



ACTIVE BLACK COUNTRY

Helping You Get Fit for Business



**SPORT
ENGLAND**

Active Black Country



Introduction

Engaging your employees in physical activity and sport is crucial to creating an efficient & effective workforce and demonstrates a business's commitment to being a good employer. At Active Black Country, we recognise and value how sport and physical activity are part of many Black Country residents' DNA, with physical activity being part of their everyday lives.

We also understand that there is much to do to improve the conditions and opportunities to help those who are inactive to do more.

The Black Country continues to have one of the lowest levels of physical activity in England, with 54,336 additional adults needing to get active just to reach national average. 31.5% of the Black Country's population is currently inactive, and only 53.7% currently achieve the 150 minutes or more of physical activity as recommended by the Chief Medical Officer.

This has a negative impact on health & wellbeing, social & economic development. There are 34,950 businesses across the Black Country with 446,000 people currently employed. But productivity is still low: GVA per head in the Black Country is £8.784 lower than the England average and the Black Country population suffers from a number of health inequalities.

The Black Country is characterised by a unique set of socio economic challenges which sets it apart from the rest of England with high levels of unemployment and health inequalities.

Our hardest challenge remains in how we encourage everyone in the Black Country to be active every day. Employers can promote and encourage increased levels of activity in a number of ways, and Active Black Country can support you along the way.

Why is Workplace Wellbeing Important?

Physical inactivity has been linked to an increased risk of a range of health conditions and evidence shows that undertaking physical activity can help maintain and promote both physical and mental health & wellbeing. Employees spend up to 60% of their waking hours at work¹, therefore it is essential that the workplace plays an active role in supporting individuals to lead, rather than hinder, a healthy lifestyle.

6.3
- average number of days taken sick per employee³

Sickness absence per year costs UK businesses an estimated
£29bn²

Work related stress, depression and anxiety costs the UK economy between
£3.7bn and **£7bn** per year⁴

Physical inactivity estimated to cost the UK economy
£8.2bn per year²

87%⁷
of employees feel they would be more productive if they could take time out in their working day to exercise and eat healthily

Return on investment between £2 and £34 for every
£1² spent on workplace health initiatives

More than **40%** women & More than **35%** men

spend more than **six hours** a day desk-bound or sitting still

Well-designed wellness programmes can increase job satisfaction and reduce staff turnover between
10 & 25%⁶

Physically active workers take
27%⁵ fewer sick days

Physical activity programmes at work can reduce absenteeism by up to
20%⁵

If you are interested in setting up a workplace sport and physical activity programme, but are unsure where to start, let us help you.



How Can we Help You to Get Involved?

1. Ignite

Workforce Consultation & Planning

Active Black Country will carry out consultation to develop a bespoke action plan designed to improve workplace wellbeing based on the culture, environment & future plans of your organisation.

The action plan would lead into stage 2

“The workplace challenge is a great motivator. We have set a team challenge to introduce some competition between colleagues, which is great fun. Seeing your points tally total up and the total distances you have worked over a period pushes you to new lengths!”

Workplace Challenge Participant, Dudley

“The workplace challenge has helped me get active again and came along at the right time. I’m generally quite an active person but was getting into bad habits of not really doing much. I’d picked up an injury which stopped me running but never really got going again. The introduction of the challenge created a competitive buzz which really gave me the kick I needed. I always feel better about myself, more alert at work when I’m exercising and the challenge is an excellent motivator for that.”

Workplace Challenge Participant, Dudley



2. Set Up

The action plan could include the following:

The Black Country Workplace Challenge

The **FREE TO JOIN** online programme aims to get workplaces moving and promotes physical activity to improve the health and wellbeing of staff. Employees can sign up to the Black Country Workplace Challenge for free by registering at www.workplacechallenge.org.uk/blackcountry and start logging their sport and physical activity.

Awareness Events

Active Black Country can work with you to facilitate a health & wellbeing awareness event to engage employees and raise the profile of both physical and mental wellbeing tailored to meet the needs of your organisation including mobile health checks delivered onsite for staff.

Champion Training

In partnership with the British Heart Foundation, the Workplace Challenge Champion Training is designed to support individuals to become 'Champions' within their organisation. The training will equip staff with the skills, confidence and resources to promote better health and participation in sport and physical activity across your organisation.

The champions will then drive wellbeing within your organisation.

“The Workplace Challenge gives staff an excellent opportunity to record our activities, by having a visible activity log with local and national leaderboards it creates friendly competition. The Workplace Challenge app makes it easy to log activities and encourages us to think about what we can do each week.”

Workplace Challenge Participant, West Bromwich

3. Accelerate

To support workplace champions, the following is available:

Equipment Loan Scheme & Workplace Wellbeing Fund

Active Black Country has an equipment loan scheme in place which allows organisations to borrow sports equipment to trial workplace based activity on a short term basis. Alongside this we also have a funding stream available to support organisations implementing physical activity within the workplace to improve the health & wellbeing of their workforce.

