Mapping Disability

Engaging disabled people: the research

Research on reaching, engaging and communicating with disabled people

Contents

SPORT ENGLAND

English Federation of Disability Sport

Introduction

1.1   Sport England seeks to open-up sport and exercise to all and increase the number of people being active regularly, with disabled people being a key target audience. Significantly fewer disabled people are engaged with regular sporting and physical activity compared with non-disabled people.

1.2   Much is already known about the complex barriers to disabled people doing exercise/sport. In particular, the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) study 'Talk to Me'* sets out some principles to help deliverers of sport and physical activities improve their offers to disabled people - including in relation to how deliverers communicate with disabled people about these activities. Further work was required to build on these principles and to translate them into practical guidance to use. In spring 2015, Sport England, in partnership with the EFDS, commissioned IFF Research to undertake further research with disabled people to achieve this.

Trusted communication channels

1.3   The EFDS report, 'Talk to Me', had highlighted using a trusted channel as one of the key ways to engage disabled people. This study explored this idea of channels and information sources further.

1.4   A wide range of venues where activities might be advertised were mentioned, with advertising in locations where people are forced to wait (e.g. stations, bus stops, waiting rooms) being particularly likely to be noticed. Advertising in medical settings can feel particularly relevant (although the health benefits of exercise was not felt to be a motivating message, so materials in these settings may need to play against the medical context in terms of the messages they use).

1.5   Recommendations from medical professionals or support workers (such as GPs or Community Mental Health Nurses) or a trusted support organisation (e.g. Mind) were felt to be particularly powerful in encouraging engagement with the idea of doing sport / exercise, but these appeared to be uncommon in practice - the exception rather than the rule. More commonly, recommendations came from more informal sources (e.g. friends, family, a hairdresser).

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*   'Talk to Me' (2014) Understanding how to increase participation in sport and physical activity amongst disabled people in the UK, prepared for EFDS by 2CV: http://www.efds.co.uk/resources/research/3252_talk_to_me_-_pdf_version

1.6   Many were interested in viewing the class or activity beforehand to try to gauge whether or not they might be comfortable with it – both in terms of how likely they will be to be able to cope with the intensity of the activity and whether they feel likely to be accepted by the other people. This was sometimes down covertly by taking a sneaky peek or undertaking a recce in person; at other times family, friends or other informal sources (e.g. a beautician, a hairdresser) would be quizzed about what the activity was like. There was interest in activity organisers facilitating this ability to take a sneaky peek (e.g. by putting footage of activities online).

Designing materials that resonate

1.7   To understand how to put the principles set out in 'Talk to Me' into practice, a wide array of materials promoting sport and physical activity were shown to individuals.* Some of these were real materials used to promote activities; others had been created by a design agency. These deliberately used contrasting messages, imagery and visual styles, in order to explore what works best.

Messages

1.8   In general, the most appealing **messages** were softer, tapping into passion and humour. Conveying the **positive pay-off** of exercise - feeling better, or the release of endorphins, through messages such as "Being active feels great" - strongly appealed (and were far more motivating than messages talking about the health benefits of exercise). Appealing to **passion for a particular sport** (e.g. "Love football? Want to tackle a new challenge?") was also well-received, as was **using humour to reassure that you don't have to be an athlete to take part** (e.g. posters from the 'This Girl Can' campaign, featuring slogans such as "I'm slow but I'm lapping everyone on the couch" and "I jiggle therefore I am").

1.9   The least appealing messages were harder, i.e. those emphasising **competitiveness** (e.g. "Serious about football? Want to tackle a new challenge") or **ordering action** (e.g. "No excuses!"). Messages in the form of commands may actually prompt individuals to want to rebel and do the reverse.

*   Materials were nearly all in poster / flyer format as this most closely reflected what deliverers would be able to create in future. However, the findings can be applied across other communication formats.

1
Executive summary

Imagery

1.10   In terms of **imagery, photography** was found to be far more engaging than illustration, as people were more able to identify with the individuals shown and project themselves into the activity. Photographs were particularly motivating where they **showed people actually doing the activity** (as this allowed individuals to have a window into what taking part will be like) and where they **showed facial expressions and visible enjoyment** (as this helped individuals imagine the motivating pay-off).

1.11   Three styles of **depicting disability** in photographs were tested (explicitly, subtly and invisibly - see below). Responses to these were very diverse but, overall, **subtle depictions of disability had broadest appeal**. These images were felt to clearly depict disability, but without the impairment being the first thing the viewer noticed about the person; some of these images appeared to show a mix of disabled and non-disabled people taking part; and some images implied activity at a slower or gentler pace, or showed support being given. These elements made an activity feel more accessible and attainable, but without leaving people feeling that they had been segregated or labelled. There was also a role for people simply looking - in respondents' words - normal, or a bit rubbish (rather than athletic, serious or competitive, which tended to make the activity feel intimidating).

Subtle | Explicit | Invisible

1.12 Despite this general preference, people felt there was sometimes a role for imagery that is more explicit - for instance, if an activity is intended to be targeted at people with a particular impairment type, then clearly showing people with that impairment would be beneficial by indicating who the target audience is and what the session will be like. Similarly, imagery in which disability is entirely invisible was felt to sometimes be of relevance - for instance, if an activity is being targeted specifically at disabled people who want competition, high octane or adrenaline inducing activity, then show people with invisible or hidden impairments.

Be clear about the target audience

1.13 As this implies, **for activity organisers to succeed in choosing appropriate images and messages, they need to first begin by making a clear decision about who the activity is aimed at** - e.g. is it for people with mental health conditions; anyone with a disability or illness; or a broad mix of individuals? Is it for beginners or for those more experienced? Is the emphasis to be placed on enjoyment or will there be more of a competitive edge?

Terminology

1.14 Numerous **phrases** were tested to find out which effectively flagged that disabled people would be welcomed and supported to take part in activity, but without creating the impression that they would be stigmatised. More **positive reactions** were given to materials that talked about **flexibility** (e.g. "Adapts to suit your abilities") or **variations in pace** ("Activities at your own pace") as these conveyed the idea of support just explicitly enough but without causing people to feel labelled. Although liked by the majority, a few felt these phrases were not explicit enough (as, for example, they felt they might signal that an activity is aimed at people with a range of fitness levels rather than at disabled people per se). A few others disliked the implication of gentler activity - they wanted to be pushed more.

1.15 A possible solution to this is that the **idea of flexibility / offering support could also be conveyed in more tangible ways** - for instance, by saying that a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter will be present or that the coach is BSL trained; or that you can stop and start whenever you like; or that the instructor is trained to support people recuperating from injury or with long-term illnesses. The specifics would of course need to reflect the specific activity being promoted and the individuals at whom the activity is aimed.

1.16 Other phrases were **more problematic**. The phrase **inclusive activities**, while acceptable and non-stigmatising, was **far too ambiguous** - it was too often associated with all inclusive holidays (and so needed to be supported by further explanation, as otherwise it could easily be misread as meaning that kit, equipment, refreshments etc. are included in a fee for taking part).
Other phrases - "Activities suitable for people with additional support needs"; "Activities for disabled people" - tended to leave individuals feeling that they had been labelled.

Structuring materials

1.17 To engage and communicate their relevance swiftly, materials needed to avoid overloading their intended audience with competing messages (this is something that some of the original posters used as examples were perceived to be guilty of). Applying a consistent structure, including key elements and organising this information into a hierarchy all helped to ensure the communication worked effectively. Materials needed to incorporate:

1. **One main headline message** - a message that taps into motivations for taking part (the positive feeling after exercise, passion for an activity, being able to have fun etc.).

2. **At the next level down a clear indication of who is welcome to take part.** This can be both through the first supporting message (e.g. "for anybody who may struggle with the speed and intensity of Zumba") and through the imagery showing a mix of individuals taking part, that reflects who the organisers hope will be there.

3. **Photos** that **convey the emotion of taking part and make clear the activity / activities available**.

4. **Practical details** (where, when, etc.) **which stand out and are concise**. This also needs to address some key points which can facilitate the individual having a positive first experience of the activity (see expectations of taking part, on next page).

