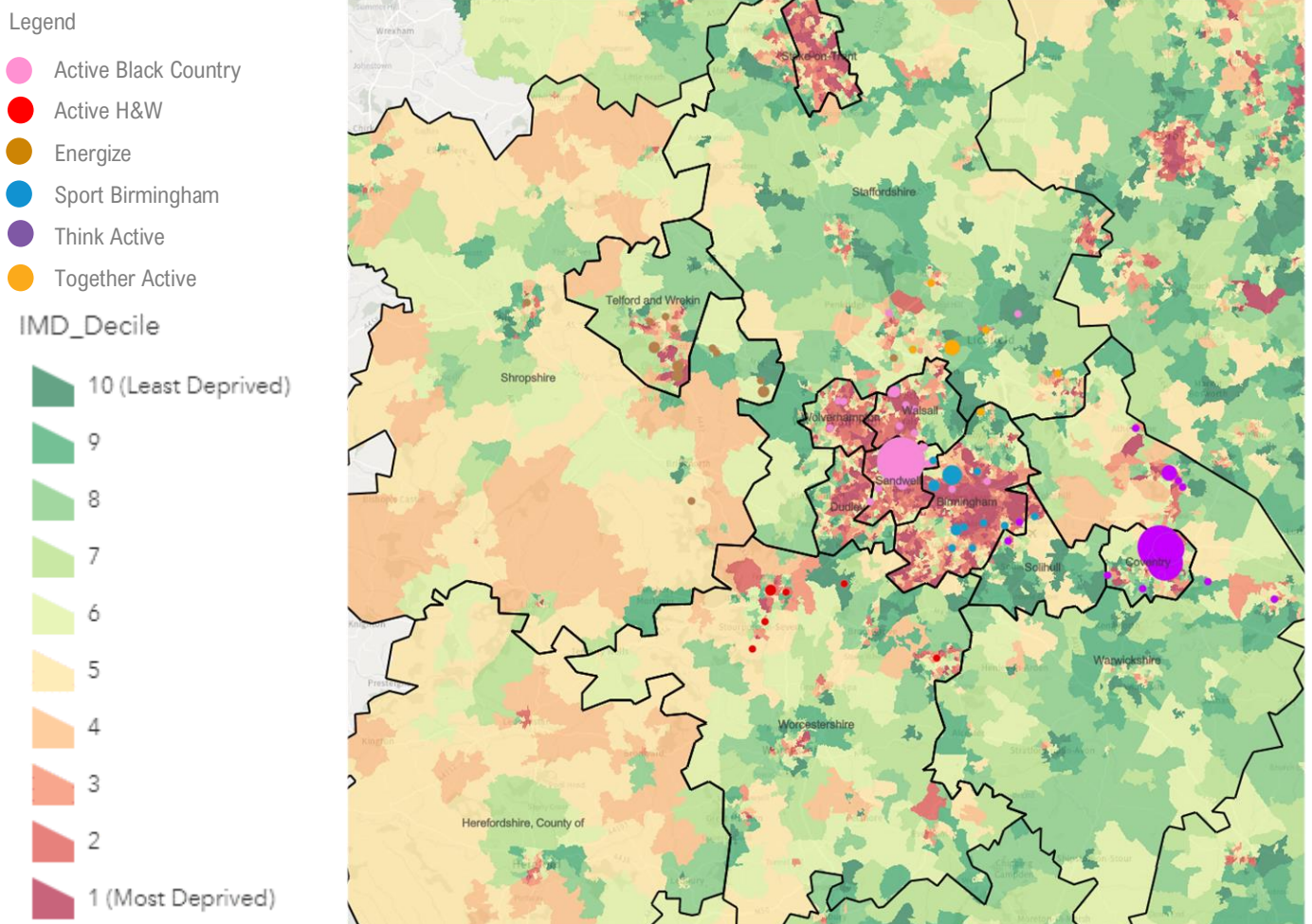


Figure 4: Gen 22 Participants and Overall IMD 2019

The demographic breakdown of participants registered on the Gen 22 programme so far is as follows:

Figure 5: Gender Identity

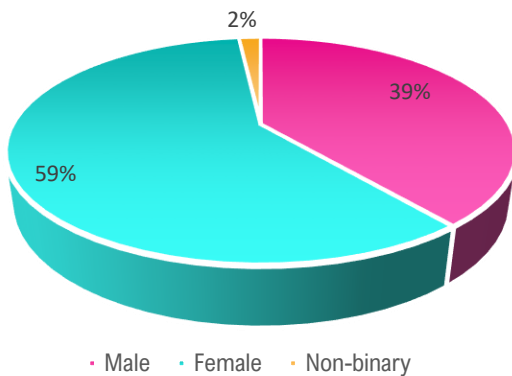


Figure 6: Participants with a disability or long-term health condition

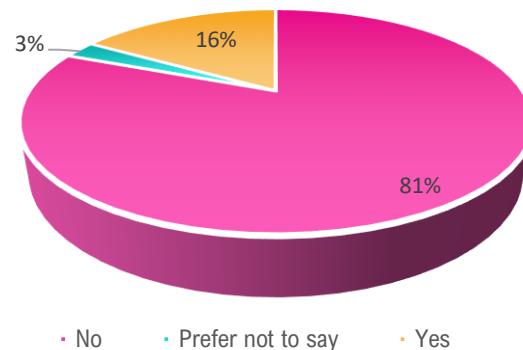
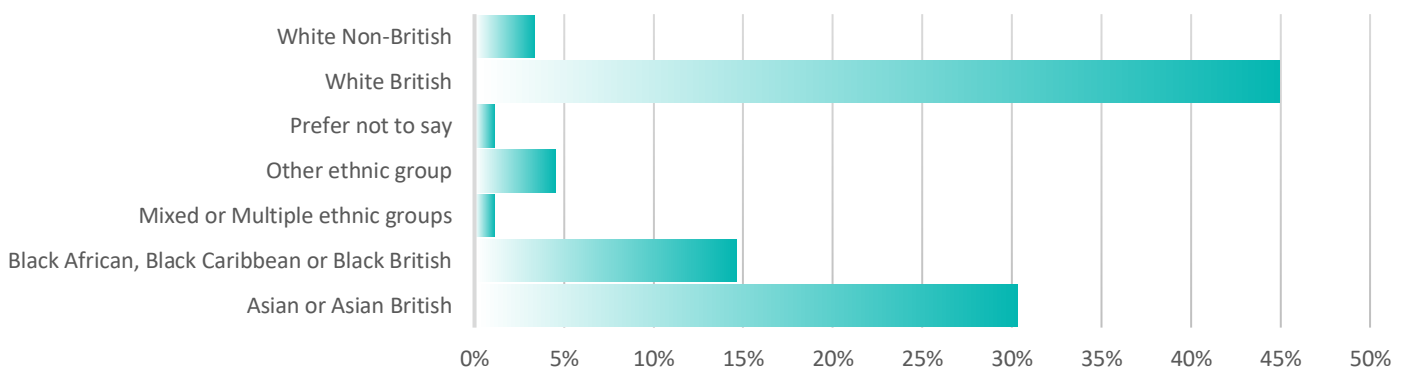


Figure 7: Participant Ethnicity



Adding Value

A key focus of the Gen 22 programme involves adding value to each project where possible. The Gen22 Team from the Organising Committee have developed a package of benefits to add value to the funding spent per participant and to build on the intrinsic benefits of the training and assignments offered. This includes:

- A guaranteed reference for each participant following completion of their assignment.
- Employability workshops delivered as part of corporate social responsibility from Severn Trent Water, which include:
 - Grow Yourself: focussing on confidence building.
 - Get That Job: CV writing and interview practice.
 - Shine Bright at Work: building effective working relationships and communication in the workplace.
- Entry onto the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, which is being delivered as a pilot scheme of a new approach to the recruitment of DofE participants.
- A Welcome Pack for each participant containing Games Kit, souvenirs, and a Gen 22 handbook.
- A pair of Games tickets (prior to B2022).

