

# Evaluation Report

Together an Active Future  
(TaAF)

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# Executive Summary

## Background

The evaluation team, based in the Health Research and the Sports and Exercise Science departments at Lancaster University, responded to a request for an evaluation design for the Pennine Lancashire Local Delivery Pilot, Together an Active Future (TaAF) in May 2019, and began the evaluation in September 2019 in a two-year project that ended in October 2021.

Early design phases noted the need for evaluation activities to be flexible enough to respond to need, but also to be methodologically sound and use best practice methods. Therefore, the proposal outlined a programme of work comprising three strands that could flex as required, within the limits of possibility, funding and timescale. This ability to respond to the unpredictability of a live and constantly developing delivery within an on-going context approach enabled response to delays in the local area plans both before and particularly within the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Together an Active Future (TaAF): The pilot and aims

Recognising the health and social benefits of physical activity, Sport England published their 'Towards an Active Nation' 2016-2021 strategy to tackle inactivity and achieve significant changes. Part of this strategy was the development of Local Delivery Pilots (LDP), which aimed to tackle inactivity at a focused, local level. Pennine Lancashire was one of 12 LDPs selected to deliver this vision and explore ways of doing things differently. This pilot is known as "Together an Active Future", or TaAF.

TaAF's aims are to address the prevalence of poor mental and physical health across the Pennine Lancashire area. Links between health and low activity rates have been noted in this location suggesting the need for increased engagement.

## TaAF Evaluation Timeline in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic

Since March 2020, people's relationships with physical activity (PA), including their motivations and ability to participate, have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The TaAF projects and this evaluation were carried out at a time of unprecedented social change brought about by the current pandemic, resulting in significant changes to social life for people of all ages - including their engagement in PA. National and local restrictions have had many



implications for sport and physical activity, with many social and PA venues closed and only reopening a few months before the end of the funded evaluation period. Nevertheless, the use of on-line and other resources enabled some activities to adapt, or try new things, and so this evaluation was able to adapt too.

The Lancaster University evaluation team worked closely with the TaAF Core Team throughout the evaluation project with specific strategies used to enable that. The Lancaster team adopted a flexible and pragmatic approach to ensure the successful evaluation, despite the challenges faced throughout 2020-2021. We are grateful for the support from the TaAF Core and Wider teams who continued to make this success possible.

### Doing things differently

Doing things differently has been an emphasis of TaAF from the beginning and this included the evaluation they commissioned from Lancaster University, such that the overall evaluation is not based on traditional metrics or outcomes such as numbers of people reached or increasing exercise. However, individual projects within networks may take some of these measures themselves and an important role of the evaluation team has been to design training and facilitate setting in place the mechanisms and training for individual projects to be able to do that (Evaluation Strand 3).

The evaluation emphasised understanding people's life histories in relation to attitudes to and involvement in physical activity (Evaluation Strand 2), and the process of implementing a range of different interventions and of organising TaAF, in order to learn what are the barriers and facilitators for projects to be implemented effectively (Evaluation Strand 1). The emphasis on learning and feeding back was a strong thread throughout the evaluation:

### Action Learning

At the core of this evaluation was an intention to capture the learning that takes place during the operation of TaAF and its impact upon the wider systems within which it operates. This learning has been regularly returned to the TaAF core team and others for review and reflection using (i) an Action Learning approach; and (ii) various feedback reports and presentations.

The action learning approach provided time and space to reflect with the TaAF Core Team on the evaluation data being collected, enabling participants to engage in shared learning. It allowed time for both reflection and action which, in turn, supported the TaAF Core Team's decision-making processes and next steps. This supported TaAF and Sport England's desire for both rapid review and rapid learning.

There are three strands to the evaluation, **Process, Qualitative and Quantitative**.

## Strand 1: Process Evaluation

The aim of Strand 1 was to carry out a series of process evaluations on the implementation of physical activity programmes and TaAF. These considered the many levels of TaAF and its delivery.

### Objectives of the Process Evaluation

1. To evaluate implementation of TaAF as a group, including understanding potential facilitators and inhibitors of their implementation effectiveness;
2. To learn from processes and factors involved in delivery of physical activity programmes across Local Authority Districts (LAD) and two of TaAF's target groups;
3. To provide feedback on evaluation insights in a timely-manner to facilitate rapid shared learning and evidence-based changes within the 'test and learn' ethos of TaAF
4. To develop resources to allow individuals or groups at local levels in Pennine Lancashire to be able to conduct their own evaluations using the proposed evaluation approach.

The Evaluation Team was able to adapt plans to accommodate progress of TaAF. In relation to influences of pre-existing delays and the COVID-19 pandemic, especially on recruitment of potential interviewees, this required significant changes in timelines and proposed studies. Figure 1 below shows the three studies that were finally included.

### Final TaAF Process Evaluation Structure

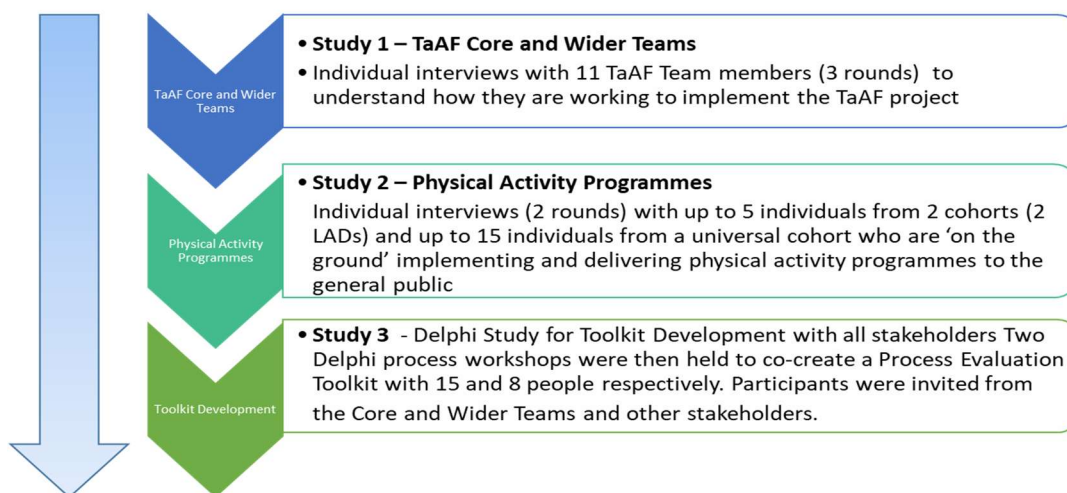


Figure 1: Studies in the final process evaluation



## Methods of the Process Evaluation

Data for the evaluation were gathered and analysed using the **Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR)**, a well-evidenced cutting-edge methodology. This framework consists of five areas or ‘domains’: **Intervention Characteristics, Outer Setting, Inner Setting, Characteristics of Individuals, and Process** (<https://cfirguide.org>), each made up of more specific, focused areas called ‘constructs’, or factors. In Studies 1 & 2, TaAF members from the Core Team and Wider team, and members of local physical activity programmes and the universal programme were interviewed using a CFIR based interview.

## Study 1: Findings for the TaAF Core and Wider teams

- Both Core and Wider Teams considered TaAF as a positive project in comparison to what has been attempted before and this was evident across the domains.
- Across the three rounds there were some changes observed. Fewer constructs within the CFIR framework were perceived as helpful for the Wider Team in implementing TaAF in Round 2 than Rounds 1 or 3. Much of this change was linked to the impact of Covid-19 with the Inner Setting domain most impacted. In contrast, the number of constructs perceived as helpful for the Core Team remained stable across the first two rounds, with some reduction in Round 3, although which factors were seen as facilitating implementation did vary.
- In each round, **strong facilitators** were identified, but these were different across rounds.
  - Round 1: *Intervention Source, Relative Advantage, and Planning*
  - Round 2: *Population Needs, and Opinion Leaders*
  - Round 3: *Adaptability, Trialability, Cosmopolitanism (external networks), TaAF Culture, and Access to Knowledge and Information.*

## Main differences between team perspectives

Overall, the Core Team perceived more factors to be facilitative than did the Wider Team (63 versus 51), with the main difference being in the **Intervention Characteristics**, for example, *Intervention Source* and *Relative Advantage*. The Core TaAF Team were all there from the start and developed the programme, often seconded from other posts to TaAF. They worked closely together and may be more aligned to TaAF ethos and values, while the Wider Team members work in a variety of contexts, for example, some may be Local Authority District (LAD) leads. Given these differences, more mixed views in the Wider Team may be expected. This was only marginally so (35 in the Core Team as opposed to 39 in the Wider Team).

## Highlights:

- There were good networks with external partners, and these are strongly helping the implementation and delivery of TaAF (known as **Cosmopolitanism**). Other helpful factors were acknowledged by both teams including: TaAF’s **adaptability, trialability**, understanding

of the **population needs & resources**, **networks & communications** used within the project, the **culture** within TaAF, its **learning climate**, the **available resources**, levels of **self-efficacy** of team members, and the extent and quality of **engagement** with people inside and outside of their team.

- The Core Team perceived that the way TaAF can be adapted, tested, tailored and revised strongly helps implementation (**adaptability and trialability**). Other facilitating areas were TaAF's **evidence strength and quality**, its **relative advantage** over other work, its **design quality & packaging**, the **structural characteristics**, **leadership engagement**, and the **reflection and evaluation** occurring throughout the work.
- For the Wider Team, strong facilitators for implementation included TaAF's: **culture** and the **access to knowledge and information**, suggesting TaAF's shared values, understanding and norms help project delivery and goal attainment. Other facilitating factors were TaAF's **compatibility** with other work, the values of people in the team and in the local area, **goals and feedback** received, the team's **knowledge and beliefs** about TaAF. The involved **opinion leaders**, **formally appointment internal implementation leaders**, **champions**, and **external change agents** were also contributing in a positive way to how TaAF is being delivered.

## Barriers

A notable finding is the low number of barriers (factors that may be hindering implementation) identified. When they did occur, they were not lasting barriers. This is a particularly optimistic finding given the circumstances over the past two years. Barriers were *Relative Priority* in Round 1, for the Core Team only, and *Readiness for Implementation* in Round 2 for both teams. None were rated as strongly unhelpful, and none featured in Round 3, showing the role of development and changing challenges over time.

## Bringing it all together

The strongly facilitating factors, as they changed across time, are illustrative of the development of TaAF, the importance of its adaptability and in depth understanding of, and links with local community leaders and organisations, and significantly, the role that characteristics of TaAF have played as the programme has weathered and adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic. The period with fewest facilitating factors was Round 2, corresponding to the period associated with the most restrictions on physical activities, strictest COVID-19 lockdown and furloughing of staff. This was particularly felt by the Wider Team. While COVID-19 may have dominated some of the timelines in this programme, normal development and flexing was also occurring. Factors such as TaAF *Culture*, *Access to Knowledge and Information* and *Learning Climate* all seemed to be robust elements of the intervention whereby even if there were mixed views in Round 1, this had become positive by Round 3.