Competitions & the Black Country Business Games

Active Black Country will run a series of sport specific competitions allowing businesses to compete against one another in a variety of different team sports. These competitions will conclude with the Black Country Business Games where employees will represent their business in an afternoon/evening of team based activities & challenges.

Benefits of Workplace Wellbeing

Investing in your employees' wellbeing can boost morale and team spirit, demonstrating your Corporate Social Responsibility and encouraging employees to engage in active travel can help the environment by reducing your CO2 footprint.

There are many benefits for both employers & employees resulting from having a physically active workforce which can include:

Employers	Employees
Increased productivity	Improved physical & mental health & wellbeing
Increased job satisfaction	Increased motivation & morale
Reduced absenteeism	Greater job satisfaction
Reduced staff turnover & costs involved with training new staff	Networking opportunities
Engagement & long term succession	Less sickness
Improvement in communication, team morale & motivation	Less stress & back pain
Increased positive corporate image	Opportunity to develop & improve skills including communication, team working & leadership
Lower rates of early retirement due to ill health	Greater job security
Active travel saves CO2, reduces your carbon footprint & reduces pressure on parking	

“In December 2014 if you had told me I would be doing as much physical activity as I am doing now, I would have thought you were a comedian! This type of challenge is exactly what I needed to get back into fitness after a somewhat lazy year or so of doing very little and suffering a number of injuries. I’ve lost over a stone in weight and am feeling great physically and mentally.”

Activity Participant



Workplace Health National Case Studies

Royal Mail

The Royal Mail has experienced issues of long-term absence, especially related to musculoskeletal health, for many years. In 2003 their sickness absence levels were 7 per cent (an average of 16 days per employee per year) and a daily cost of £1m. Customer service standards were also being affected. Royal Mail introduced a range of integrated measures:

- Health screening
- Health clinics at 90 sites
- Fast access to occupational health services
- Access to physiotherapy
- Employee assistance programme (EAP)
- Incentive scheme
- Rehabilitation centres focusing on improving back, neck and shoulder injuries
- Phased and partial return to work (RTW)
- Case management

After four years, sickness absence levels had fallen to 4 per cent (10 days per employee) and saved Royal Mail almost £230m. Up to 3,600 more staff were available to work each day as a result of these measures⁹.

Ginsters

Introducing an Active Workplace intervention for the 540 employees of the Ginsters factory in Cornwall not only reduced sickness, stress-related illness and accidents at work, but also led to a 14% reduction in health premiums, a 14% reduction in staff turnover and a drop in recruitment advertising costs from £55,000 to £15,000 over three years. Working with Sport England and the local council to encourage active travel, create physical activity opportunities in the workplace and build links with local sports clubs, which allowed employees and their families to trial new activities at new clubs, the employees of Ginsters are far healthier and more positive about their jobs and the reputation of the factory has grown considerably⁹.

For more information regarding the workplace challenge or to sign up please visit:

www.workplacechallenge.org.uk/blackcountry

For more information on the work of Active Black Country, visit:

www.activeblackcountry.co.uk

e: sports@blackcountryconsortium.co.uk

t: @bcbeactive

f: /Active Black Country

Active Black Country Partnership

The Deckhouse, Waterfront West,
Dudley Road, Brierley Hill DY5 1LW

t: +44 (0)8458 15 15 15

f: +44 (0)1384 471177

About us

Active Black Country (ABC) is the Government and Sport England recognised Country Sports Partnership (CSP) for the Black Country region, providing the strategic leadership for sport and physical activity across the areas of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton. It operates under its clear vision that - **'We aim to make it easier for individuals and communities to be physically active. To be safe, secure, healthy and passionate about sport'**.

ABC is hosted by the Black Country Consortium Ltd (BCC Ltd) as its accountable body and employer. As a not for profit Company, limited by guarantee, BCC Ltd is a small, multi-disciplined team working to promote economic prosperity, health and well-being across the Black Country.



Our Vision

"We aim to make it easier for individuals and communities to be physically active. To be safe, secure, healthy and passionate about Sport."

Our mission

"To demonstrate our passionate belief that in our local area, where socio-economic factors have created far reaching inequalities and inactivities, physical activity and Sport have the power to change lives."

Sources

- ¹ Workplace Challenge Flexible Lunch Break Manifesto
- ² ERS Research & Consultancy. Health at Work: Economic evidence report 2016
- ³ CIPD Absence Management Survey 2016
- ⁴ Healthy Working Lives. Promoting Health at Work – Physical Activity 2013
- ⁵ National Institute for Health & Clinical Excellence. Physical Activity Local Government Briefing 2012
- ⁶ Price Waterhouse Cooper referenced in National Institute for Health & Clinical Business Case.
- ⁷ British Heart Foundation – Why does Health at Work Matter?
- ⁸ The Work Foundation. The Business case for Employee Health & Wellbeing.
- ⁹ Sport and Recreation Alliance. Game of Life: How sport and recreation can help make us healthier, happier & richer.