In addition to this menu of opportunities for participants, Active Partnerships have committed to adding value and individual projects across the WM AP Network have been developed to maximise the impact on each young person taking part. Several of the organisations involved as assignment providers are experienced in mentoring young people from our target audience, and this expertise has become a key element of projects.

Additionally, partners have shown interest in getting involved with Gen 22 to offer supporting opportunities over and above the assignment provision element. For example, a project outline has been developed with Swim England, who have offered the Level 1 Assistant Swimming Teacher qualification at a reduced price, alongside complimentary CPD seminars and hands on support to get individual projects off the ground, enabling AP's to effectively partner with Leisure Operators in the local area and make a real impact on workforce issues through the Gen 22 programme.

Similarly, discussions are underway with the Community Engagement Team at the MOD who are keen to offer teambuilding, leadership and confidence building courses important for soldiers, but also transferrable into normal life, as part of projects that have been set up with other organisations; and the Youth Employment Service have highlighted that they are able to draw down funding for additional training required for Gen 22 participants such as First Aid at Work courses.

Active Black Country

The 'Creating an Active Black Country' strategy focusses on tackling inequalities in physical activity levels in the region and the ABC People Plan ensures that local people are at the heart of this approach. The People Plan aims to ensure the development of a workforce that is reflective of the local population, better able to engage and inspire opportunities for everyone to be active. As such, Active Black Country have aligned their Gen22 programme with this approach and are focussing on improving employability and employability skills amongst disadvantaged young people in the Black Country.

Pilots

ABC were involved in the delivery of a series of pilot projects during the latter part of 2021 to inform the development of the Gen22 concept; ABC are actively building on the learning attributed to these projects during the delivery of their main Gen22 programme. These projects aimed to increase employability and improve training opportunities for 7 young people already engaged within identified 'Community Hubs'. Working with the ABC's Partnership Lead Officer (Communities), five organisations were identified who wanted to increase capacity and sustainability. ABC funded young people from each organisation to receive training and support which enabled them to complete their voluntary 30 hours social action project and increase their employability skills. Below are the organisations and brief focus for each:

- Inspire Group – Walsall
 - Multi-skill activity sessions for families, designed and delivered by a Gen22 participant using outdoor park spaces in Mossley, Walsall. The participant completed full training and subsequently gained employment from the organisation.
- West Bromwich Basketball – Sandwell
 - Two young people were identified by the club's director to increase female membership and support the delivery of additional sessions as coaches, and to provide support with administrative duties. They received training and shadowed experienced coaches before taking the lead on female-only sessions.
- NPV Football- Wolverhampton
 - Football sessions were delivered in primary and secondary schools in Wolverhampton. One young person was identified to receive training and mentoring to complement their existing studies. They gained experience from an experienced coach before assisting school sessions as well as supporting local events to promote physical activity.
- Soccer 2000 – Dudley
 - An existing young volunteer was funded for a football coaching qualification and mentoring to enable them to deliver sessions independently subsequently gaining employment and in turn
 -

increasing club capacity. Sessions were developed for and delivered in schools across Dudley and at school holiday camps.

- Wolverhampton Wrestling – Wolverhampton
 - Two young attendees were identified to become Gen22 participants. One female and one male. The club wanted to attract more females and increase capacity. Both volunteers received mentoring from the head coach as well as training, to enable them to coach independently. Both have remained with the club and continue to assist the head coach in session delivery.

Places Leisure

Alongside Sport Birmingham; Active Black Country approached Places Leisure to discuss the possibility of developing a Gen 22 project, aligned with the ABC People Plan, based around developing a cohort of qualified Lifeguards, with the aim of tackling the apparent shortage of appropriately qualified young people in the region.

Places Leisure utilised their recruitment channels to identify 9 young people who met the eligibility criteria set out by the Gen 22 programme requirements and would most benefit from the opportunity, who subsequently completed their National Pool Lifeguard Qualification in September. Each of these have now gained at least part-time employment with Places Leisure at West Bromwich Leisure Centre or elsewhere.

There continues to be known shortages within the aquatic workforce (including lifeguards and swimming teachers) meaning that there will continue to be opportunities to support young people into employment through this programme.