## Implications and future suggestions

A range of suggested actions were made for items perceived as barriers or which had mixed or

neutral views, that may enable these aspects to become more facilitating. These may help inform discussions for moving forward and were fed back to the Core and Wider Team at each time period in a report and a live presentation. They were derived from recommendations associated with the CFIR and based on other implementation evaluations, but also from comments made by members during the interviews.

For the Core Team, the most common recommendations in order of frequency were:

- **Round 1:** Identify and prepare Champions; Alter incentive/allowance structures; Conduct local consensus discussion;
  - **Round 2:** Alter incentive/allowance structures; Identify and prepare Champions; Assess for readiness and identify barriers and facilitators; Build a Coalition.
  - **Round 3:** Identify and prepare Champions; Alter Incentive/Allowance structures; Develop a formal implementation blueprint; Build a Coalition; Conduct local Consensus discussions
- For the Wider team, the most commonly recommendations, in order of frequency were:
- **Round 1:** Identify and prepare Champions; Alter incentive/allowance structures and, Conduct educational meetings;
  - **Round 2:** Identify and prepare Champions; Alter incentive/allowance structures; Build a Coalition.
  - **Round 3:** Identify and prepare Champions; Assess for Readiness and Identify Barriers and Facilitators; Alter incentive/allowance structures; Build a Coalition; Conduct local Consensus discussions

**The top four suggested actions:** The top four most mentioned were: identifying and preparing champions; altering the incentive/allowance structures; assessing readiness to implement TaAF, and identifying barriers and facilitators that may have an effect in delivery.

### Learning from Success

While the above recommendations for areas that were not perceived uniformly as facilitating are important for implementation development and improvement, it is also important to take note of those factors that were consistently or eventually facilitating, or facilitating at specific stages (e.g. working well at the initiation of TaAF, or facilitating in a time of great change and upheaval), that is, the key strengths of the intervention. It is important to ensure we learn from these, to keep using and strengthening them, and to share with other Sport England projects and with the wider community of projects within TaAF's influence.

## Study 2: Local Physical Activity Programmes and Universal Programme

As in Study 1, the evaluation in Study 2 focused on perceived barriers and facilitators for implementation and delivery of the interventions, aiming to use insights to make suggestions for members and participating organisations to consider when going forward. There were two evaluation (interview) time points: Round 1 October-December 2020; Round 2 June-July 2021

In addition to a universal programme, the **Active Lifestyle Hub (ALH)**, the two local area projects included were “**The Big Connect**” and “**How Active are you?**”.

### Findings for Study 2

Detailed feedback reports and presentations have been given directly to contributors for each group. However, given the small numbers in each programme, to protect identity, findings are presented here in a combined fashion.

### Helpful factors common to all programmes

In Round 1, there were seven factors that all programmes perceived to be helping their implementation (Figure 2), and three in Round 2 (Figure 3). Of these, two were perceived as helpful at both time points: the programmes’ relative advantage, and their goals and feedback. Relative advantage compared to other programmes was noted as helpful for implementation. Interviewees noted that their programmes were unique in their specific approaches, and particularly that collaboration with multiple organisations or partners appeared to be helping. Having a clear knowledge of population needs and resources was important, facilitated by good connections and regular engagement with the local community to help understand cultural factors and barriers that may affect target populations’ engagement.

In terms of goals and feedback, having goals was seen as helpful for developing an effective service. These goals were reflected upon regularly through feedback from stakeholders. Feedback was reported as positive for the programmes, even at this early stage, which was encouraging for the general test and learn ethos of TaAF.



## Round 1

### How is the implementation of the Physical Activity Programmes going?

Helpful factors common to all interventions

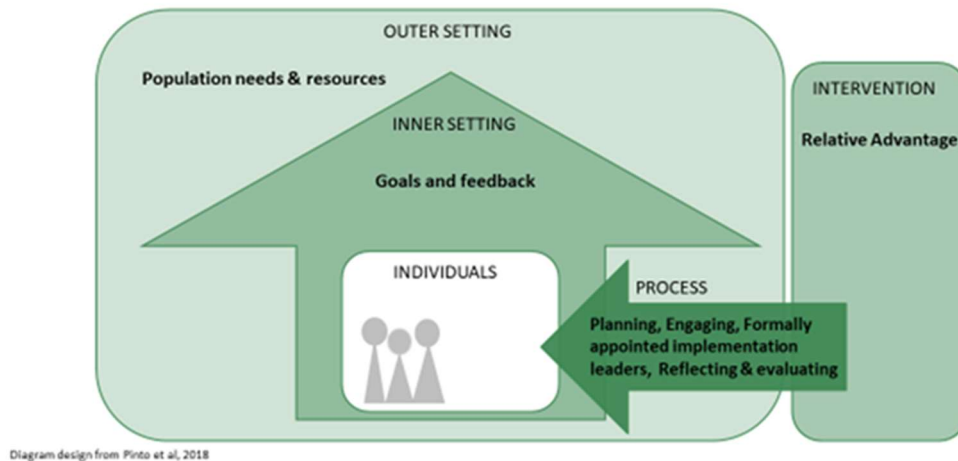


Figure 2: Helpful Factors for all three programmes in Round 1

In terms of the programmes' implementation Process, Planning was particularly helpful when plans were continually collaboratively and reflectively revisited and revised. Engaging was seen to happen more when a lot of time and effort was put in to building relationships with clients, staff and partners, with regular contact highlighted as important. Having several people involved in leading the implementation (Formally Appointed Implementation Leaders) was considered important but having a specific individual who can take the lead and keep everyone connected, or "Championing" the project, was a particularly strong facilitator for implementation. Finally, programmes showed that regularly planned reflection and evaluation, e.g. discussing processes and agreeing changes on an ongoing basis, was helpful. Collection of, and reflecting on, relevant data (e.g. outcome metrics, monitoring of client progress, case studies and stakeholder feedback) was also noted as helpful for programmes and their implementation.

In Round 2, the three factors helping all programmes' implementation were: relative advantage, goals and feedback, and leadership engagement, illustrated in Figure 3.

Relative Advantage compared to other programmes was still seen to be helpful in Round 2, related to their uniqueness. Comments included features such as ease of accessibility for target populations, offering support throughout programmes, being collaborative with multiple organisations to create a network of long-lasting relationships, and having a holistic approach to wellbeing whereby activities could be tailored to meet an individual's/client's physical, mental and/or emotional wellbeing.

In relation to Goals and Feedback, interviewees talked about receiving helpful feedback from Together an Active Future (TaAF), staff delivering interventions, and from those participating in the interventions. Interviewees discussed the usefulness of having plans to gather feedback and use this to support the planning and setting of goals for future work.

## Round 2

How is the implementation of the Physical Activity Programmes going?  
Helpful factors common to all interventions

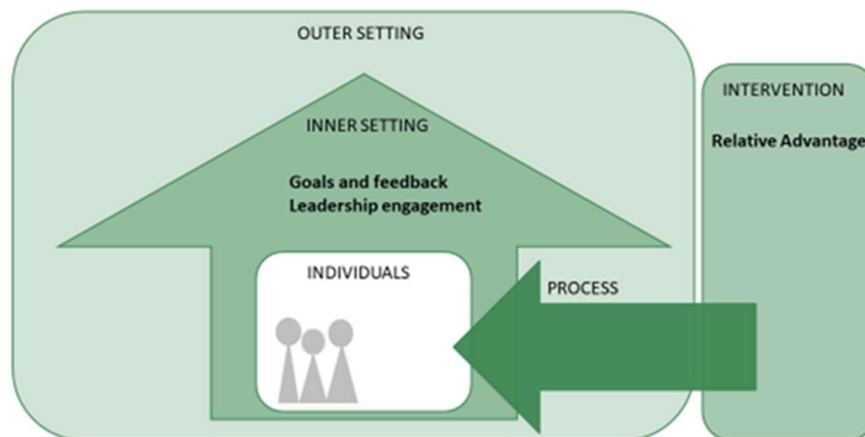


Diagram design from Pinto et al, 2018

Figure 3: Helpful factors for all three programmes in Round 2

Activities that helped raise awareness of the programmes and their benefits to leaders, managers and supervisors, were considered helpful for boosting *leadership engagement* levels and so programme implementation. Leaders offering support to programmes and listening and responding positively to suggestions from staff involved in programme delivery, were examples of helpful outcomes for implementation.

### Strongly helpful factors for at least one programme

There were other factors and activities that were particularly strongly helpful for one or two programmes included in this study. While not present for all programmes, they may highlight particular activities or features worthy of exploring more to see if any learning can be shared to other programmes. In Round 1 there were 12 of these factors highlighting particularly strong influence of aspects related to the programme's characteristics, the inner and outer settings, and the processes related to programme implementation.

In Round 2 there were six factors of these factors, again highlighting aspects of the Interventions' Characteristics, the Inner and Outer Settings, and the Processes related to the programme and



its implementation, but this was a different set of facilitators, illustrating change over time. Some factors were in common with Study 1, notably adaptability and understanding the population, highlighted as valuable characteristics that may enable these programmes to adapt to the pandemic and continue to support local populations within it.

**Examples illustrating some of these concepts from the interviewees are as follows:**

- Being adaptable in response to COVID-19 restrictions was very helpful in order to deliver activities, e.g. doing activities online; having contingency plans in case circumstances suddenly changed enabled delivery.
- Understanding the needs and resources of the target population in terms of cultural barriers and expectations relating to physical activity, time constraints, as well as worries about fitness or body shape was very helpful.
- Sharing networks and connections was a major benefit in terms of support with grant funding applications, specific expertise, linking organisations with similar interests.
- A culture of empowering people in the community and helping people improve their lives through education, health and wellbeing was considered very helpful to implementation.
- Working relationships which are supportive, warm and compassionate, where those working to support the intervention are appreciated and valued are very helpful, linking to strong identification with the organisation.
- Despite the numerous challenges caused by COVID-19 restrictions, hard work of staff and volunteers to deliver physical activity interventions was somewhat successful.
- Holding focus group meetings, contacting and speaking with the target population on a consistent and regular basis facilitated activities and this was endorsed by participation and feedback from the target population.

**Barriers**

There were some challenges and barriers in Round 1 for at least one programme, often influenced by COVID-19. These were related to: the implementation climate of the inner setting and their readiness to implement the programme, the cost of the programme, and the external change agents. These were not perceived as barriers in Round 2.