5. **Information about how to find out more ahead of the session** - both passively (e.g. via a website) and more actively (by having a dialogue with the instructor or stating your individual needs).

Expectations of taking part and ensuring a positive first experience

1.18 It is also critical that the first experience of taking part in an activity is a positive one and reflects the expectations created beforehand by the communications materials. This needs to involve:

- An **opportunity for disabled people to state their needs to the instructor privately in advance** (e.g. by organisers offering to be available by email or phone, being available before the activity starts).

  and / or

- The session being **run in a flexible manner** with the person in charge demonstrating they are open to accommodating different people's needs (e.g. allowing individuals to go at their own pace, or start / stop whenever they like). This approach needs to apply to everyone - i.e. not singling out disabled people taking part for special attention. The person leading the class needs to sustain this awareness of the individual's needs throughout the time that the activity is running.

1.19 As this implies, singling out disabled people for special treatment or asking them to state their needs in front of others is to be avoided at all costs - this was universally negatively-viewed.

1.20 Disabled people were sometimes also concerned about being penalised for not turning up to a particular session. It is important that organisers make it clear that missing a session due to having a bad day will not incur financial penalties or affect their ability to return to the next session.

1.21 **All these elements need to be stated very explicitly by organisations on the first communication about the session.** It is also advisable to mention any specific support provided.

1.22 For many, a good session includes a mix of people with different abilities, i.e. it is not disability-specific. Sessions specifically only for disabled people can result in those taking part feeling segregated. Taking part with other people at a similar pace, i.e. who are not athletes, tends to be preferred.

Conclusions and next steps

1.23 As we have seen, the target audience is very diverse, and there is not one approach that works equally well for everyone. That said, it is clear that communications resonate more strongly when they tap into positive motivations for being active - the endorphin-related pay-off after taking part; passion for a particular activity; or simply having fun. We can also conclude that, rather than focusing on individuals' impairments, communications should aim to make disabled people feel welcome and reassure them that they will be supported. This supportiveness is best achieved by creating opportunities for disabled people to state their needs in private; and by running activities in a flexible way - and should never involve the person feeling labelled or singled out in front of others.

1.24 All of this can feel tricky to achieve. It does, however, become a great deal easier if the activity organiser begins by making clear decisions about who each activity is intended for; and what support will be provided to make the activity accessible. Applying our suggested structure (summarised at 1.17) to communications materials can also help, by ensuring all the key information is included, and the key messages stand out.

1.25 Finally, the activities themselves need to deliver on what the communications materials have promised, so that people want to come back - and again, central to this, is the organiser making a clear decision about who will take part, and the types of support or flexibility that can be built in.

1.26 A guide for use by organisers of community sport - that provides a practical summary of how to communicate with disabled people to enable them to engage with sport and physical activity - has been developed based on the findings of this research (see Appendix 1 to this report).
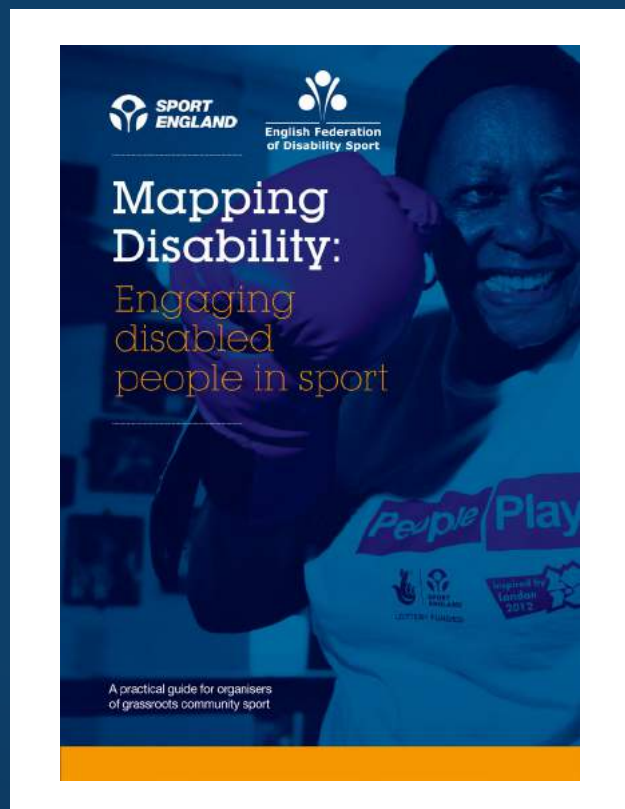
Background

2.1 Sport England aims to make people's lives better through sport. Much research has shown that taking part in sport can have profound and far-reaching benefits for both the person being active as well as the wider community. Not only are there considerable physical health benefits to being active on a regular basis, but also more wide-ranging positive impacts in terms of mental well-being, education, the economy, increased employment and decreased crime.

2.2 The barriers disabled people face engaging with sporting activity are complex and extend beyond basic motivational factors. The 'Active People Survey' shows that significantly fewer disabled people are engaged with regular sporting and physical activities compared with non-disabled people.

2.3 As part of its strategy to transform sport in England, Sport England seeks to increase the number of people regularly doing sport and physical activity. Disabled people are one of the key target audiences identified in the strategy.

2.4 Much is already known about the barriers to disabled people taking part in sport and physical activity. As noted by EFDS ('Motivate Me'* 2014), the challenges that are faced by disabled people on a day-to-day basis can mean they see sporting activities as something that is beyond their reach and not for "people like me". There is a clear need to provide deliverers with practical guidance which can help them to reach and engage their target audience.

2.5 Work carried out by EFDS in late 2014 provides groundwork in this area. Their report entitled 'Talk to Me'** includes some headline indications of what is currently working and not working with the way providers communicate messages to disabled people. It outlines a set of principles to help providers improve their offers for disabled people. This includes several principles related to communication such as:

- Using trusted channels.

- Offering support and reassurance that disabled people will be able to take part if they turn up.

- Reassurance that disabled people will fit in.

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* 'Motivate Me' (2014) Understanding what motivates and appeals to disabled people to take part in sport and physical activity, prepared for EFDS by 2CV: http://www.efds.co.uk/assets/0000/9381/Motivate_Me_May_2014_FINAL_REPORT.pdf
** 'Talk to Me' (2014) Understanding how to increase participation in sport and physical activity amongst disabled people in the UK, prepared for EFDS by 2CV: http://www.efds.co.uk/resources/research/3252_talk_to_me_-_pdf_version

There were also assertions that disabled people do not like to be defined by their disability and are more likely to respond to approaches which appeal to what's important to them, with the implications of this being:

- Don't lead an approach by talking about someone's impairment or health condition.

- Talk to the wider values of disabled people as much as possible.

2.6   Further work was required to build on this theory and in particular to understand how some of these requirements could be satisfied at the same time. This in turn would lead to practical guidance that organisations providing sporting activities for disabled people could use to reach and engage their target audience. In spring 2015, Sport England, in partnership with the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS), commissioned an independent research agency to undertake further research amongst disabled people to achieve this.

Objectives

2.7   The objectives of the project were:

- To understand the communication channels disabled people access, and which they trust, to establish which are most effective for communications encouraging physical activity or advertising specific clubs, sessions or facilities.

- To establish what information would be required from such communications to enable disabled people to decide if the opportunity is suitable for them, with their specific needs.

- To build on previous work regarding the types of messaging, language and imagery which resonates with disabled people and encourages them to look into the opportunity further.

2.8   The findings also have fed into the development of a practical guide for delivery organisations to enable them to improve their marketing to this audience. The guide provides tangible examples which organisations can use as a basis for their communications.

2.9   The guide content is included in Appendix 1 to this report; while the research methodology is described in detail in Appendix 2.

3
Trusted communication channels

3.1   As highlighted by the EFDS report, 'Talk to Me,'* using a trusted channel is one of the keys to successfully engage disabled people. The research explored which channels disabled people were most likely to use, and which were most likely to lead to their engaging with the idea of doing the sport or exercise activity being promoted.