Walsall Wizards

Walsall Wizards Basketball Club, approached Active Black Country through their 'open' expression of interest process for funding opportunities, which, with similar systems in place across the WM AP network, is proving to be a successful source for Gen22 project ideas.

Walsall Wizards are a community basketball club offering basketball coaching and competition in the Willenhall area of the Walsall borough, who identified a need to recruit qualified coaches to support demand for its services, the development of club programmes and to improve club sustainability.

This project is straightforward, but one that fully encompasses the Gen22 aims and objectives. 15 young people already involved in the club who fit the Gen22 eligibility criteria, were offered the opportunity to train to become qualified Basketball Coaches and gain coaching experience, with the possibility of employment at the club upon completion of their volunteer hours for Gen 22.

To date, 11 of the participants have completed a Level 1 Umpire and Level 2 Basketball Coach qualification with the remainder due to complete their course in February 2023. Once qualified, participants will complete their 30-hour assignment in-house at club sessions with younger players mentored by experienced coaches to build confidence, and at school holiday camps held regularly by the club. Once completed, the participants will have the opportunity to become club employees and will be tasked with delivering satellite programmes under the club umbrella at local primary schools, enabling the club to develop their outreach and membership base.

Project Planning

ABC are developing a strong pipeline of projects and have identified several new and existing partner organisations keen to be a part of Gen22. An agreement has been reached with Challenge Academy who operate an outdoor pursuits centre near Dudley, to deliver a series of team building, confidence building and leadership workshops based around their "Bags of Character" concept. Initially ABC had partnered with Talentmatch; an organisation focussed on mentoring and improving the employability of young people, to identify potential candidates for the programme. However, since funding ceased for Talentmatch in October 2022, ABC have turned their focus to working with Juniper Training, voluntary sector support organisations in each Local Authority area and the four Black Country Virtual Schools who are extremely keen to nominate

young people to the Gen22 programme. Initially, these organisations have been offered the opportunity to nominate young people to take part in the Swim England Swimming Teacher Assistant project, the Challenge Academy project and potentially an extension of the Places Leisure Lifeguarding project.

Active Herefordshire & Worcestershire

Active Herefordshire and Worcestershire have focussed their approach on young people who are least engaged and would benefit most from the opportunities created by Gen22 in areas of socio-economic deprivation.

The Project Manager for Children and Young People was new in post in April 2022. As a result, due to the standing start in terms of building relationships, significant effort has been put into developing new and existing links with organisations who are able to offer worthwhile assignments for Gen22 participants. As such, a pipeline of projects is in place for young people to step into following the identification of appropriate volunteers from nominating organisations, which is also well underway. The team have also now recruited for additional capacity to support the CYP Project Manager to deliver the Gen22 programme one-day-per-week.

Kidderminster & District Youth Trust

Seven young people identified by Kidderminster & District Youth Trust, have been supported to train to become young sports leaders and to support the delivery of youth club sessions and youth club residential trips. Each participant has been tasked with arranging and delivering sports activities, planning events and travel arrangements, gaining experience in supporting and working with younger people as part of their youth work experience. Between them they have so far completed 130 hours of volunteering in their youth club setting.

As a result of the impact of their Gen22 project, KDYT are in the process of developing a further young leader's programme to support more young people to build confidence and employability for the future.

Redditch Self-Defence Association

Five young people have registered to take part in Gen22 with five more identified to enrol on the programme in the new year.

The organisation has arranged for these young people to assist with in-house coaching sessions with their peers and younger children, building their own delivery capacity while developing the confidence and leadership skills of the young people involved. They have also been supporting operationally focussed tasks as part of their assignment by working on reception and developing social media content.

Pershore Riverside Centre

Work has begun with Pershore Riverside Centre to nominate and arrange assignments for young people within their organisation to help with in-house club session delivery as part of their volunteering experience. To date, one Gen22 participant has enrolled and will be supporting the delivery of a SEND focussed club session for their volunteering assignment, building confidence, teamworking and leadership skills.