In Round 1 (Oct-Dec 2020), interviewees reported that organisations had been particularly affected by COVID-19 and its restrictions. The priorities of people had changed as well as what was allowed to happen, making readiness for implementation a real concern for some. However, for those that did not see this as a barrier to their programme’s implementation, COVID-19’s impact was seen as something that could be overcome through rethinking the original plan, doing more collaboration, and adapting to the current circumstances.

Costs were identified as a barrier because of some uncertainty around funding being in place, if funds would be sufficient to deliver the planned work, or if target group members would be able

to avoid fees associated with taking part in the programme. At this time, there was also some concern by at least one programme that their external change agents may have unhelpful attitudes towards participation in physical activity, which could potentially hinder implementation of their target group.

## Highlights

- Relative advantage, and goals and feedback, were stable enablers for helping these different interventions be delivered in their respective areas and target populations. Sharing the learning and experiences of these interventions may be useful for other programmes starting or already on their journey with TaAF-related work.
- Across both evaluation rounds, four factors were strongly helpful for one or more of the programmes evaluated. These were the culture of the inner setting of the programmes, the relative advantage of the intervention over other interventions, planning and the delivery (or execution) of the interventions.
- There was no consistently identified barrier across all programmes. There were some potential barriers to implementation identified by at least one programme in Round 1 including unsupportive attitudes of external change agents and the costs associated with the programme's delivery. Readiness for implementation was particularly affected by COVID-19 and associated restrictions at the time. Not every programme saw these as barriers for their programme and its delivery, and in the Round 2 of the evaluation, these concerns had disappeared.
- Adaptability and Understanding Population Needs and Resources were facilitators in both Studies 1 and 2, highlighting the importance interviewees gave to these factors and their successful role in TaAF.

## Study 3: Delphi Study for Toolkit Development

The aim of Study 3 was to develop resources to enable individuals or groups at local levels in Pennine Lancashire to conduct their own evaluations. A Delphi process was chosen as a recognised method for arriving at a group decision by consulting with experts or stakeholders, with a report or aggregated findings being shared with the group after each round. Two rounds in the form of group workshops took place with 18 and 7 people attending respectively. The first workshop covered what the toolkit should contain, how it should look and how best to deliver it to the target audience. The feedback gathered informed creation and design of the process evaluation toolkit. The second workshop offered the opportunity to gather feedback on the draft toolkit. Following the second workshop, changes were made to the toolkit to incorporate the feedback given. Figure 4 illustrates the development.

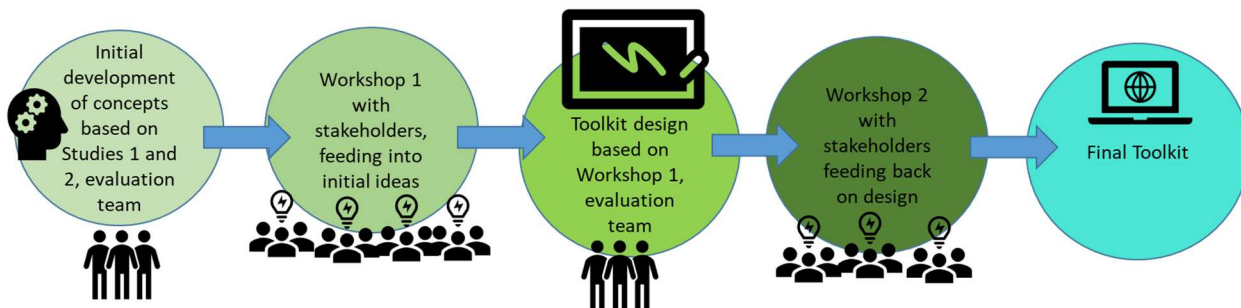


Figure 4: Illustrating the Delphi process to design the Evaluation Toolkit.

## Delphi Workshop 1 findings

In this session, we discussed: 1) barriers target groups might have for carrying out process evaluations, 2) how to overcome these barriers, 3) design and content of the toolkit, 4) the CFIR.

## Main barriers for people doing process evaluations

- **Perception of evaluation** - people can be ‘fearful’ of “evaluation” as a word
- **Timing of the evaluation** - evaluations carried out at the end of a project and not during as in TaAF, lose ‘learning’ that has happened during the ‘journey’ of the project.
- **Deciding what to prioritise** when evaluating and why, and what tools/measures should be used. Having options to choose ways of collecting data was important, with flexibility.
- Participants felt that they often did not **have the skill or knowledge to analyse data** they collected as part of the evaluation process.
- Participants were not always sure how best to **share evaluation findings** and what to include e.g. they felt that structured reports were not always engaging
- Participants **did not feel confident** in carrying out a process evaluation and were not sure where to start or what steps to take.
- Evaluation had to reflect **resource constraints of ‘real life’ projects**.

## Overcoming the barriers

- **Clear and easy to use** step by step guidance on how to carry out a process evaluation would help boost confidence.
- Having **space to reflect** on what went well and what could have been improved upon when carrying out a process evaluation, throughout the journey, so learning can be done on a continuous basis and not just at the end. **Guidance on how and who to share reflections and findings with** was requested.
- Participants suggested that organisations they worked in needed a ‘**culture change**’ to make process evaluations part of a normal practice. Having a standard process evaluation toolkit that everyone could use would help to have **united front**.

- **Tried and tested measures** - Have a list of resources/tools/survey measures
- **Data collection and analysis** - a range of ways to capture data that links in with your aim
- Make resources **accessible** by working with communities and partners to co-create and co-design them so they are more bespoke and tailored.
- Have **guidance on creating realistic timelines** for projects that everyone can agree on. A set of guidance questions on what needs to be thought about before you start an evaluation is needed.

### Main toolkit design and content features

Participants were asked what they felt a process evaluation should look like and what it should contain, with examples.

- **Functionality** -the option of having digital and physical resources.
- **Image and tool led** - they preferred more images, diagrams, checklists, templates and case studies/examples rather than text. Any photos used need to reflect the users, or use more animated images of people.
- **Usability** -guidance on how long each section of the toolkit would take, and easy access to sections of the toolkit without having to read the whole document
- Colour scheme should be reflective of TaAF, with a “Less is more” approach, keeping accessibility in mind. Cost of printing should be considered - materials should be able to be reproduced in black and white.
- **Future proofing** - the toolkit should be user tested to check for whether it’s useful, logical and user friendly. It needs to be able to be updated and improved upon as time goes on.

### The Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR)

Participants were asked how accessible the CFIR was and how it could be better designed for non expert evaluators.

- Language - could be made more basic and visual aspects such as diagrams introduced.
- Simplifying and making it more practical than academic
- Snapshot vs changes -participants wanted to look at the ‘journey’ and changes over time, so would like to see how the CFIR could be applied in that way.
- Name of the CFIR - the participants suggested that they did not like the acronym CFIR as it linked to perceptions of difficulty and evaluation which they felt to be off putting.

### Toolkit development following Workshop 1

The process evaluation team used suggestions provided by the participants in Workshop 1 and designed the toolkit addressing the feedback. Details in the main report explain how the suggestions were used (See Table 9).



## Findings from Workshop 2

In the second workshop we gathered feedback on the draft toolkit:

### Strengths and weaknesses of the design and content

- **Positive** - overall, participants liked the layout and structure. They liked the 'top tip' boxes, templates/worksheets and planning sections were particularly helpful. They found the description of what a process evaluation was useful and commented on how the colour scheme matching the sections worked well and helped the sections flow throughout.
- **Negative** -the CFIR section was still text heavy, confusing and they didn't like the colour scheme. The CFIR language, label and name was unappealing. Participants didn't like the 'contact an expert' tone and felt that more templates and encouragement could be used to boost confidence.

### Suggestions for improvements to the toolkit, what needed further explanation and any changes to the design

- **Worksheets/templates** - more worksheets on topics such as how to do quantitative and qualitative analysis, examples of completed worksheets, examples of case studies and templates and a simplified version of the main areas of the CFIR to use in a template to use.
- **Language** - participants suggested some alternative wording for sections of the toolkit, name of the toolkit, changing the names of the five main CFIR domains into simpler more familiar labels, focusing less on 'process evaluation' the title, and removing more academic terminology.
- **Strategies** -make the matching of unhelpful factors with suggested helpful strategies into a clearer diagram.
- **CFIR** -simplify the CFIR down to just the main domains/area rather than all 39 constructs with an easy to use template with questions and prompts that could be asked in interviews, focus groups and surveys with an accompanying rating system.
- **Design** - coordinate colour schemes with the sections and making sure font and design elements are consistent throughout with as much use of images, graphics and space on the page as possible. Match the proposed phases of a process evaluation in the resource.

### Finalising the toolkit

The final version of the toolkit produced by Lancaster University in conjunction with TaAF and other partners will enable partners to carry out their own evaluations going forward using a united systematic guide. It is a 46 page resource. There is potential for further collaboration with TaAF and Lancaster University to explore the impact and usability of the toolkit once it has been tried and tested by TaAF and partners, although this would need to be discussed with TaAF at a later date. This could include adding real-life case studies, for example.

## A new CFIR questionnaire

Exploring a way to gather data and use the CFIR in a quicker way was another aim of this work strand to help inform the toolkit development. The research team developed questionnaire items that could capture the CFIR constructs. Questionnaires were completed by participants in addition to taking part in the interviews, where possible, to be able to compare the results and establish whether the questionnaire could be a reliable and valid alternative tool.

Very few of the interviewees taking part in Studies 1 and 2 completed the questionnaires. The low respondent numbers for the questionnaire made it hard to draw conclusions as to how useful and efficient it is in its current form. Its length and time-consuming nature seemed off putting for potential participants and equally time consuming to analyse for researchers.

However, feedback from the Delphi study was that questions would be useful. Future work on this, including testing, would be really useful with lots of input from future users.



## Strand 2: Life Course Evaluation

The life course evaluation combines co-design, action learning, and life course and deliberative methodologies. Through the use of a two-phased interview approach, we gained an in-depth understanding of individuals' relationships with and attitudes towards Physical Activity (PA), within the context of their lived experiences.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on the TaAF pilot and this in turn had a bearing on the life course evaluation. To overcome the challenges faced, we worked closely with the TaAF Core Team to adopt a flexible approach to the evaluation.

### What is a Life Course Evaluation?

A life course approach has been adopted because it is relevant for exploring 'how people make sense of their experiences and of the world around them' (Goodson, 2001, p.20). Life stories are important to people's identities, and so this is an important approach in understanding their lives, experiences, and relationships with physical activity.

#### The objectives include:

- Exploring each individual's relationship with physical activity
- Establishing key life events that participants believe to be important to their attitudes towards and relationships with physical activity;
- Identifying people's reasons and motivations for taking part in the physical activity intervention;
- Understanding the impact of these changes on the lived experiences of the participants.