Information sources

3.2   The audience is diverse and accordingly a wide range of venues where activities might be advertised were mentioned including cinemas, leisure centres, local pubs, their child's school, community centres, churches, supermarket and shopping centre information boards, on lampposts, at bus stops and railway stations, libraries, waiting areas in hospitals or for GPs, dentists or physiotherapists. Adverts in local newspapers and stalls at local community events were also mentioned. Friends and family were also a source of information about activities.

> Advertising in locations where people are forced to wait, such as stations, bus stops, waiting rooms is particularly likely to be noticed, but is often only given passing attention. Regardless of setting, people will only glance at materials: they need to engage and communicate relevance swiftly.

3.3   Promoting sport and physical activity can feel particularly relevant in medical settings but care should be taken in wording materials, as an emphasis on the health benefits of exercise was not generally found to be a motivating message. In this context, the materials may therefore need to play against the setting in which they are shown in some circumstances.

3.4   Use of the internet was more prominent amongst younger people (aged 18-29), who were likely, for example, to Google 'What's on in x' to find out about the local sport offer. Some individuals with mental health conditions and learning disabilities wanted to take information away or be directed to a website they can look at later (rather than standing and reading).

3.5   People with mental health conditions often investigated in-depth to ensure the activity appealed, wanting to ensure they knew exactly what it involved. Again, younger people were especially likely to use the internet to achieve this - this resulted from a combination of both being more daunted by the idea of exercise and also being more adept at using the internet.

Recommendation and personal experience

3.6 Some individuals said they will pay particular attention to a recommendation from someone they trust. This could be someone with whom they have a formal relationship (e.g. their GP) or an informal relationship (e.g. a friend or a local hairdresser).

3.7 Recommendations from medical professionals or support workers (e.g. GP, Community Mental Health Nurse) or a trusted organisation (e.g. Mind) were felt to be particularly powerful but appeared to be uncommon in practice - the exception, not the rule.

Gaining a clear understanding of the nature of the activity, the type of person taking part and the approach of the instructor / organiser before committing to a first session is crucial for some. Providing information or opportunity to see whether it will be an environment that can be trusted may engage those who might otherwise be reluctant.

3.8 Family, friends, and others with whom individuals have long-standing relationships (e.g. hairdressers or beauticians, local event organisers) also proactively made recommendations which people said they would trust. This channel also has the benefit of being a potential source of information about the detail of what an activity involves - as people said they would often quiz this type of acquaintance about what the activity was really like.

3.9 Viewing the class or activity beforehand through a recce is also a way disabled people can decide whether they might be comfortable with it - whether they feel likely to be accepted by those people taking part and to be able to cope with it.

> I peek through the door and run away... I checked out a gym once, but the way it was done, I really didn't like it. The way the instructor was. The exercises to warm up were too harsh.
>
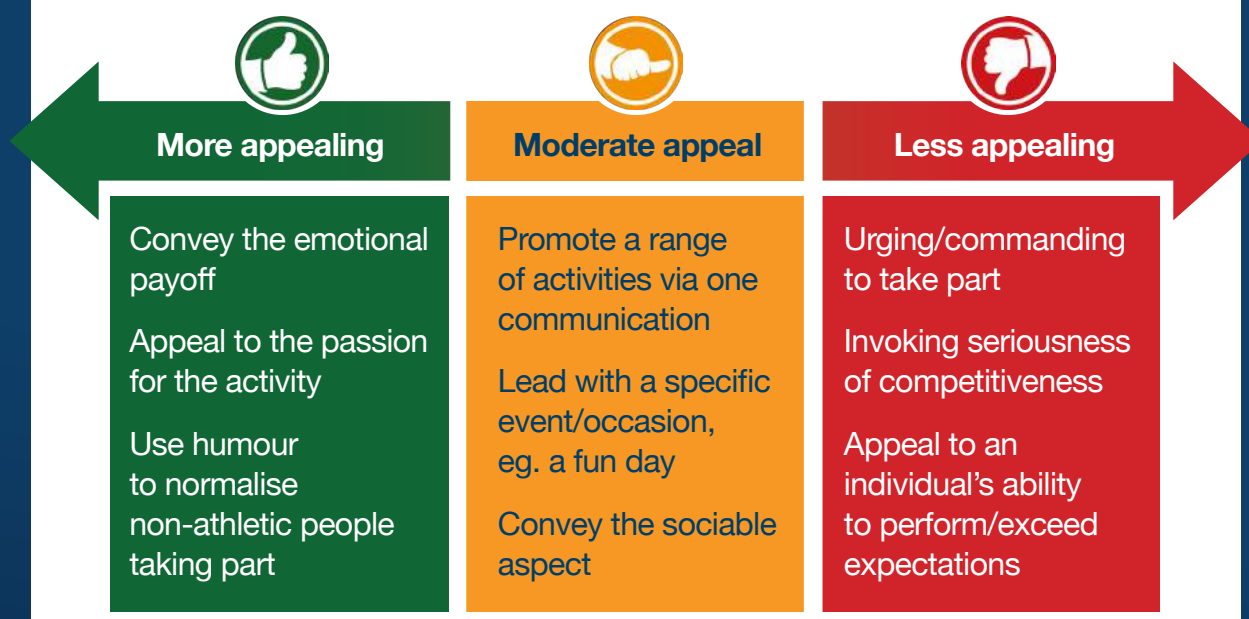> **Female, mental health, learning or cognitive condition, 30-49 years, Manchester**

4.1   It is important to note that the disabled population is very diverse. Therefore, activity organisers need to decide who the target audience is for an activity, and tailor the communications appropriately (it is unlikely that an activity would ever be suitable for all disabled people).

4.2   Despite the diverse audience, there were some general preferences when it came to messaging and images, with some tending to be preferred over others across the board, and others tending to be disliked.

4.3   In every instance though, there were some individuals who had different views from the majority; even where most people liked an approach, a few did not and vice versa i.e. if even if most people did not find a particular communication engaging, a minority still did.

There is no one-size fits all approach that will engage all disabled people who do not currently engage in sport or exercise regularly.

Headline messages

4.4   Bearing in mind the caveats above, in general, the most appealing communications were softer, encouraging using passion and humour whilst the least appealing were the harder versions emphasising competitiveness and ordering action, as summarised in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Relative appeal of headline messages

More appealing	Moderate appeal	Less appealing
Convey the emotional payoff	Promote a range of activities via one communication	Urging/commanding to take part
Appeal to the passion for the activity	Lead with a specific event/occasion, eg. a fun day	Invoking seriousness of competitiveness
Use humour to normalise non-athletic people taking part	Convey the sociable aspect	Appeal to an individual's ability to perform/exceed expectations

4
Designing communications that resonate

More appealing 👍

4.5 People reacted most positively to messages conveying the **positive pay-off of exercise. Messages that evoke how you might feel after exercising**, for example, feeling better or the release of endorphins, were more motivating than simply talking about health benefits (which are assumed as a given). Headlines such as "Being active feels great" help individuals visualise the reward they might get from exercising. It may also remind people of times in the past when they have felt good after exercising, reinforcing a positive memory.

> I think everybody already knows that exercise is good for you, but it tends to be a chore... So to get people to walk in through the door, it needs to be... About the positive reward you'll get... "Being active feels great." That's letting you know about the endorphins, the fact that you'll feel fantastic afterwards.
>
> **Female, mental health, learning or cognitive condition, 30-49 years, Manchester**

> Because when you are active, you do feel better, because you're distracting from the pain that you're feeling.
>
> **Female, physical condition, 50+, Birmingham**

4.6 **Appealing to a passion for a particular sport** is a successful way to tap into motivations for many. The "Love football? Want to tackle a new challenge?" message was thought to convey passion and fun, and, for most, tapped into their motivation for taking part. For newcomers to doing sport, tackling a new challenge also worked well.

4.7 **The use of humour to show that you don't have to be an athlete** was also well received. The reassurance that you do not have to be fast, competitive or in professional gear to take part resonated with many.