Project Planning

Active H&W have a host of projects in the planning stage and have identified another 15 organisations who are keen to be involved in Gen22 either as a nominating organisation or assignment provider. These include Open Trail who focus on cycle coaching and bike mechanics; Aztec Adventure who offer water sports; Active Youth Outreach Services who are a mobile youth service offering orienteering focussed activity via HAF programmes and outreach work; The YMCA, Princes Trust and Virtual Schools for Hereford and Worcester who are keen to help identify young people to take part.

Energize

Energize have aimed to align the Gen22 programme with organisations they already engage with, or those who engage with the relevant audiences, and develop partnerships on this basis. For example, where there could be strong connections already between the 'nominating organisation' and 'assignment provider', or where they fulfil both roles.

Bright Star

Based in the Telford area, Bright Star is a not-for-profit organisation that uses boxing and education to empower vulnerable people to make positive changes to transform their lives. They have engaged with 15 young people from their existing programmes who expressed an interest in volunteering as part of their involvement with the organisation.

The young people identified to take part in the Gen22 programme are in the process of completing their 30-hour assignments by supporting the activity programmes taking place within the club setting. Most members of the club are referred to Bright Star due to adverse childhood experiences and trauma. The Gen22 volunteers have been trained in a trauma-informed approach to coaching boxing, and have been working within the Bright Star early intervention programmes for young people. The participants will now be able to act as role models to new recruits attending introductory sessions, offering advice from their lived experiences and will be able to provide real life examples of how they have made positive changes in their lives.

Following completion of the programme, Bright Star intend to support the Gen22 participants to find further placements to continue their volunteering journey both internally and externally from their organisation.

Shropshire Youth Support Trust

Energize have also come to an agreement with Shropshire Youth Support Trust for 5 young people to take part in Gen22 in the new year. They specialise in working with NEET young people and are planning to work on a one-to-one basis with each participant to identify what they are interested in doing for their volunteering assignment with the aim of aligning this to support their future employability.

Shrewsbury Town FC Trust

Shrewsbury Town FC Trust are in the process of identifying 15 young people from their Kickstart programme who they feel would benefit most from the Gen22 programme. They are also intending to work with participants individually or in small groups to design their own volunteering assignment to maximise the engagement potential.

Project Planning

Energize are building their pipeline of projects and have conducted initial meetings with the Virtual School CIC Head Teacher for Telford who has shown an interest in nominating Gen22 participants, and Stay who are a charity that provides support services to homeless and vulnerable people in the Telford & Wrekin Borough. They aim to support young people to realise their aspirations to live independent and fulfilling lives.



Gen22 aligns closely with Sport Birmingham's key priorities over the next 5 years, including growing and developing a workforce for the physical activity sector, and improving life skills and prospects through participation and engagement. Their Gen22 programme approach focusses around providing additional support and value to organisations or collaborative projects that have been successful in supporting young people who face barriers and challenges to accessing opportunities, as well as building partnerships with emerging organisations who support young people from a similar target audience via other key programmes.

Eidgah Academy CIC

The Eidgah Academy is a community hub situated in Perry Barr that caters for young people and provides an extensive range of educational, recreational, and social developmental activities.

Sport Birmingham highlighted their suitability for the Gen22 programme as a result of previous work, due to their focus on supporting young people to develop self-esteem, confidence and communication skills.

7 young people were nominated to take part in Gen22 to help plan, organise and deliver two community fun days in Perry Barr. The aims of the events, as identified by the participants were:

- To reconnect the local community post Covid-19, because they felt that their community had become “isolated and out of touch”, and because they thought that a “Fun Day would be great way to get people to reconnect”.

- To support children and young people in the area who may not necessarily be able to access activities therefore offering a fantastic opportunity for them at their local community hub.
- To “spread the spirit of the Commonwealth Games across the whole community, particularly to involve people from diverse backgrounds”.

The participants were also trained to support Eidgah staff to help organise and deliver after-school and weekend sports and mentoring sessions with the aim of building capacity within the organisation.