### Life Course Methods

We conducted individual, one-hour interviews with people who were participating in TaAF projects, repeated five months later to capture change over time. Throughout data collection, analysis, action learning meetings and deliberative panels, the evaluation team fed outcomes back to the TaAF Core Team. This ensured that learning potential from the evaluation was maximised in an ongoing fashion which in turn, supported the TaAF Core Team in their future decision-making, further funding applications and planned ventures.

### Life course cohorts

The projects associated with TaAF from which participants were invited:

**Cohort 1: Job Centre Plus** customers (part of the Department of Workplace and Pensions (DWP)). The TaAF Core Team worked with DWP to reach people who are not in employment. Participants in this cohort attended two events hosted by TaAF at a Job Centre Plus in Pennine Lancashire.

**Cohort 2:** members of **Creative Football**, which works alongside Sport England and TaAF to provide a range of bespoke football initiatives. At the time of interviews, sessions with limited numbers were taking place instead of the usual projects, including Blokes UTD and Girls UTD.

**Cohort 3:** Individuals who participated in the **Virtual Mile** in Rossendale. This challenge of running or walking a mile was open to anyone of any age or ability, and participants were asked to record and send in their best time. Due to our life course methodology, we recruited only adults aged 18 or over to take part.

**Cohort 4:** Individuals who participated in the **Active Lifestyle Hub**, also known as ‘Up and Active’. This workstream supports people in Lancashire to be more physically active. This cohort matches one of the Process Evaluation (Strand 1) projects.

### Co-design

Co-designing components of the evaluation with the TaAF Team and locality leads was an important component of the Lancaster University Evaluation Team approach wherever possible. This included co-designing an approach for recruiting and interviewing participants, including what the teams would like to understand following the life course interviews, co-designing a set of questions. These questions were incorporated into the interview schedule. The TaAF Core Team also developed a ‘Life Course Reflection Tool’ to explore the relationship between key life events and physical activity levels, which the Lancaster evaluation team drew on to create a document to use in the life course interviews.

### Data analysis

There were two key strands of data analysis: one for each of the four participant cohorts (within-cohort data analysis) and one for the cross-cohort data analysis. For **Within-cohort data analysis**, Thematic Analysis of transcribed interviews was used to identify emerging themes. The **cross-cohort data analysis** was informed by the concept of ‘thematic networks’. Basic Themes are identified within the data, which are then grouped into Organising Themes and, finally, into Global Themes.

### Action Learning Meetings

An action learning approach provided time and space to reflect with the TaAF Core Team on the evaluation data being collected and the initial themes emerging from the data analyses, enabling participants to engage in shared learning. It allowed time for both reflection and action (Dunphy et al. 2010), which, in turn, supported the TaAF Core Team’s decision-making processes and next steps. This supported TaAF and Sport England’s desire for both rapid review and rapid learning.

### Deliberative Panels (Insight Events)

Deliberative panels methodology can play a key role in including a range of people in research

and in shifting research findings from data analysis to meaningful recommendations for policy, practice and guidance.

The use of deliberative panels in the life course strand of this evaluation:

- enabled other stakeholder groups to contribute to this strand of the evaluation;
- contributed to data analyses;
- provided important opportunities for verifying and fine-tuning the qualitative findings from each cohort.

As the follow-up life course interviews were completed, four deliberative panels (Insight Events) were held with a wider group of participants from each of the four cohorts. Each insight event was co-designed with the TaAF core team and included members of the TaAF Core Team, Sport England, and individuals who had been involved in organising the physical activity intervention the cohort participated in.

### Life Course Study findings

In order to make findings as accessible as possible, audio, infographic and animation media are used, please see links below in each section.

### Within-cohort findings

The life course evaluation comprises four participant cohorts: Job Centre Plus; Creative Football; Virtual Mile; and Active Lifestyle Hub. Infographics and audio recordings are used in this report to present the findings from each of these four participant cohorts. It is hoped that these resources clearly present the key findings from each of the four different cohorts, and that they can be used by TaAF colleagues to support dissemination and development activities as their work continues.

An overview of the participants within each of these four cohorts is presented below, with further detail provided in the accompanying infographics and audio recordings.

#### Cohort 1: Job Centre Plus

Five JobCentre customers were interviewed at two time points (n=10 interviews). The participants were three men and two women, aged between 20 and 50 years. Four of the five people lived alone, and they had been involved with the JobCentre between 12 months and 25 years - mostly several years.

[Together an Active Future | Lancaster University](#)

#### Cohort 2: Creative Football

Three Creative Football participants were interviewed at two time points, while two participants were interviewed once (n=8 interviews). The participants were two men and three women, aged between 20 and 50 years.

[Together an Active Future | Lancaster University](#)

### **Cohort 3: Virtual Mile**

Three Virtual Mile participants were interviewed at two time points, while one participant was interviewed once (n=7 interviews). All participants were women, and were aged in their 30s and 40s. Virtual Mile participants were the most active of our participants across the cohorts.

[Together an Active Future | Lancaster University](#)

### **Cohort 4: Active Lifestyle Hub**

Five Active Lifestyle Hub participants were interviewed at two time points (n=10 interviews). Participants were three men and two women, aged between 35 and 65 years. The people taking part in this cohort were therefore at very different life stages. For example, one participant had two young children, while two participants were retired.

[Together an Active Future | Lancaster University](#)

### **Cross-cohort findings**

Four Global Themes were identified across the cohorts: **Life; Identity; Networks; Perceptions of Physical Activity (PA)**. The tables below summarise the Global Themes, and the Organising and Basic Themes from which they were developed. These findings are also supported by an animation and infographic.

**Global Theme 1** This theme summarises aspects of life that have had a key influence on the way people live. This incorporates positive and negative experiences that have been present throughout individuals' lives, and how these have influenced decisions and actions. The theme addresses what is currently happening in people's lives, along with past experiences.

Table 1: The organising and basic themes related to the Global Theme “Life”

GLOBAL THEME: LIFE	Organising Theme			
	Mental health (MH)	Physical health	Significant events / moments	Trauma
Basic themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving mental health</li> <li>• Drinking</li> <li>• MH symptoms</li> <li>• Difficulties with crowds</li> <li>• MH difficulties</li> <li>• Negative impact on MH &amp; wellbeing – COVID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weight</li> <li>• Ill health</li> <li>• Negative impact on physical health – COVID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance struggles</li> <li>• College</li> <li>• Children</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Employment – enjoyment</li> <li>• Military Service</li> <li>• Negative impact on life – COVID</li> <li>• Positive impact on life – COVID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic abuse</li> <li>• Bereavement (loss)</li> <li>• Concern for family</li> <li>• Grieving</li> <li>• Family difficulty</li> <li>• Judicial system</li> </ul>



**Global Theme 2:** This theme relates to the extent to which an individual’s identity is associated with physical activity. It shows how different sources and experiences throughout life have shaped individuals’ perceptions of the personal importance of physical activity.

Table 2 The organising and basic themes related to the Global Theme “Identity”

GLOBAL THEME: IDENTITY	Organising Themes		
	Hopes and Aspirations	Developing PA identity	Prioritising PA
Basic themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aspirations</li> <li>• Hopes for the future</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Childhood PA</li> <li>• Active in childhood</li> <li>• Parental influence in childhood PA</li> <li>• Active teenager</li> <li>• Active when working</li> <li>• Active family</li> <li>• Adulthood activity</li> <li>• Bereavement and PA (impact)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Importance of PA</li> <li>• Benefits of PA</li> <li>• Limited PA (activity, knowledge, options)</li> <li>• PA enjoyment</li> <li>• Change in activity levels</li> <li>• Juggling commitments</li> </ul>



**Global Theme 3:** This theme relates to the networks that individuals have and are part of in their lives, and the extent to which these influence decisions, actions and their motivation and capacity to be physically active. These networks are unique to the individual and look different for each person. Some networks are considered to be chosen and supportive, while others are perceived as being forced upon them and controlling.

**Table 3** The organising and basic themes related to the Global Theme “Networks”

GLOBAL THEME: NETWORKS	Organising Themes		
	Relationships	Chosen / supportive networks	Forced / controlling networks
Basic themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support network</li> <li>• Dog companionship</li> <li>• Importance of knowing someone</li> <li>• Finding out about PA activity</li> <li>• Feelings of belonging – not being alone in their situation</li> <li>• Feeling safe</li> <li>• Negative impact on relationships – COVID</li> <li>• Positive impact on relationships – COVID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health coach</li> <li>• Organisers</li> <li>• MH professional support</li> <li>• Support of family</li> <li>• Support of dogs</li> <li>• GP intervention</li> <li>• Support during COVID</li> <li>• Encouraging / introducing to PA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MH treatment</li> <li>• Hospital admission</li> <li>• Waiting for help (MH)</li> <li>• Job centre – negative / lack of control / fear / lack of understanding</li> <li>• Fear of losing benefits</li> <li>• Lack of control</li> <li>• Lack of support during COVID</li> </ul>

**Global Theme 4:** This Theme addresses perceptions of what physical activity means for participants, and comprises different aspects including an understanding of what physical activity is and what it means at an individual level. The theme also addresses individuals’ motivations to be physically active, along with the barriers that can prevent people from being physically active.

**Table 4** The organising and basic themes related to the Global Theme “Perceptions of physical activity”

GLOBAL THEME: PERCEPTIONS OF PA	Organising Themes		
	Motivations for PA	Barriers to PA	Understanding PA
Basic themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Influence of MH on PA</li> <li>•Influence of PH on PA</li> <li>•Motivation challenges</li> <li>•Motivation to improve</li> <li>•Technology motivates</li> <li>•Children as motivation</li> <li>•Bereavement prompts PA</li> <li>•Encouragement from others</li> <li>•Inclusivity – easy to access</li> <li>•Positive impact on PA – COVID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PA financial restrictions</li> <li>• Employment prevents PA</li> <li>• Fear of being judged</li> <li>• Negative impact on PA – COVID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confidence</li> <li>• PA with support</li> <li>• No discussion with GP about PA</li> <li>• Social aspect of PA</li> <li>• Dogs and PA</li> <li>• Walking</li> <li>• Benefits of running</li> <li>• Active at home</li> <li>• Valuing PA / what counts</li> </ul>

**Key learning points from the life course evaluation**

There are eight key learning points from the TaAF life course evaluation findings, listed below. These also feature in the short animation and infographic which can be found [here](#).

1) Mental and physical health can sometimes act as motivators to be physically active. However, people also told us how ill health can get in the way of being active.

- 2) Difficult life events and traumatic experiences can prevent people from being physically active. When life is challenging and people are experiencing a transition, physical activity is often not a priority.
- 3) Everyone we spoke with had been active in childhood.
- 4) People who described themselves as physically active adults had often been encouraged to be active as a child.
- 5) Having supportive networks and relationships is important for people's physical activity levels. People often became involved with a physical activity through these supportive networks, and encouragement from others was very important.
- 6) Some people's lives included examples of forced or controlling networks. These tended to be negative examples of networks, and were perceived to restrict an aspect of life in some way.
- 7) For some people, physical activity was about having time for themselves, while for others the social aspect was important.
- 8) Feeling safe and that they belonged led to people continuing their involvement in physical activity.