4.8 Several posters from the 'This Girl Can' campaign were received positively with both the headline messages of "I'm slow but I'm lapping everyone on the couch" and "I jiggle therefore I am" were liked for conveying the idea that people can engage in exercise on their own terms and enjoy it in their own way rather than focussing on competing.
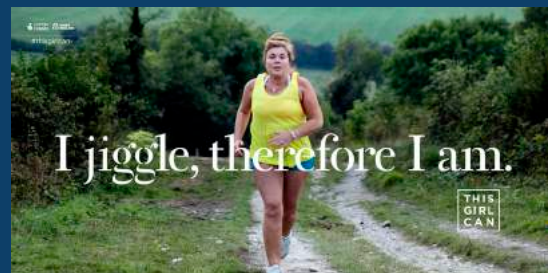
They were liked by both men and women for depicting normal people, for using humour and warmth and for conveying the idea that people could engage in exercise on their own terms. They were particularly liked by those with physical impairments whilst a few of those with mental health conditions found them somewhat antagonistic, or rubbing your face in it if you perceived yourself to be fat and / or slow - perhaps a sense more of being laughed at rather than with. These posters were lacking in specific information about local activities which people did want provided. Not all the messages from the campaign were received positively, further details of these are provided below.

Moderate appeal

4.9 **Showcasing multiple activities via one communication** (such as on the "Being active feels great", shown here) received a mixed response. This can have broader appeal, as different individuals are interested in different activities (whereas by comparison, materials where the key message is clearly promoting a single activity will appeal to a narrower audience).

It can, however, also lead to a lack of clarity, as it can communicate that the only or principle activity offered is the one shown in the image - in the example here, people assumed it was mainly tennis on offer.

4.10 **Leading with a specific event or occasion** such as an open day can be slightly problematic for individuals with mental health conditions who may find it hard to predict if they will be well enough on one specific day. It also gives the impression of a one-off event with no possibility of sustaining involvement which some people found demotivating.

4.11 **Conveying the sociable aspect of sport and exercise**, such as on the 'Fun, friends and fitness' and 'Sociable sports' examples, appeals to many. However this is not necessarily the best approach for encouraging involvement initially as people queried how likely they would be to get to know anyone the first time they went. A minority - often those with mental health conditions - found the idea of sociable sessions unappealing.

Less appealing

4.12 Messages that sounded like an order were generally not well received. As the audience are those who do not currently regularly undertake physical activity, **messages urging or commanding to take part** (e.g. "No excuses!") tended to be seen as confrontational or aggressive and may actually prompt individuals to want to rebel and do the reverse. Headlines that had connotations of a sergeant major were often disliked, (for example those with messages such as "Start!", "Get active!" or "Get the habit").

> Messages that sounded like an order were generally not well received.

4.13 Care also needs to be taken about interpretation or potential double meanings, especially for those with mental health conditions. Two examples highlighted as having negative connotations were "Get the habit" (which some connected with drug taking) and "Throw yourself in" (which some felt evoked suicide).

4.14 Materials which **suggested seriousness or competitiveness** frequently elicited negative reactions. For example "Serious about football? Want to tackle a new challenge?" was thought to fail to tap into the fun or enjoyment that most find motivating. It also evoked the image of intimidatingly serious or competitive fellow players. Wanting to play more or improve were also felt to suggest that newcomers might not be welcome. However, a few people were motivated by more competitive messages such as this.

> I wouldn't have put "serious" there. Because the game's already too serious... I'd have put, "Love football? Want to tackle a new challenge?"
>
> **Male and female, mental health, learning or cognitive conditions, 50 years+, London**

4.15 Appealing to an **individual's ability to perform or exceed expectations**, e.g. "Find your superhuman", was seen as an implausible goal for most (especially amongst the older and physically disabled). Crucially it also seems to imply that the session would not be accessible for everyone. Again though, a minority did find this message inspiring and wanted to be pushed.

Designing communications that resonate

Imagery

4.16 There was an overarching conclusion that photography was more engaging than illustration. It appeals universally, as individuals can more readily identify with the individuals shown and project themselves into the activity. The nature and content of images shown to people varied, and the following section discusses the relative appeal of different types of imagery in more detail.

Photography versus illustrations

4.17 Materials using both illustrations and photographs were created by the creative agency, using similar messaging to allow responses to the images themselves to be compared. Illustrations were not found to be engaging generally. People remarked that they were too abstract, blank or bland. The static nature of some of the illustration examples shown did not convey the dynamism of the activity adequately. Some of the illustrations also carried associations with more medical or government posters (such as those for sexual education or stopping smoking), and these were not thought to work well in a sport and physical activity context. Amongst the styles of illustration only one was thought to work to any extent (as shown next to the neutral amber icon in figure 4.2) - this molecular and fluid approach was thought to display energy to some extent but it was not liked by all. Photographs are far more likely to engage, particularly where it:

• Showed people actually engaging in the activity - it allows individuals to have a window into what the activity will be like.

• Showed facial expressions and visible enjoyment, which helped individuals to imagine the motivating pay-off.

4.18 Figure 4.2 below shows examples on the left of photographs that were appealing, and examples on the right of illustrations, which were less appealing.

Figure 4.2: Examples of photos that were more appealing and illustrations that were less appealing

More appealing

Less appealing
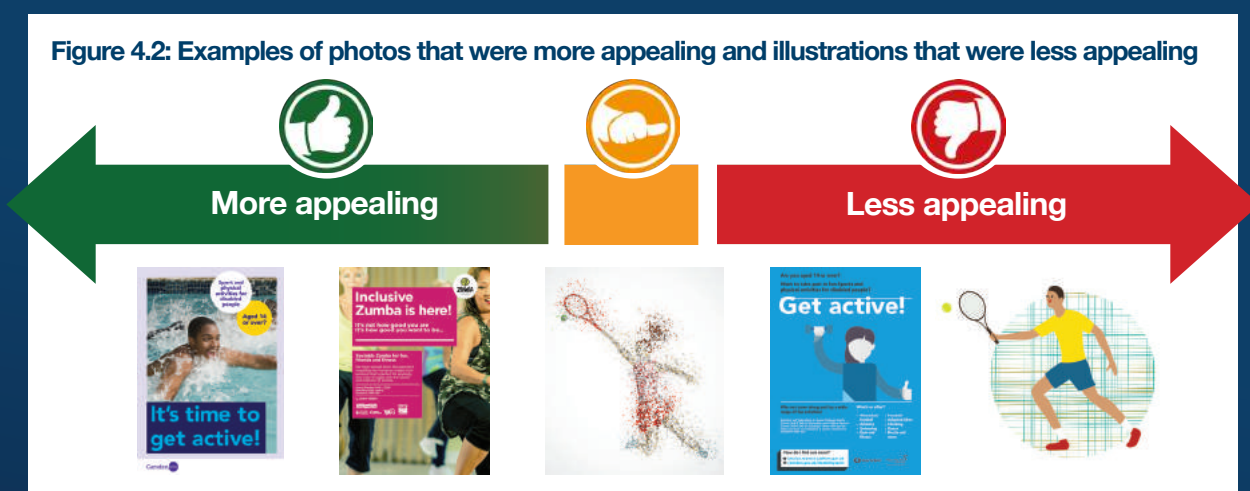
4
Designing communications that resonate

Photography style

4.19 However, the style of photograph was important. Less abstracted, more direct photography styles (as shown in the green column on Figure 4.3 below) appealed more widely - and allow the imagery to demonstrate the activity and sell the enjoyment to be had. Seeing others enjoy themselves helps viewers imagine the benefit they themselves may feel. Close-cropping of images can help to draw the viewer in although care should be taken that this technique does not lead to an abstract image.

4.20 For some, semi-abstract photography (images such as a hand and a racquet, a football and a foot or those shown in the amber column in Figure 4.3 below) worked well. This style of photography was notably more popular amongst those with predominately physical impairments as they felt it clearly showed what the activity was without being too prescriptive about the types of people who might take part - thus increasing their ability to project themselves into the activity. However, others did find semi-abstracted photographs less engaging.