Places Leisure

Alongside Active Black Country, Sport Birmingham approached Places Leisure with the intention of developing a project under the umbrella of Gen22 to tackle the growing need for appropriately qualified young people to take up positions as Lifeguards in the region. Utilising the Places Leisure recruitment channels and with opportunities open at Sparkbrook Pool and Fitness Centre. To date, 5 young people have enrolled on the Gen22 registration portal and are due to begin their National Pool Lifeguard training in the new year.

Sport 4 Life

Closely linked with their Commonwealth Active Communities work in Birmingham, Sport 4 life have partnered with SB to support the delivery of Gen 22. Sport 4 Life’s key objectives are to help young people (aged 11 to 29) to move into sustained education, training, and work through sports-themed personal development. An agreement has been reached for Sport 4 Life to identify 30 young people eligible for Gen22 to undertake training and volunteering opportunities in the region. The approach will see Sport 4 Life utilise their existing networks to identify young people deemed to benefit most from the Gen22 programme, and support them into individually identified volunteering opportunities, including individually focussed training and development plans.

Project Planning

Sport Birmingham have additionally created a strong pipeline of potential projects for Gen22 in their region, several of which are due to move forward early in the new year. Discussions have been held with organisations such as; Make a Difference who operate a local gym and would like to offer Gen22 assignments; Continental Stars Table Tennis who offer HAF programmes and weekly coached sessions; the See My Voice programme; Employability UK who are keen to offer training to add value to projects; YDA funded clubs; Sporting Elite who offer sporting activities and coaching; and Midland Mencap.

Think Active

Gen 22 aligns closely with Think Active’s Confident, Capable People objective which aims to enable people to confidently advocate the benefits of physical activity, and give people the capability to lead and influence. Their aim for Gen 22 is to build upon the learnings gathered from a leadership project piloted with Aston Villa Foundation, Grow Organic, Positive Youth Foundation (also a Gen 22 flagship provider), and Inspire in Arts who were funded to enable young people to undertake Sports Leaders qualifications with the intention of accessing volunteering opportunities.

In August 2022, Think Active appointed additional capacity to support the thematic lead in the delivery of Gen22, focussing time exclusively to the programme for one day per week.

Rising Stars Youth & Community Group

Rising Stars organise and deliver social, sporting, and recreational events and activities in and around the Greater Foleshill area of Coventry and predominantly focus on engaging with the young Muslim community. 33 young people who are already engaged with Rising Stars have enrolled on the Gen22 programme, with the intention of developing confidence, leadership, and team-working skills through supporting Rising Stars’ staff to arrange and deliver in-house activities and events. To date, around half of the young people have begun working through their volunteering assignment, but due to unforeseen circumstances within the Rising Stars organisation, there has been a slight delay in the progress of the project, and the majority of the Gen22 Participants are due to begin their journey in the new year.

Aptitude CIC

Aptitude engages with young people in activities and opportunities to develop personal, social and emotional skills to inspire them to be active citizens making positive life choices. They deliver positive free activities for young people in their local community, and young people can access support for issues with relationships, family, mental health, and wellbeing, as well as offering training and experience opportunities in youth work, sports leadership and mentoring. They are aiming to enrol 12-14 young people on to the Gen22 programme and participants will be supported to complete a Sports Leadership course with a view to supporting in-house delivery of football focussed activities and events as part of their volunteering assignment during the February 2023 half term.

Project Planning

Think Active are working to develop a menu of smaller and more varied projects to complement the Rising Stars project and have several in the pipeline. Firstly, they are on course to be the first Active Partnership from the WM Network to move forward with the project proposal from Swim England and the Institute of Swimming to partner with a local leisure operator to train a cohort of young people to become Level 1 Swimming Teaching Assistants, who will be able to support the delivery of swimming lessons, helping to build capacity in swimming lesson delivery in the area. The next stage for this project is to begin to identify young people utilising existing networks.

Additionally, some of the focus going forward will be towards the development of a Gen22 programme that will target care leavers, working with organisations such as Virtual Schools to identify young people and to link them with potential assignment providers.

Discussions are also underway with Volunteer It Yourself to identify a group of eligible young people and link them with a Gen22-relevant volunteering assignment, focussed around supporting projects to improve community sports facilities. VIY challenge young people to learn trade and employability skills through helping to fix youth and community facilities in need of essential repairs and improvements.