### The final action learning meeting: reflections and actions

Members of the TaAF Core and Wider teams attended the final Action Learning Meeting in October 2021. In line with an action learning approach discussion of findings led to the development of a series of actions for those who attended and who will be continuing to work on the TaAF programme over the next few years. This process highlighted the importance to TaAF of the following key learning:

- Life events and the concept of different transition points within people's lives were of particular interest to the TaAF team, including how to ensure people are encouraged and supported to be physically active at these times;
- The concept of people living their lives through participation in different networks was of interest to the TaAF team. In particular, attendees thought it could be useful to consider different types of networks in their future work (whether these are chosen and supportive, or forced and controlling), including where particular organisations may sit within this;
- The choice of language when conducting research about people's physical activity was considered to be important. The group discussed the barriers created by the term 'physical activity', and Sport England's recent shift to use the alternative term 'movement'. It was agreed that the choice of language needs to be consistent, as it can have a significant impact on what different stakeholders think 'counts as' or value as physical activity;
- Those in attendance at this final action learning meeting thanked the evaluation team for the opportunity to hear about, discuss and reflect on the learning from the life course evaluation. The action learning approach has been valued by and has benefitted the TaAF Core and Wider teams. Feedback received also acknowledged the importance of sharing the data analysis approaches used, making it clear how themes and key findings had been developed in a systematic and robust way.

## Strand 3: Quantitative evaluation

The initial aim of Evaluation Strand 3 was to train volunteers to take basic functional ability measurements and use standardised questionnaires and to prepare an online database where the data obtained could be entered and used by all partners, as well as TaAF.

In the context of the COVID-19 restrictions, a different approach was required. It was agreed that the assessment training would enable end-users to self-assess. This would be achieved by the creation of short movie clips showing how to complete the physical tests and ‘conversion’ of paper-based questionnaires to an online format. This should allow wider dissemination and ease of collecting data, increasing sustainability.

- Quantitative measures of physical activity, functional ability and general wellbeing were determined and developed based on ease of delivery and minimal need for equipment. The short physical performance battery (SPPB) was chosen as the method to train, covering balance, walking speed and leg strength as this needs minimal equipment (a mobile phone, a chair and a tape measure).
- Accompanying questionnaires chosen were the Global Physical Activity Questionnaire, the Neighbourhood Environment Walkability Scale (NEWS) and the International Fitness Scale (IFIS). Appendix 2 gives the instructions.
- Instructions were developed and feedback obtained. Three videos were developed detailing how each test could be run, incorporating feedback. Finally, the questionnaire format was developed and disseminated to different TaAF groups for feedback on ease of use, comprehension, clarity and design. Links to the video clips and surveys can be found in Appendix 2.
- The measures were ultimately developed as online resources for dissemination to the ‘end user’ (Pennine Lancashire residents) rather than e.g. fitness trainers, sport centre staff etc.
- A spreadsheet for programme staff to use to collate data was designed to enable easy recording ready for analysis on effectiveness of individual programmes.

# Final Report

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

The evaluation team, which is based in the Health Research and the Sports and Exercise Science departments at Lancaster University, responded to a request for an evaluation design for the Pennine Lancashire Local Delivery Pilot, Together an Active Future (TaAF) in May 2019, and began the full evaluation in September 2019 in a two-year funded project, to end in August 2021. This was later extended to end in October 2021. This proposal was based on a partnership that had already developed including the Blackburn Alliance, the TaAF team and Lancaster University. The first phase of the TaAF evaluation (January to June 2019) consisted of a design phase during which members of the Lancaster University TaAF evaluation team worked with and alongside the TaAF Core Team to define and shape the requirements and potential methodologies. At the same time, several community engagement events took place, intended to continue to contribute to the evaluation.

This early design phase noted the need for the next evaluation activities to be flexible enough to respond to need but also to be methodologically sound and use best practice methods. Therefore, the proposal outlined a programme of work comprising three streams that could flex as required, within the bounds of what was funded, what is possible and the timescale. This approach was proposed to respond to the unpredictability of a live and constantly developing delivery within an on-going context. This has proved extremely valuable in terms of being able to respond to delays in the local area plans both before, and particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, and all the further delays and restrictions that has produced. Therefore, whilst the Lancaster Evaluation team put forward methods and modes of evaluation that addressed evaluation requirements as envisaged in May 2019, it was acknowledged that all future needs could not be anticipated.

The accepted proposal, which then formed part of an agreement between Blackburn-with-Darwen Council and Lancaster University, responded to the evaluation requirements as determined by the TaAF team, the evidence as generated during the design phase of this programme of work, and responded to feedback on an earlier proposal.

### 1.2 Together an Active Future (TaAF)

Physical activity has long been recognised as a contributor to good physical health, with physical inactivity ranked as the 4<sup>th</sup> leading risk factor for global mortality (WHO, 2009). Indeed, lack of



physical activity has been reported as a major cause of various types of cancer, diabetes and heart diseases, while participation in physical activity considerably reduces the risk of several non-communicable diseases as well as mental disorders (WHO, 2009).

Recognising the health and social benefits of physical activity, Sport England published their 'Towards an Active Nation' 2016-2021 strategy with the vision for '..everyone in England regardless of age, background or level of ability to feel able to engage in sport and physical activity. Some will be young, fit and talented, but most will not. We need a sport sector that welcomes everyone - meets their needs, treats them as individuals and values them as customers.' (Sport England, 2016). This strategy was supported by the largest financial investment (£250 million) ever made by Sport England to tackle inactivity and achieve significant changes for Sport England and its partners. These key changes are:

- Investing in tackling inactivity as one of the greatest individual and societal gains
- Investing more in children and young people from the age of five to achieve character and healthy habits building
- Enabling those who are active to carry on being so, but at a lower cost to the public purse, by identifying ways where physical activity can become more sustainable and self-sufficient
- Being more responsive to individuals' needs and lifestyles to increase inclusiveness, especially of those groups currently under-represented in sport
- Helping sport to keep pace with the digital expectations of customers
- Ensure/develop work and collaboration both at international and local level, as appropriate, to obtain a more joined-up approach
- Working with a wider range of partners, including the private sector, using their expertise as well as their investment to help others align their resources
- Working with their sector to encourage innovation and share best practice particularly through applying the principles and practical learning of behaviour change
- (Sport England, 2016).

Part of this strategy was the development of the Local Delivery Pilots scheme (LDP; <https://bit.ly/2WEmwjP>), aimed to tackle inactivity at a focused, local level which would consider the identity, geography and challenges of each area. Following a rigorous process, Pennine Lancashire was one of 12 LDPs selected (<https://bit.ly/2OEMJM5>) to deliver this vision and explore ways of doing things differently, and this pilot is known as "Together an Active Future", or TaAF. See Figure 1 for a map indicating the extent of the area covered in the North West of England.

### 1.3 Together an Active Future (TaAF) aims:

TaAF's aims are to address the prevalence of poor mental and physical health across the Pennine Lancashire area. Links between health and low activity rates have been noted in this location suggesting the need for increased engagement through a variety of modes. It is readily



acknowledged that ‘one size does not fit all’ to promote change and thus the aim of the TaAF is to:

*work with local people to better understand ‘their motivation, aspirations and support needs’ to enable them to become more active. The aim was to ‘co-design individual, person centred approaches alongside wider community empowerment and social movements for physical activity.’* (Pennine Lancashire, 2017, p.7).

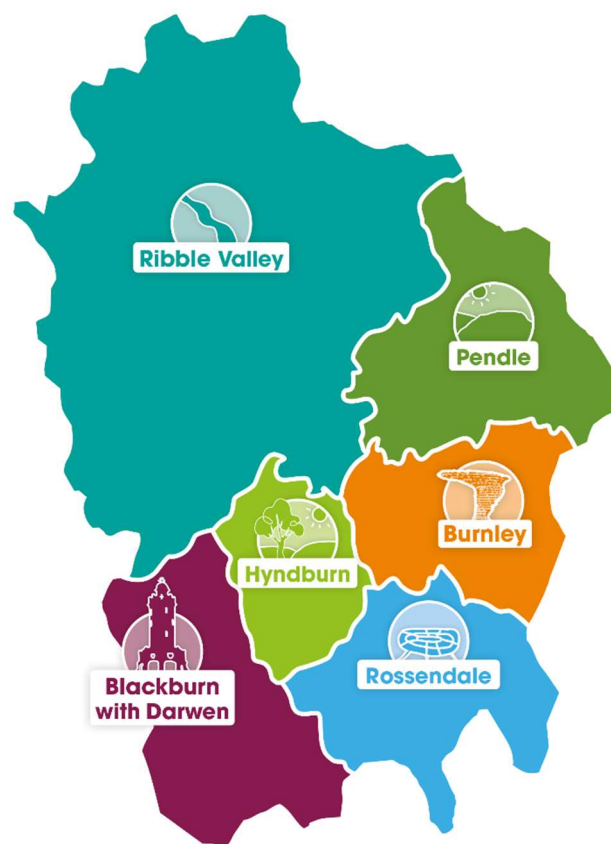


Figure 1. The Pennine Lancashire area of the UK

#### 1.4 TaAF Timeline and Local Context

Lancaster University has been an evaluation partner of TaAF since late 2018, with the full evaluation project awarded from September 2019. The evaluation covered a two-year period to the end of October 2021. TaAF is a programme of work aiming to influence the actions of individuals, teams and organisations from different geographical areas in Pennine Lancashire, an area that is one of the more deprived areas of the UK (DCLG, 2015) with over 100,000 adults who are physically inactive (TaAF, 2019).

Throughout the majority of the evaluation, people’s relationships with PA, including their motivations and ability to participate in interventions, have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic (United Nations, 2020). The TaAF pilot and this evaluation were carried out at a time of unprecedented social change brought about by the current pandemic, resulting in significant changes to social life for people of all ages - including their engagement in PA. On 23 March 2020, the UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson addressed the nation in a televised statement, announcing a national lockdown to ‘slow the spread’ of COVID-19 (UK Government, 2020). This lockdown lasted into June 2020 (BFPG, 2020), with many organisations and establishments closed, and people permitted only ‘one form of exercise a day - for example a run, walk, or cycle - alone or with members of your household’ (UK Government, 2020).

In response to increasing infection rates, the first national lockdown was soon followed by a tiered approach to localised measures, with Pennine Lancashire coming under severe (Tier 3) restrictions as a result of its infection numbers (LCC, 2020). This then led to a further full nationwide lockdown of the winter of 2020-2021 until restrictions were eventually eased with sports facilities and leisure centres eventually re-opening, and indoor events allowed from early Summer 2021. These national and local restrictions have had ‘many implications for sport and physical activity’ (Sport England, 2020), with government guidance issued to help physical activity (PA) providers to negotiate the, often changing, restrictions (DfBEIS & DfDCMS, 2020).