> Being able to see facial expressions or visible enjoyment in a photograph was generally very motivating.

4.21 Both those with predominantly physical impairments or mental health conditions felt that showing people's faces in these types of semi-abstract images improved them as it communicated enjoyment.

4.22 Many felt very abstract images (such as that shown in the red column in Figure 4.3 below) left the nature of the activity too unclear. It was thought to be ethereal and people found it too difficult to imagine themselves taking part or to establish what the activity would be like. There was a consensus that the precise nature of the activity needed to be more explicit.

Figure 4.3: Examples of less abstract and more abstract photography styles

More appealing — Less appealing

Not abstract | Slightly abstract | Very abstract
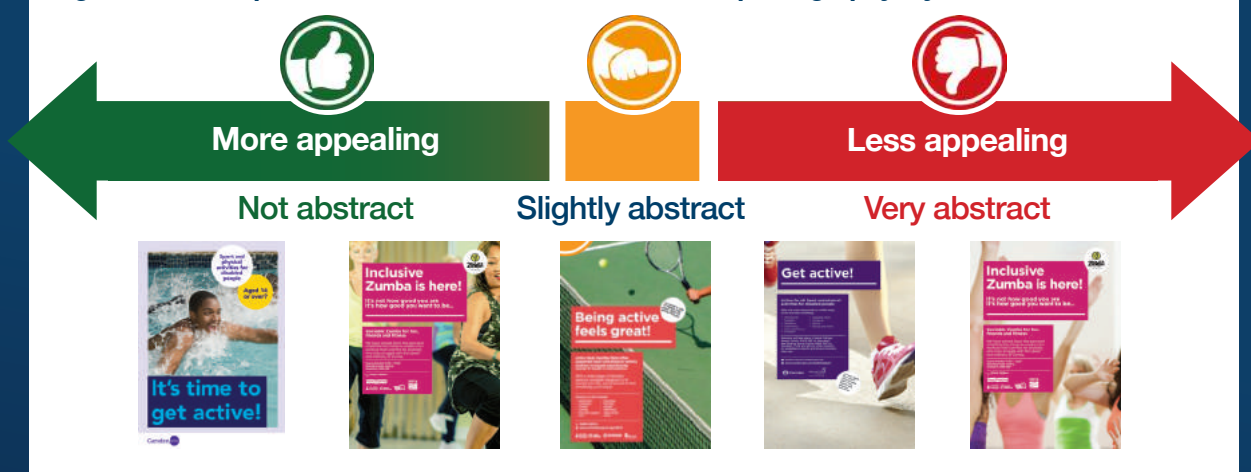
Depicting disability

4.23 As part of the research three styles of depicting disability (explicitly, subtly and invisibly) were tested. This section reviews reactions to each, and it should be noted there was no wrong answer - each style appealed to some of the disabled people who took part - but some depictions were attractive to fewer people.

4.24 **Subtle depictions of disability** (such as those shown in the green column in Figure 4.4) had broadest appeal; the disabled people who took part did not feel labelled, but were able to connect with the imagery as the images:

  • Depicted disability, but without it being the first thing the viewer notices about the person.

  • Seemed to show a mixture of disabled people and non-disabled people taking part.

  • Implied activity at a slower or gentler pace, or showed support being given (i.e. while impairments were not explicitly shown, the imagery implied that individuals' needs for a slower pace, or for support, would be catered for).

4.25 Together, these elements made the activity feel more attainable.

That's a blind runner, isn't it? Being lead...

Yes, but it's hard to see, first of all, it didn't jump out at me.

Males, physical conditions, 50+, Birmingham

They all look like they're having fun, as well as getting involved and getting active. It's not just disabled [people] either, it just looks like a mixture of people, female and male.

Female, mental health, learning or cognitive conditions, 18-29 years, Birmingham

4.26 A further, more generic element of these images that was liked was that they showed the sociable aspect of the activity and implied friendliness.

4.27 **Explicit images of disability** (such as those showing people in wheelchairs, and others in the amber column in Figure 4.4) were more disliked than liked. They tended to make disabled people feel labelled or segregated.

4.28 However, some people reacted more positively to images explicitly showing a disability - especially those with predominately physical impairments themselves. Younger people sometimes did not see themselves as disabled but said they felt inspired by seeing images of people who they perceived might need more support than themselves to take part.

> It's kind of like, "If they can do it, I can do it"... It's motivating for me.
>
> **Male, mental health, learning or cognitive conditions, 18-29 years, Birmingham**

4.29 If the session being promoted is specifically for disabled people (and in particular if it is for those with the type of disability being shown), then this style of explicit image is liked as a clear indication of what the experience might be like and who the target audience is, a window onto the activity. Those who liked this style of photograph thought it communicated that the organisers of the activity had thought of people with needs like theirs, and they therefore felt the activity would be suitable for them (for example it would not be at too fast a pace, or that the organiser would have a realistic idea of what they might be able to do). Older people with predominately physical impairments particularly found this type of depiction reassuring.

4.30 For a few disabled people, there was a place for **images in which disability was invisible** (i.e. images of people with no clear disability such as the football image in Figure 4.4). This was felt to convey competition, high octane or adrenaline activity. A few found this inspiring but others ranged from feeling at best it was "something to aim for" to at worst, "intimidating" - it was not found to be encouraging in terms of trying something for the first time.

> That looks quite high-octane and quite exciting.
> That just seems to be faster-paced.
> Yes... Gets your adrenaline going!
>
> **Male and female, mental health, learning or cognitive conditions, 30-49 years, Manchester**

4.31 Those with predominately mental health conditions felt that the best that could be achieved was to show non-disabled people or a mix of people to communicate flexibility and that the session welcomes all. They noted that stereotypical ways of representing people with mental health conditions (e.g. people with their head in their hands or banging their head against a wall) tended to be negative and potentially distressing; these types of images were thought to have nothing to do with the experience of physical activity, where the goal was to 'try to be normal' and to 'have a good time'.

4.32 In summary, although there were differences of opinion, the **broad consensus** was that a mix of people - some with visible and invisible impairments, some with no disability at all, is most engaging because it communicates that the sessions will welcome disabled people but that they will not be segregated.

Figure 4.4: Examples of explicit, subtle, and invisible depictions of physical impairment

More appealing ← → Less appealing

Subtle — Explicit — Invisible

4.33 Finally, communicating inclusivity could also be achieved by showing people enjoying themselves or playing for fun (i.e. avoiding people looking serious or competitive) and using images of people who may not be in physical peak condition, or do not look like professional / experienced sports people. Depicting people who, in individuals' words, look normal or a bit rubbish (but enjoying themselves) gives the impression that if they can do it, so can the viewer.

Signalling who the activity is aimed at

4.34 During the research numerous approaches to signal an activity's relevance to its intended audience were tested. This section discusses the response received and summarises the most effective ways to engage the target audience.

4.35 A common theme among the target audience is a high level of anxiety around what taking part in sport or exercise will actually be like. This includes concerns about the amount of physical stress involved, how the instructor will interact with them and who those taking part will be. Disabled people raised worries about being "judged" by athletic, competitive, or "big-headed" people taking part in the activity.

> Success in communicating suitability for this target audience needs to begin by making a clear decision about who the activity is aimed at

4.36 Communications materials therefore need to make the reality of taking part as tangible as possible, including giving a sense of who the other people doing the activity will be. This can best be tackled by:

- **Making a clear decision about who the target audience is for each activity**. Not every activity will have the same player profile. For example organisations need to consider if the activity is for people with a specific impairment type; anyone with a disability or illness; or a broad mix of disabled and non-disabled individuals. They also need to determine if it is for beginners or for those more experienced. And is the emphasis to be placed on enjoyment or will there be more of a competitive edge?

- **Reflecting who the target audience is clearly in the communications**. It needs to be very prominent, featuring in either the headline message or at the next level down. The imagery used could also consider the target audience and show the likely mix of people actually engaging in the activity. As discussed in the imagery section above, dynamic images which show the activity in progress and visible enjoyment make materials more involving and compelling.