Together Active

The Together Active 2021-2025 strategy “Step Up” outlines their focus on the inactive population, for young people this specifically includes those with care experience, those known to youth offending systems and those with long term health conditions. Evidence highlights that these young people are most likely to be inactive in Stoke and Staffordshire and have poorer health, social and educational outcomes than their counterparts. Their Gen22 delivery model is focussed on these groups of young people.

Liberty Jamboree

Liberty Jamboree are an organisation that aim to provide new and exciting opportunities for young people with learning and physical barriers in and around Staffordshire. They work with young people who are vulnerable because of their disabilities and learning barriers, to improve access to facilities and provisions and support their inclusion within their community and their transition into adulthood and independence. The services they offer are person centred, resulting in programmes and provisions which offer meaningful choices and support identified needs, fitting nicely into the Gen22 programme aims.

They have selected 6 young people so far, with an aim of 15 in total to be involved in their Gen22 project, who will complete an adapted version of the Sports Leaders Awards training, delivered in conjunction with British Blind Sport. They will then complete their 30-hour Gen22 assignment by designing and supporting the delivery of in-house programmes that Liberty delivers to their peers.

Project Planning

Together Active have a strong pipeline of organisations who are keen to be involved in their Gen22 programme. So far, they have engaged with several organisations who are keen to help nominate young people who would most benefit from participation, such as the YMCA, Department for Work and Pensions, Concrete who support young people at risk of homelessness and the Hubb Foundation who support families and local communities and provide HAF programmes during school holidays. Additionally, they have several organisations who have signed up to their expression of interest

to host young people and offer worthwhile Gen22 volunteering assignments; Bee Active requiring support for HAF programmes, Burton Albion FC, Port Vale FC, Frontline Dance, Stoke City FC, and Kilnworx who operate a climbing centre.

Key Learning

Gen 22 has provided Active Partnerships in the West Midlands region an opportunity to work closely as a Network; to share knowledge and experience and collaboratively govern a 'live' programme.

Furthermore, a key success at this stage of delivery is the willingness to share project ideas, delivery experiences, project leads and good practice amongst the Network. For example, project concepts developed in one AP region, are in the process of being replicated where it is deemed equally suitable in another, such as the NPLQ Lifeguarding project. Eventually this could potentially be delivered in at least four of the six AP regions with multiple partners.

As with any programme or initiative there have been some challenges, mainly centred around delivery processes which could be streamlined. Steadily we have attempted to iron out these issues to make the process for enrolment onto the programme as smooth as possible. These modifications will be tested as the registered number of participants grows.

Notably, another highlight of ongoing delivery is that it has encouraged APs to search for and identify organisations that they would not ordinarily target to support with delivery programmes, and new encounters have sometimes led to further networking opportunities, meaning that new and potentially lasting partnerships are being created that could benefit wider Active Partnership delivery.

In order to maximise the impact of each project for the participant and to keep the quality of the experience high and worthwhile for each individual, Active Partnerships have generally not advertised this opportunity openly, and have sought to identify nominating organisations, assignment providers, and individual participants, utilising new and existing networks on an almost case-by-case basis to ensure that the right young person is matched with the right Gen22 opportunity. Active Partnerships have also largely focussed their efforts on their identified priority areas, where it is felt that maximum impact from Gen22 can be achieved.

It is also worth mentioning that expression of interest processes utilised by Active Partnerships to match potential funding recipients to the most appropriate opportunity, such as the Together Fund, have been an excellent source of project identification throughout the Network. Several projects have been derived from organisations having project concepts in the pipeline that have matched closely with the Gen 22 objectives, enabling Active Partnerships to shape and improve these concepts to maximise the outputs for both the programme, the young person and the organisation involved. These processes have also reduced the administrative burden on projects such as this.

Finally, there is a keen focus to ensure that the Gen22 opportunity is as worthwhile as possible for the participant. Anecdotal feedback from individuals and organisations involved so far suggests that a key element of this is to enable the young person to have voice in decisions affecting their experiences, to make sure their experiences are positive.