The North of England has been particularly severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In September 2021 the Northern Health Science Alliance (NHSA) published a report demonstrating a 14% higher mortality rate in the North than in the rest of England, and that about half of this higher mortality was explained by higher deprivation and worse pre-pandemic health. This report also demonstrated that people living in the North experienced 41 more days of the harshest lockdown restrictions than the rest of the country, on average, due to the tier system, and experienced a bigger drop in mental wellbeing and higher increase in loneliness. Other research from across the world has also confirmed that COVID-19 lockdowns have reduced engagement in any kind of physical exercise, with research from Lancaster University Centre for Ageing Research showing that frailty, and so vulnerability to serious impacts of infection, was impacted by both lockdown and amount of physical activity amongst older people in our area (Garner et al, 2021). All these factors underline the importance of TaAF for the people of this area.

### 1.5 Doing things differently

Doing things differently has been an emphasis of TaAF from the beginning and this included the evaluation they commissioned from Lancaster University, such that the overall evaluation is not based on traditional metrics or outcomes such as numbers of people reached, numbers of people completing government guidelines of 150 minutes of exercise per week, or improvements in physical fitness. However, individual projects may take some of these measures themselves and

an important role of the evaluation team is setting in place the mechanisms and training for them to be able to do that.

The TaAF Team requested an academically rigorous and independent process evaluation by Lancaster University, but emphasised that the specific outcomes or measures of ‘effectiveness’ of the TaAF pilot were not to be examined.

Instead, the Lancaster University TaAF evaluation team focused on investigating ‘how’ TaAF was being implemented and any barriers (hindering factors) and facilitators (helpful factors) linked to the factors related to its implementation (delivery), which could be fed back to TaAF and relevant persons or groups, to contribute to their own ongoing learning and future implementation activities. This emphasis on the process of implementing a range of different projects and of organising the TaAF pilot from an organisational perspective, enabled the evaluation team and those involved in delivering the TaAF programme to learn what works, what are the barriers and facilitators for projects to be implemented effectively and what could be done to capitalise on the facilitators and break down the barriers. It also emphasises understanding people’s life histories in relation to attitudes to and involvement in physical activity. The emphasis on learning and feeding back is a strong thread throughout the evaluation, rather than just an evaluation report at the end of a project as in some evaluation approaches, and so this report comes at the end of a group of interim reports, feedback presentations and various action learning and feedback sessions and presentations. A full set of the presentations can be found in the final report portfolio materials.

The strategy throughout the evaluation included working closely with the TaAF team to track developments, reflect on change and facilitate learning to set the foundations both for any ongoing evaluation to consider, and to develop the implementation of TaAF, its associated activities and the wider implications of the change activity delivery in the Pennine Lancashire area in an ongoing manner. In this final report, we will also be able to draw the outcomes of the streams together so that we can understand what works for whom and in what context, and learn something of the mechanisms of interventions and behaviour change that work for different populations. This will make the best advantage of the mix of methods applied here.

The Lancaster Team’s approach of working alongside the TaAF Core Team, by having regular meetings and attending the weekly Core Team Meeting has allowed for the teams to have a shared understanding of the TaAF pilot and the Lancaster University evaluation, and keep informed of any updates. The Lancaster Team has also met regularly with some of the Core Team members, such as the Insight Manager, to work to identify suitable cohorts, plan for introductions to partnering organisations and refine recruitment strategies, and this has been an invaluable strategy to ensure the evaluation could recruit members of the organisations to take part in interviews and other central events.

The evaluation team also considered TaAF's goals and ambitions beyond the duration of Lancaster University's involvement, with the ambition that 'non-experts' in evaluation would be able to conduct their own process evaluations of future work. This would specifically benefit individuals, groups and organisations that will be implementing their own TaAF-related programmes of work in their respective areas and targeted public groups and be an effective vehicle for knowledge transfer from the university to the council and community groups.

### 1.5.1 The impact of the early design phase

The early design phase, which took place before the beginning of the main evaluation, noted the need for the evaluation activities to be flexible enough to respond to need but also to be methodologically sound and use best practice methods. Therefore, the evaluation programme of work consisted of three streams that could be expanded as required (subject to time and workload limits and/or costing). This approach was proposed to respond to the unpredictability of a live and constantly developing delivery within an on-going context. The Lancaster Evaluation team proposed methods and modes of evaluation that addressed the evaluation requirements as perceived in May 2019, but acknowledged that it was not possible to anticipate all future needs and that responsiveness would need to be a crucial part of the partnership. Of course, this approach became even more essential in the context of an unanticipated pandemic. Any changes that were agreed as necessary throughout the evaluation project are indicated in the specific evaluation streams.

### 1.6 Underlying principles of the evaluation

**Action Learning:** The requirements of the evaluation are multiple and complex. However, at their core is an intention to capture the learning that takes place during the operation of the TaAF and its impact upon the wider systems within which it operates. This learning has been regularly returned to the TaAF group and others for review and reflection using an Action Learning approach. This approach provided time and space to reflect with the TaAF Core Team on the evaluation data being collected and the initial themes emerging from the data analyses, enabling participants to engage in shared learning. It allowed time for both reflection and action (Dunphy et al. 2010), which, in turn, supported the TaAF Core Team's decision-making processes and next steps. This supported TaAF and Sport England's desire for both rapid review and rapid learning.

**Mixed Methods and Implementation Research:** The evaluation considers the many levels of the TaAF and its delivery through a mixed methods approach, including analysis using Implementation Research, examining how the overall and constituent programme and projects are put into practice. This considers the challenges and problems the programme faces, identifies influencing factors that could be levers for change, explores the impact of the many actors involved (e.g. staff, volunteers, local influencers, participants) and takes an overview of



the wider context. The three strands to the evaluation are Process, Qualitative and Quantitative. The summary of the initial plans can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1: Outline of three strands to evaluation**

<b>Evaluation Strand 1</b>	<b>Evaluation Strand 2</b>	<b>Evaluation Strand 3</b>
<b>Process Evaluation</b>	<b>Qualitative Evaluation</b>	<b>Quantitative Evaluation</b>
<p>Aim: to carry out a series of process evaluations on the implementation of physical activity programmes and TaAF</p>	<p>Aim: to gain an in-depth understanding of the choices made by individuals relating to activity engagement.</p>	<p>Aim: To train volunteers to take basic metrics to assess impacts of the interventions, to be implemented by the local partners.</p>
<p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand processes and factors involved in the delivery/ implementation of physical activity programmes across the Local Authority Districts (LAD) and TaAF’s target groups;</li> <li>2. Evaluate TaAF as a group, including understanding the potential facilitators and inhibitors of their implementation effectiveness;</li> <li>3. Provide feedback on evaluation insights in a timely-manner to facilitate rapid shared learning and evidence-based changes within the ‘test and learn’ ethos of the Pathfinder phase;</li> <li>4. Develop resources to enable individuals or</li> </ol>	<p>Objective:</p> <p>A life course approach was adopted in this strand of the evaluation because it is relevant for exploring ‘how people make sense of their experiences and of the world around them’ (Goodson, 2001, p.20).</p>	<p>Objective:</p> <p>To enable volunteers at a local level to take basic functional ability measurements and use questionnaires to obtain quantitative data. They will then use this to assess impacts of the projects implemented by the local partners by TaAF in collaboration with local partners.</p>



<p>groups at local levels in Pennine Lancashire to conduct their own evaluations using the proposed evaluation approach.</p>		
<p>Methodologies: Mixed methodologies (i.e. qualitative and quantitative methods) will be used in this strand, drawing on the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research and other relevant models and theories throughout the inquiry.</p>	<p>Methodologies: The methodological approach of focus in this strand of the evaluation will be life course interviews. As discussed below, this approach will be complemented by the use of reflective diaries and deliberative panel methodology.</p>	<p>Methodologies: Training will involve Development of ‘standard operating procedures’ for the measurements and use of a database for data entry (as this is most likely to be online, TaAF must ‘house’ it and have control of the database). NB This strand <u>does not</u> include any analysis of the data.</p>
<p>Outputs: feedback reports to the LADs and TaAF group; learning/training materials for local level evaluations to be taken using the proposed framework</p>	<p>Outputs: feedback to the TaAF group through action learning meetings</p>	<p>Outputs: training materials and report on numbers of people trained.</p>

## 2.0 Strand 1: Process Evaluation

### 2.1 Introduction

#### 2.1.1 Aims and objectives of the process evaluation package

The aim of process evaluation package was to carry out a series of process evaluations on the implementation of physical activity programmes and TaAF, and has four key objectives, as follows. Some agreed adaptations made over the course of the evaluation are detailed below.

#### Objectives

- 1. Understand the processes and factors involved in the delivery or implementation of physical activity programmes across the Local Authority Districts (LAD) and two of TaAF's target groups;
- 2. Evaluate the implementation of TaAF as a group, including understanding the potential facilitators and inhibitors of their implementation effectiveness;
- 3. Provide feedback on evaluation insights in a timely-manner to facilitate rapid shared learning and evidence-based changes within the 'test and learn' ethos of the Pathfinder phase;
- 4. Develop resources to allow individuals or groups at local levels in Pennine Lancashire to be able to conduct their own evaluations using the proposed evaluation approach.

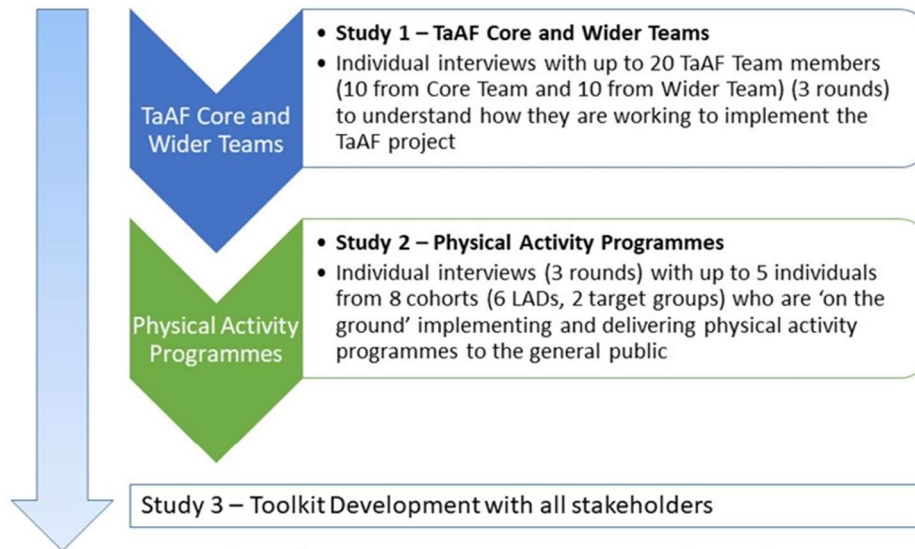
#### 2.1.2 Flexibility and changes

Flexibility by Lancaster University was a key component of the evaluation work to be completed. The aim of Evaluation Strand 1 was to carry out a series of process evaluations on the implementation of physical activity programmes and TaAF. The Evaluation Team has adapted plans to accommodate progress of TaAF throughout the evaluation and in line with COVID-19 restrictions and changes to the physical activity programmes. At the time of the previous interim report, this had required significant changes in timelines and proposed studies, and at that point, an extra study using focus groups had been proposed. All preparation for this study was completed including ethics proposals and agreements. Given ongoing issues with local area physical activity staff being furloughed and experiencing other lockdown related restrictions on their programmes, it was not possible to recruit for this extra study, and so no further report on this potential study is included in this document. Table 2 below summarises the studies and Figure 2 summarises the original and the final structure of the Process Evaluation Strand.