4.37 In situations where organisers want to hold mixed sessions it should be made clear that those with a disability will be welcomed and accommodated, and to avoid implying that disabled people will be segregated. Showing a mix of disabled and non-disabled people in the image is an effective way to reassure individuals that they will not be treated differently and will be welcomed.

4.38 It should also be noted that a few can take the **representation of gender and colour schemes** (pink, blue) very literally and can assume an activity is male or female only based on the people depicted or colours used in a piece of communication.

Terminology

4.39 Numerous **phrases** were tested to find out which most effectively flagged that disabled participants would be welcomed and supported, but without giving a sense that they would be stigmatised. The **most positive reactions** were given to the following phrasing:

- Materials which positioned activities as '**flexible**', as shown in <u>Figure 4.5</u>. For example saying that the activity "adapts to suit your lifestyle" or "adapts to suit your abilities" were felt to convey the idea of support just explicitly enough (with the sense that everyone would be welcome and catered for), but not so explicitly that people felt labelled. It was particularly liked by those with predominately mental health conditions, but was also relatively positively received by those with predominately physical impairments.

- This idea of flexibility could also be communicated in more tangible ways, for example by stating the following on the poster or leaflet, where they apply:

  - A BSL interpreter will be present or can be arranged or you can bring your own (or the coach is BSL trained).

  - You can stop or start whenever you like.

  - You can bring a friend.

  - The instructor is trained to support people recuperating from injury or with long-term illness.

  - You can speak to the instructor in advance to explain your abilities or any support you may need.

- Materials that used the phrase **"Activities at your own pace"** similarly tended to be liked, as it was thought to communicate there would be no pressure.

4.40 Although these methods of positioning the activity as flexible were well liked by the majority there were a few detractors. A few felt these phrases were unclear and could just be referring to people with a range of fitness levels rather than abilities, so they may not lead all disabled people to identify that they are part of the intended audience. Also a few individuals would want to be pushed more than these messages implied.

4.41 More **mixed reactions** were given to:

- **Communications which promoted 'inclusive activities'**. This was seen as a palatable way of saying everyone was welcome and was acceptable in terms of not stigmatising individuals. This wording was thought to be too ambiguous though, and for many it was linked to all-inclusive holidays, so it could only work if accompanied by supporting messages to clarify what is meant by inclusive (i.e. to make clear that it is not the kit, refreshments or other sporting equipment that is included).

- **"Activities for all abilities"** again was not found offensive but was not necessarily perceived to be relevant to disabled people

- **"Activities suitable for people with additional needs"** was certainly explicit enough but only just about acceptable in terms of disabled people not feeling labelled.

4.42 Other phrases were deemed less acceptable as they were perceived to stigmatise disabled people:

- Although only different by the addition of one word, the phrase **"Activities suitable for people with additional support needs"** was found too stigmatising, and carried associations of special needs. Younger people especially disliked this expression. Even those that did find it acceptable felt it was not clear enough what type of support might be on offer.

- Explicitly using **"Activities for disabled people"**, or indeed mentioning disabled people directly, was again for many a strong negative and thought to be too stigmatising. However, there were exceptions and if this type of bold message is used then it may attract a specific segment - amongst older people a minority did find the lack of ambiguity helpful.

4.43 Figure 4.5 summarises the relative appeal of these phrases:

Figure 4.5: Relative appeal of phrases to indicate target audience includes disabled people

Greatest acceptance / effectiveness	Mixed response	Phrases thought to single out disabled people / stigmatise
adapts to suit your lifestyle adapts to suit your abilities activities at your own pace	activities suitable for people with additional needs activities for all abilities inclusive activities	activities suitable for people with additional support needs activities for disabled people

Structuring materials

4.44 To engage and communicate relevance swiftly, materials need to avoid overloading the audience with competing headline messages. As outlined in the section on information channels, often viewers only see materials fleetingly, and so they may not have time to read the detail.

4.45 Many of the original posters used as examples (which had not been re-designed by the creative agency) were thought to be too busy, as shown in Figure 4.6. Many people found them 'overwhelming', with various competing messages.

> There is too much going on. You just stand there reading every little bit. There is nothing grabs me on it at all, like to make me stand and read it.
>
> **Female, physical condition, 30-49 years, Manchester**

> Too much information on it. I've not even actually read it, because I've just gone, "there's too many words on that".
>
> **Female, mental health, learning or cognitive condition, 30-49 years, Manchester**

Figure 4.6: Poster styles thought to be too busy

4.46 Instead, materials need to apply a consistent structure, organising the information into a hierarchy and ensuring key elements stand out.

4.47 In order to engage and effectively communicate with disabled people the following key elements should to be included, and structured in the way detailed (see Figure 4.7 for examples).

1. **One main headline message**. Main messages that tap into motivations for taking part appear to work particularly well (for example the positive feeling after exercise, passion for an activity, or being able to have fun).

2. **At the next level down a clear indication of who is welcome to take part:**

   • Say who the activity is for in the first supporting message (for example "for new and experienced players with additional needs" or "for anybody who may struggle with the speed and intensity of Zumba").

   • Use the image to show a mix of individuals taking part - reflecting those who will be there.

3. **Photos to:**

   • Convey the emotion of taking part.

   • Make clear the activity / activities available.

4. **Practical details which stand out and are concise.** This needs to address some key points which can facilitate the individual having a positive first experience of the activity (see expectations of taking part, below).

5. **Information about how to find out more ahead of the session:**

   • How to find out more passively (e.g. via a website).

   • How to have a dialogue with the instructor or state your individual needs.

Designing communications that resonate

3 Photos to convey emotion and make clear the activities available

1 One main headline message

2 At the next level down a clear indication of who is welcome to take part

4 contact details **5** website link **6** practical details

4.48 These guidelines can also be applied to alternative formats such as web banners or magazine adverts, and the recommendations on phrasing and signalling the target audience can be followed across radio adverts or text marketing.

5
Expectations of taking part and ensuring a positive first experience

5.1   The previous chapters have set out important issues to bear in mind at the point at which the audience is considering taking part in an activity. It is also critical that the first experience of taking part in the activity is a good one and reflects the expectations which have been created by any communications.

Good practice

5.2   The first experience either needs to involve an opportunity for disabled people to state their needs to the instructor privately in advance or, alternatively, the session needs to be run in a flexible manner with the person in charge showing they understand disabled people's needs.

Stating needs to instructor in advance

5.3   Disabled people made it clear they want to be provided with the opportunity to talk with the instructor / event organiser in private before attending a new session. Organisers therefore need to clearly indicate how they can have a conversation about or make known their support or pacing needs in advance. For example organisers could offer to:

   •   Be available by email or phone so they can state any support needs in private

   •   Hold a drop-in half an hour before the activity starts, where they could talk to the instructor or organiser.

Sessions run in a flexible manner

5.4   Those people taking part want to feel reassured that they will be catered for by default, i.e. not that they will be treated specially or differently but that the session is flexible in nature for everyone. An anything goes manner is welcomed, for example allowing people to:

   •   Stop, start or drop-out whenever they want, or

   •   Go at their own pace.

> Ideally as many options as possible should be available because individuals' preferences vary, there is no one ideal method.

5.5 Individuals also wanted to know that the support they may require will be available. From the first communication this needs to be explicitly stated.

For example organisations could let them know that:

- There is an instructor trained to support people recuperating from injury or illness, or with long-term health conditions.

- They can "bring a friend" - this can make coming to a session where they do not know anyone else less daunting. Note that using 'supporter' does not resonate whilst 'friend' is clear and preferred.

- The coach is BSL trained or that a BSL interpreter will be present for deaf people, or that one can be arranged or that they can bring their own.

5.6 Organisations should use the initial communication materials to normalise getting in touch so disabled people can talk through their needs, without it being made to feel a burden or problem for the organisation. For example the initial communication materials could say:

- "Any questions?"

- "Tell us what YOU need from a session"

- "Everyone's different so tell us how we can make this work for you!"

5.7 Disabled people much preferred the idea of speaking to or emailing someone directly than filling out forms. Some feared that a form would not be looked at, and indeed a few had experience of this happening.

