

# Case Study

## Theme – Community Engagement

### ‘Someone Like Me’ – Rise Up Yoga

The Heath Town estate in Wolverhampton is one of the most deprived areas in the Black Country with low levels of participation in physical activity, high levels of health inequities and high unemployment.

Active Black Country developed a project aimed at upskilling a local resident to deliver yoga, tai chi and martial arts across the estate - addressing mental and physical health inequalities.

The project, developed in partnership with ‘*Black Country Make*’ was the brainchild of local resident Akil Maylor. It was run at a disused shop in the middle of the Heath Town estate. The shop was turned into a yoga dojo through a combination of sportivate investment and donations from local community.

A community audit highlighted a culture of demotivation and mistrust within the community, with scepticism towards outside organisations delivering on the estate who didn’t understand the needs of the local community and couldn’t effectively engage residents.

Akil Maylor, mentored by Deon Morgan a traditional martial arts & yoga teacher, has now successfully developed a community hub to run classes for the estate whilst gaining his own qualifications. He now aims to mentor others, uniting people from a variety of backgrounds and developing skills through experience. The hub has now become a ‘Safe Haven’ for people within the immediate community, with over 500 participants benefiting from the project since its inception.

For further details visit:  
[www.activeblackcountry.co.uk](http://www.activeblackcountry.co.uk)



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**Since I've been coming to your classes , I've been able to sleep much better**

Participant

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**I have seen the wonderful impact that the yoga sessions have had on the community of Heath Town. By providing an opportunity to be active and learn new skills we have shown young people there is hope and a future - as there was nothing here before**

Akil Maylor

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