Table 2: Summary of studies and tasks completed

STUDY	Tasks completed	Changes from the original proposal
Study 1 – Process evaluation of the TaAF Project (Core and Wider Teams)	Three rounds of interviews were completed and feedback reports sent, each complemented by a presentation delivered by the Process Evaluation Lead.	All three planned rounds were completed, although numbers volunteering to take part were lower than anticipated. We planned for up to 10 people each from the Core and Wider teams to take part. Eleven people took part in total with six from the Core team and five from the wider team.
Study 2 – Process Evaluations of the TaAF Target Groups and LAD Physical Activity Programmes	Two rounds for each of the Active Lifestyles Hub (Universal project) and two other programmes (The Big Connect and “How Active are You?”). Data analysis was completed and feedback shared in the form of brief reports with participants and their locality district or programme. In addition, a recorded presentation synthesising the findings from each project was made available.	We anticipated 5 staff/key stakeholders per local area per intervention, but given the limited number of projects that were actually running and ready to take part, this was not possible. The original proposal was to examine two population target groups and up to six physical activity programmes across the six Local Authority Districts. In the event, this became two local programmes and one larger universal cross-area group. Originally, three, 1-hour interviews were planned. Because of COVID-19 and other delays, only two rounds were possible but all interviews became 90 minute interviews to ensure depth of data.
Study 3 – Delphi Study for Toolkit Development	Two Delphi process workshops were held to co-create a Process Evaluation Toolkit.	This was originally planned to take place via interviews but it was decided that a Delphi process would be more suitable and more directly involve stakeholders. The Delphi study was conducted to create the planned toolkit in a co-creation manner.

## Original TaAF Process Evaluation Plan



## Final TaAF Process Evaluation

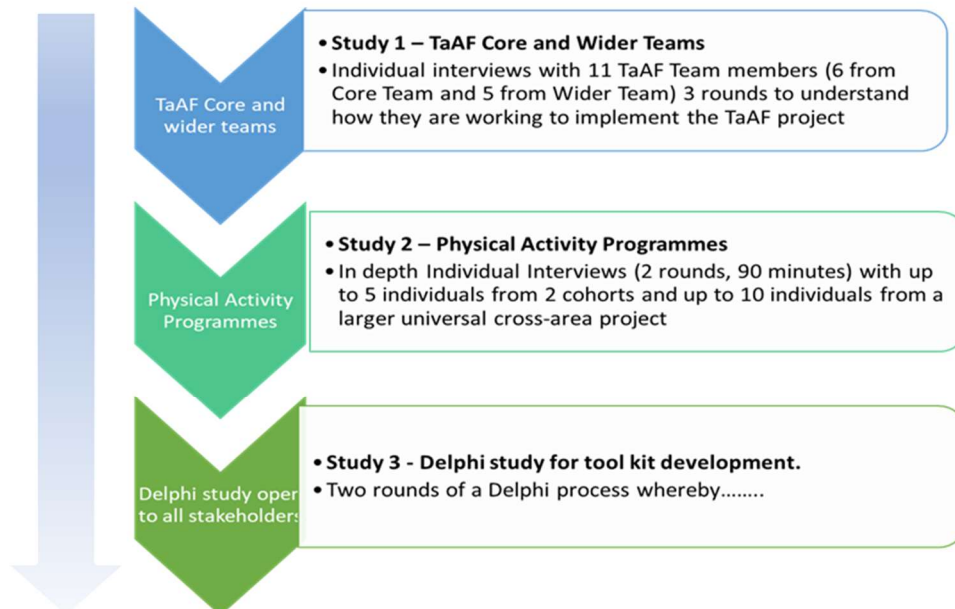


Figure 2. The different studies of the process evaluation package, including the original plan and the final studies.

### 2.1.3 What is a process evaluation?

According to Public Health England, process evaluations:

*“aim to explain how complex interventions work. They are especially useful for interventions that include a number of interacting components operating in different ways and also when interventions address complex problems, or seek to generate multiple outcomes.... [they] can be independent studies or conducted simultaneously with outcome evaluations... [and] typically examine aspects related to delivery and implementation processes”* (Public Health England, 2018, p1).

There are different ways in which process evaluations can be done. These are influenced by the specific objectives of the evaluation and the resources available. Different models and approaches have been suggested for process evaluations. They typically examine the intervention itself and the context of the intervention’s delivery. This process evaluation used the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR) to examine the TaAF pilot and programmes it is supporting, with an emphasis on the perceptions of those involved in implementing it, using interview and survey methodologies. An explanation of this framework and the reasons for choosing it for the TaAF process evaluation is outlined below.

### 2.1.4 The Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR)

The Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR), proposed by Damschroder and colleagues (2009), was selected for the process evaluation work. This framework provides a broad set of areas that have been found to influence how effectively interventions are being implemented. It brings together different models and theories relevant to the implementation of interventions into one organised framework. The CFIR has been popular in health contexts due to its benefits and advantages, such as the provision of a structured and consistent approach to understand factors influencing an intervention’s implementation and what may be helping or hindering it.

The CFIR has a useful website containing information, guidance, tools and resources for using the framework (see <https://cfirguide.org>). This includes a matching tool called the Expert Recommendations for Implementing Change (ERIC) (see [here](#) for CFIR-ERIC Implementation Strategy Matching Tool resource) that selects specific recommendations and actions that could be considered for addressing areas the CFIR has highlighted as potentially problematic for effective implementation

Using such a framework for a complex project, such as TaAF, has its advantages in that it could help provide a comprehensive insight into the different factors that may be influencing successful implementation. In addition, a framework that has been well-used and that offers resources and guidance for its use and application is additionally helpful for non-experts to learn about intervention implementation and evaluation. To our knowledge, this is the first time the



framework has been applied to a complex public health intervention on this scale and fits with TaAF’s “doing things differently” ethos, and the university team’s aims to be employing tools at the cutting edge of their field.

The framework consists of five broad areas or ‘domains’ called: **Intervention Characteristics**, **Outer Setting**, **Inner Setting**, **Characteristics of Individuals**, and **Process** (see Fig 3 below and <https://cfirguide.org>). These five domains are made up of more specified and focused areas called ‘constructs’. In total, there are 39 constructs that make up the five overall domains. These domains and constructs inter-relate to one another, and constructs may overlap into other domains. The CFIR is flexible and the way in which the analysis and scoring is done accommodates for this.

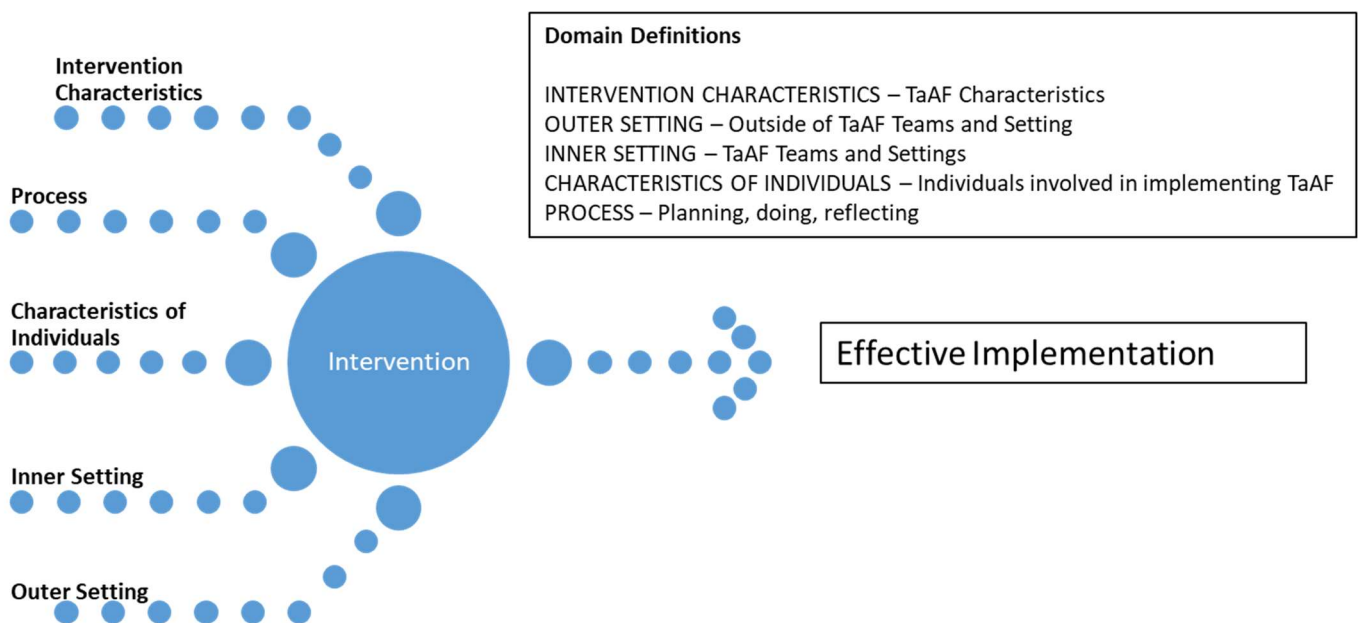


Figure 3: Domain definitions in the TaAF Context

### How was CFIR used in this project?

The figure below (Fig. 4) outlines how the CFIR was used specifically in this process evaluation, illustrating the flow of activities. The study materials were generated using the guidance and tools from the CFIR resources. At this stage, consultations were also carried out with TaAF’s Core and Wider Team members and the Physical Activity Programme staff to understand particular areas of the CFIR that were important, to help create the materials for the process evaluation studies. Data were collected from individuals involved in the implementation of TaAF using

interviews and a short survey. This included the TaAF Core Team, Wider Team, and people involved with partnering organisations that are implementing projects to the public directly. The two researchers then independently scored the qualitative data using the CFIR’s 1-5 scale to identify constructs or factors that are strong facilitators (score of 5), weak facilitators (score of 4), weak barriers (score of 2), strong barriers (score of 1) or, where there is mixed evidence, constructs that do not appear to be influencing the implementation in either a helpful or hindering way, or there is a lack of consensus amongst interviewees. Feedback reports were created and feedback presentations produced to help relay back the perceptions and experiences of individuals involved in TaAF and possible suggestions to help aid implementation and respond to barriers.