5.8 Disabled people may also be concerned about being penalised for not turning up to a particular session. Organisers will need to reassure people that it they are having a bad day it is not a problem and there will be no financial consequence nor will it affect their ability to return to the next session.

5.9 All the elements listed above need to be stated very explicitly by organisations on the first communication about the session. In summary, that:

- There will be an opportunity to state individuals' needs privately ahead of the session, and / or

- The session will be run flexibly with the needs of all catered for, and / or

- There will be specific support provided (if there will be) and / or

- Variable patterns of attendance will be accommodated.

5.10 If these messages are missing, many disabled people will not follow-up their initial interest. They may feel they need to personally investigate an activity further by asking friends or family who attend what the session was like or even by peeping in on a session in progress.

5
Expectations of taking part and ensuring a positive first experience

5.11 As discussed earlier, many were interested in viewing the class or activity beforehand to try to gauge whether or not they might be comfortable with it - both in terms of how likely they will be to be able to cope with the intensity of the activity and whether they feel likely to be accepted by other people taking part. This was sometimes done covertly by taking a sneaky peek or undertaking a recce in person; at other times family friends or other informal sources (e.g. friends, family, or a hairdresser) would be quizzed about what the activity was like. There was interest in activity organisers facilitating this peek (e.g. by putting footage of activities online).

Approaches to avoid

5.2 Several in-class approaches to activity organisers / instructors establishing individuals' needs were identified as particularly off-putting for disabled people, because they largely wish to be treated in the same way as the rest of the class. These approaches to avoid include:

> Organisations should ensure those leading sessions do not single out disabled people for special treatment

5.13 Asking individuals about their support needs in front of other people should be avoided as many disabled people report they find this acutely embarrassing.

5.14 Disabled people also agree that having the pace or approach of the whole class changed to suit them is mortifying, especially if they are identified as the reason (for example saying "Today we are not going to do x because y is here").

5.15 Creating an impression of favouritism by appearing to give the individual special attention or drawing attention to the fact you are treating them differently is also not welcomed by most disabled people.

5.16 Separating disabled people from others within the session results in those individuals feeling labelled or segregated, and is universally very negatively viewed.

> Don't, in the middle of the class, come up to me and correct me, because everyone's going to look at me, and it's crippling… Do it afterwards, on the side, instead of putting you on a pedestal in the middle of a class.
>
> **Male, mental health, learning or cognitive conditions, 18-29 years, Birmingham**

Specific requirements

5.17   Some requirements were specific to individuals with predominantly mental health conditions, visual impairments or hearing impairments.

5.18   Some individuals with predominantly **mental health, learning or cognitive impairments** prefer smaller classes (four to five people), or one-to-one sessions, or prefer to attend off-peak sessions.

- This information needs to be clear on the website; some people with mental health conditions conduct a very detailed initial investigation online. It is appreciated when information is available that enables them to investigate at their own convenience and in a non-committal way.

- Organisations also need to ensure the timetable is kept up-to-date so people can both plan in advance and change sessions if they are not feeling up to it.

5.19   There are specific considerations to ensure those who are **blind / have visual impairments** know their needs will be accommodated. For example, organisations should consider:

- Having somewhere appropriate that they can leave their guide dog.

- Having someone available to guide them around the venue or equipment in advance and on the first couple of occasions.

5.20   In addition, a person with a visual or hearing impairment on one side may prefer to stand on a particular side of the class, and instructors need to remember this throughout the session if people move around the room.

5.21   Individuals who are **deaf / have hearing impairments** also raised a number of specific requirements. For example they would like to:

- Be able to communicate online or via e-mail to state their individual needs and / or via an interpreter.

- Have a BSL interpreter (one suggested at level 6, another level 3-4 by another[*]) or otherwise it will not be possible for them to follow the class or socialise.

- Agree signals with the instructor beforehand in sessions where physical posture means they may not always be able to see the instructor / interpreter (e.g. a tap on the shoulder when moving onto the next yoga position).

---

[*]   An outline of the different levels of BSL available is provided on page 7 of 'Learning British Sign Language: A guide for families with young deaf children in England' (the National Deaf Children's Society, published The Crown February 2015), at: http://www.ndcs.org.uk/family_support/how_ndcs_can_help/ndcs_projects/isign/guide_on_learning.html

Summing up: The ideal first session format

5.22 In addition to the points raised above (especially being able to state their needs privately) disabled people appear to be most likely to react positively to a first session if by nature it is not at too fast a pace and / or does not place the individual under unrealistic stress or strain.

5.23 To work well the person leading the class needs to subtly bear in mind the individual's needs, and importantly to sustain this throughout the time that the activity is running. As they do not wish to be singled out event organisers need to make sure the activity works for all abilities / paces without the individual needing to ask for a change of pace or additional support.

5.24 For many, a good session includes a mix of people with different abilities, i.e. it is not disability-specific. Sessions specifically only for disabled people can result in individuals feeling segregated. However, being alongside other people who are at a similar pace or who are, as some individuals described, a bit rubbish is preferred, rather than taking part with athletes or big headed, competitive types.

> I think it is good for people to have disability and non-disability, because you learn from each other. There is interaction... [if] you are segregating, "oh you are disabled!", and you have got all that lot in one room, and you have got that lot in the other room, it doesn't help matters. It's good to integrate.
>
> **Male, physical condition, 30-49 years, Manchester**

5.25 After the session the instructor should discretely ask how individuals found it, so they can pick up improvement points. This should also be an opportunity to identify and deal with any barriers to taking part again.

6
Conclusions and next steps

6.1 As we have seen, the target audience is very diverse, and there is not one approach that works equally well for everyone. That said, it is clear that communications resonate more strongly when they tap into motivations for being active - the positive pay-off from taking part; an individual's passion for a particular activity; or having fun. We can also conclude that, rather than focusing on individual's impairments, communications should aim to make disabled people feel welcome and reassure them that they will be supported. This supportiveness is best achieved by creating opportunities for disabled people to state their needs in private; and by running activities in a flexible way. The way in which this is achieved should never involve the individual feeling labelled or their being singled out in front of others.

6.2 All of this can feel challenging to achieve simultaneously. It does, however, become a great deal easier if the activity organiser begins by making clear decisions about who each activity is intended for; and what support will be provided to make the activity accessible.

6.3 Applying our suggested structure (summarised at 4.47 above) to communications materials can also help, in systematically ensuring all the key information is included, and the key messages stand out.

6.4 Finally, the activities themselves need to deliver on what the communications materials have promised, so that people have a positive first experience and thus want to sustain their involvement in an activity. Again, central to this is the organiser having made a clear decision at the outset about who they hope will take part, and the types of support or flexibility that will be built in to the activity.

Guide for organisers of community sport

6.5 A guide for use by organisers of community sport has been developed based on the findings of this research (see Appendix 1).

6.6 The guide provides a practical summary of how to communicate with disabled people to inspire them to engage with sport and physical activity. It contains suggestions and guidance on how organisations can motivate disabled people to take part and how they can reassure them that their needs will be met.

6
Conclusions and next steps

6.7   Throughout the guide posters have been used to demonstrate how organisations might put the suggestions into practice. A poster template that can be adapted has also been provided to make it as simple as possible for organisations to get their message out.

6.8   A new image library containing inspiring photography of sport and physical activity that's accessible for disabled people - adhering to the principles raised in this report - has also been developed.

To view our Mapping Disability Guide, click here
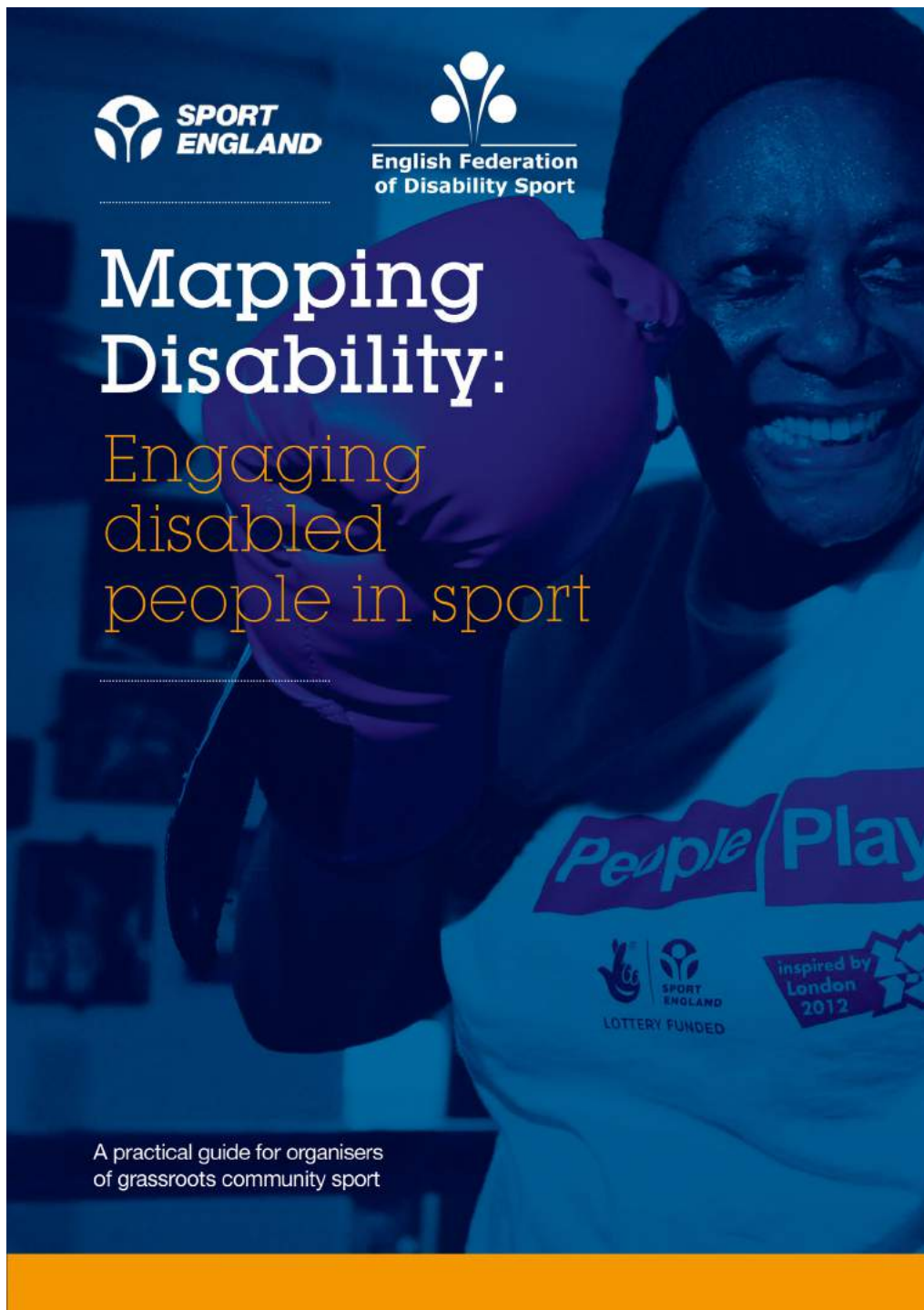
8
Appendix 2: Research Methodology

8.1 The research was undertaken qualitatively, enabling dynamic, in-depth conversations to develop between researchers and disabled people. This format has produced rich findings - understanding of why some approaches are preferable and the nuances of wording most likely to appeal (or be rejected).

8.2 Speaking face to face also provided the opportunity to show and gather reaction to stimulus materials (see below), with the researchers able to experience peoples' reactions fully rather than being limited to closed questions.

8.3 The number of people taking part provides sufficient reassurance that the findings can be said to apply to disabled people generally (as we have been able to identify recurrent themes from people emerging across the separate discussions). Combining groups and depths has enabled us to engage with individuals with a range of condition types, and several people with multiple conditions were included in each group.

8.4 Although previous studies show that individuals' sense of self is not primarily condition-led, fieldwork sessions were structured by broad condition type. Mini-groups were conducted with those with predominately physical disabilities and those with predominately mental / other disabilities, as shown in Table 8.1. This approach, recommended by IFF Research based on experience of groups with people with a range of impairments, catered for differences in discussion pace as well as enabling people with more similarities in their conditions to compare and contrast their individual needs. A total of 36 individuals contributed to the discussions.

Table 8.1: Fieldwork contributors

	Predominately physical impairments	Predominately mental health, learning or cognitive impairments	Visual impairment / blind	Hearing impairment / deaf
Age band	Mini-groups (c.6 people)		In-depth interviews	
18-29	Group 1, London	Group 6, Birmingham	2	2
30-49	Group 2, Manchester	Group 4, Manchester		
50+	Group 3, Birmingham	Group 5, London*		

* 2 further in-depth interviews conducted to capture the opinions of people who could not attend the group

8.5 The six mini-groups were face to face focus groups made up of around six individuals each. This provided time for all to contribute whilst ensuring the discussion achieved sufficient momentum.

8.6 All individuals were part of the target audience identified - they had an impairment / health problem with a substantial and long-term impact on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities and they were not currently engaging (or consistently engaging) in physical / sporting activity.

8.7 All individuals were open to taking part in physical activity, exercise or sport in future (if the conditions were right in terms of activity, support and feeling comfortable with others taking part). Although the discussions did of course include those who perceived there to be major barriers to doing sport those who were outright rejecters (e.g. those who have no interest at all in taking part, in any circumstances) were not included on the basis that they would be likely to dismiss all communications approaches, irrespective of how well targeted they are.

> The research focussed on those who were non-rejecters of sport / exercise.

8.8 As far as possible those involved in disability support / campaigning organisations, particularly those involved in campaigning / with specialist knowledge were not invited to contribute, to ensure findings were representative rather than reflecting a particularly well informed viewpoint.

8.9 The mix of the people taking part was broadly representative in terms of gender, ethnicity and socio-economic group. The groups were spread geographically (across London, Manchester and Birmingham).

8.10 The research was conducted during Spring 2015.

Stimulus approach

8.11 Creative consultancy Hudson Fuggle developed stimulus materials to show to individuals during the research. They were asked to design draft marketing materials from a brief informed by: the EFDS 'Talk to Me' report, other existing research outputs and a review of existing materials used by NGBs and other delivery organisations.

8.12 For realism, and to ensure the test materials reflected what NGBs and other delivery organisations would be able to achieve in future, Hudson Fuggle's test materials were based on real examples, see Figure 8.1.

8.13 In their redesigns they considered, and presented a range of options for:

- Imagery.

- A broader look and feel in terms of typefaces, colour schemes etc.

- Headline messages, i.e. the primary message that the audience is intended to take out.

- Supporting call to action messages, i.e. information about how to follow-up the material, with whom and via what channel.

8.14 The stimulus were shown to disabled people during the focus groups and depth interviews, to identify which elements perform best, and how the various elements could be improved. This feedback was used directly to inform the guide, and the findings are explored in depth later in this report.

> The stimulus materials were nearly all in poster / flyer format as this is easiest to use in a focus group setting. However, the findings can be applied across most communication formats.

8.15 The stimulus materials were nearly all in poster / flyer format as this most closely reflected what NGBs and other delivery organisations would be able achieve in future. However, the findings can be applied across other communication formats - most obviously they are equally valid for web banners or magazine adverts which also often heavily feature imagery, headlines and supporting messages. Reactions to wording context are useful across other marketing formats too though, such as radio adverts or SMS texts.

Figure 8.1: Example stimulus material - Event led

Before

After

SPORT ENGLAND

21 Bloomsbury Street
London
WC1B 3HF

March 2016

**English Federation
of Disability Sport**

SportPark
3 Oakwood Drive
Loughborough
Leicestershire LE11 3QF

Phone: 01509 227750
Email: federation@efds.co.uk

Based on qualitative
research undertaken by

IFF Research

Design by **jgm**