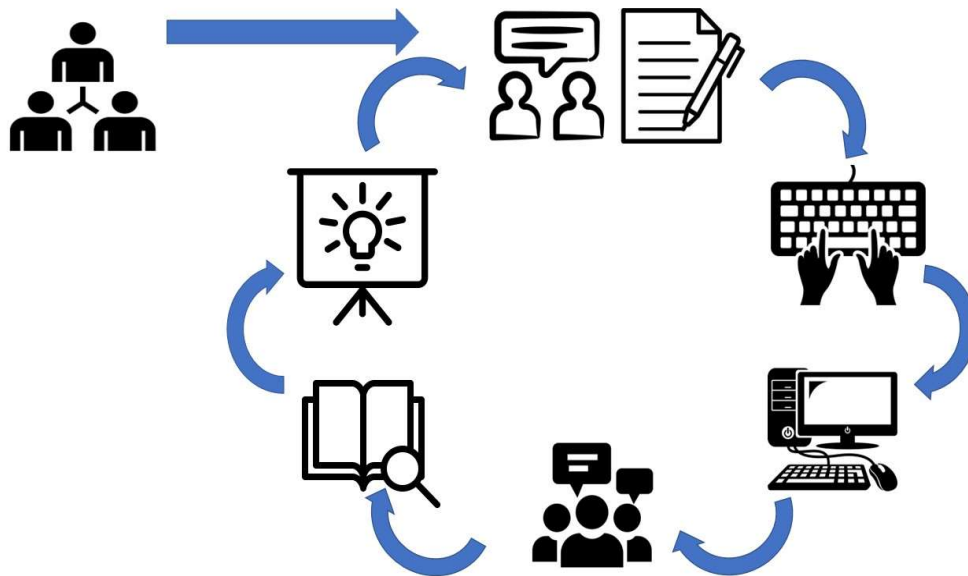


Figure 4: Flow of activities in the process evaluation

### 2.1.5 A new CFIR questionnaire

Collecting and analysing qualitative data, from interviews for example, and then scoring the content can be a resource-intensive process, especially when done in the systematic and rigorous manner the academic researchers at Lancaster University employ. Exploring a way to gather data and use the CFIR in a quicker way was another aim of this package of work to help inform the development of a toolkit for use by non-academic evaluators in the future (see Objective 4). One approach was using a questionnaire and the research team have developed questionnaire items that could capture the CFIR constructs. Further experts at Lancaster University were consulted in this process. Questionnaires were completed by individual participants in addition to taking part in the interviews, where possible, to be able to compare the results and establish

whether the questionnaire could be a reliable and valid alternative tool.

## 2.2 Study 1 - Process evaluation of the TaAF Pilot (Core and Wider Teams)

### 2.2.1 Introduction

The aims of this study were to:

- Evaluate the implementation of TaAF as a group, including understanding the potential facilitators and inhibitors of their implementation effectiveness;
- Provide feedback on evaluation insights in a timely manner to facilitate rapid shared learning and evidence-based changes;

In order to provide insight into the TaAF Core and Wider Team, this study used individual interviews to explore their operations and insights.

### 2.2.2 Adaptations to Approach

In Year 1 of the study, whilst developing the study materials for the TaAF evaluation, it was identified that focusing on the project as a whole as the intervention (the implementation), rather than just the team members (the “implementers”), would provide additional information that would be useful for the overall project. The TaAF team agreed and therefore changes to the research guide were made to capture this, resulting in the approach used.

It was also realised that 60-minute interviews would not be long enough to gather all the information about the TaAF pilot, given its complexity. The design of the interviews was therefore adjusted to meet this requirement. This resulted in the final agreed design for the TaAF project evaluation to comprise three rounds of 90-minute interviews, rather than four rounds of 60-minute interviews. This was agreed on the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

The three rounds of this study were completed. The rounds involved interviewing 11 individuals from the Core and Wider Team and using the CFIR to analyse the data (as outlined above). Following each round, a feedback report was produced and shared with TaAF. Each feedback report was complemented by a presentation delivered by the lead for the Process Evaluation. These took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021. The presentations gave a summary of the report and also explored the recommendations in greater detail. This allowed for the recommendations to be contextualised with regard to the TaAF project and the constructs in the CFIR.

### 2.2.3 Findings of the Process Evaluation of the Core and Wider Teams

This section will describe the barriers (factors that hinder) and facilitators (factors that help) influencing the implementation (delivery of TaAF), from members of the Core and Wider Team. These are grouped across the five main areas and factors that can influence the delivery of an

intervention. Each main are contains specific factors, and these are presented in turn with a summary table of the findings over the three time points over the period of the study.

### 2.2.3.1 The Influence of Characteristics of the Intervention (the TaAF Project) on its Implementation

This section presents the results across eight aspects of the **characteristics** of the TaAF project. As described in the introduction, TaAF is, from the information shared with Lancaster University over the course of the project, an ethos or approach of “*doing things differently*”. Members described TaAF as promoting a novel, bottom-up, collaborative approach to address health and wellbeing across Pennine Lancashire and its communities. Prior to the commencement of Lancaster’s research project, TaAF was focused on addressing levels of physical inactivity across several key target groups and 5 LADs. This evolved into a broader health and wellbeing remit at the start of the 2 years Lancaster was involved in this project. TaAF was seen by Core and Wider team members as helping to develop networks and partnerships with organisations, as well as engaging the public to explore barriers and facilitators to their health and wellbeing. It seems there were slightly different views of TaAF depending on the roles and involvement with TaAF, which is not necessarily bad. These do highlight possible future activities that might help consolidate shared understanding of TaAF. The following descriptions examine the findings regarding each of the characteristics of TaAF from the perspectives of the Core and Wider Teams.

#### The intervention source

In Round 1, the Core Team members interviewed felt they were instrumental in the development of the initial TaAF bid to Sport England and their ability to shape the project, thus perceiving it as internally developed. Overall, this was seen as a strong factor helping the implementation of TaAF. However, the Wider Team were less clear and consistent in their views about the source of TaAF. This factor did not appear to be influencing the delivery of TaAF from the Wider Team’s perspective. There were also few comments about this factor in the following two rounds by both teams.

#### The evidence strength and quality of TaAF

When asked about their views of the quality of the evidence supporting TaAF and whether it will have its desired outcomes, at Round 1, both teams had mixed views. Given the originality of TaAF and this early stage of the project, this is perhaps understandable. The Core Team appeared to have more knowledge of the evidence used to develop the initial bid to Sport England compared to the Wider Team. Both teams recognised the value of gathering evidence and gave some examples of the intention to gather evidence about the project.

For Rounds 2 and 3, the Core Team presented a change in their views on this factor. They indicated some examples of anecdotal evidence in Round 2 that TaAF would be able to meet its



desired outcomes. In Round 3, there were positive examples of different types and sources of evidence strength and quality of TaAF. This included feedback on work already done with TaAF-related projects and target group partners carrying out system changes in their business. The Core Team members therefore indicated that the strength and quality of their evidence for TaAF may be helping its implementation. For the Wider Team, few comments were made around TaAF's evidence strength and quality. Comments were generally descriptive or suggesting no influence on TaAF's implementation.

### **The relative advantage of TaAF**

In relation to the advantage of implementing TaAF over other options to tackle objectives set by TaAF, both teams at Round 1 felt TaAF has several advantages that were facilitating its implementation. Team members interviewed commented positively on TaAF's concept of "doing things differently". They described TaAF as promoting a novel, bottom-up, collaborative approach that relies on developing networks and partnerships with organisations, as well as engaging the public to explore barriers and facilitators to their health and wellbeing. For the Core Team members in particular, this feature or advantage of TaAF was viewed as a characteristic of TaAF that was strongly helping its implementation.

In Rounds 2 and 3, the Core Team members interviewed continued to see this feature as helping TaAF implementation but to a lesser degree. In Round 2, the relative advantage discussions related to TaAF's available funding, its ongoing evaluations, learning, and tailored interventions (e.g. the Physical Activity Pilots, or PAPs) based on understanding of target populations. In Round 3, TaAF's bottom-up, collaborative approach was a key aspect of its relative advantage over other projects rather than being in competition with them, which was perceived as helping TaAF's implementation. The Wider Team did not show particularly strong or consistent views over TaAF's relative advantage over other programmes or solutions at the second and third evaluation rounds, making few comments on this topic overall. Some of the comments made in Round 3 were quite mixed but, for example, included the advantage of the TaAF philosophy in terms of bringing groups together whilst enabling them to retain their own identities.

### **Adaptability**

This feature of TaAF was discussed quite a lot by both teams across the rounds of interviews. Overall, it was seen as a fairly consistent feature of TaAF that facilitated its implementation. In particular, the Core Team members interviewed at Round 3 saw this as very helpful for TaAF's implementation. The Wider Team members interviewed at Round 2, however, had more mixed views at this point. This was when the COVID-19 first peak was underway.

In more detail, both teams at Round 1 perceived TaAF as a highly adaptable project. Members interviewed commented on TaAF's "test and learn" ethos and the benefits of changing depending on the outcomes of engagement and insight. At this time point, there were few examples of



adaptations that had been made or could be made but overall, TaAF's adaptability was generally viewed across members as a helpful feature facilitating TaAF's implementation.

In Round 2 there were positive comments and views within the Core Team members around the flexibility of the TaAF project overall, and, the scope for people to adapt it within a certain remit despite challenges brought by COVID-19 restrictions. The positives of technology being adopted to adapt and create engagement events using online platforms were referenced. However, there was some concern that future TaAF-related projects delivered virtually might restrict the collaborative and engaging aspect of the TaAF approach. The Core Team still viewed the adaptability of TaAF as helping its implementation. For the Wider Team, however, Round 2 saw mixed views around the influence of TaAF's adaptability on its implementation. It was generally agreed that TaAF was adaptable because of the observed responsiveness to environmental and social changes at the time, as well as from feedback by the team's partners, other organisations and people on the ground. However, some viewed TaAF as requiring different amounts of changes to work in the new landscape created by COVID-19, which at the time interviewees did not know how to achieve or whether it was possible.

In Round 3, both teams again saw adaptability as a helpful feature for TaAF's implementation. The Core Team especially saw TaAF's ability to adapt as a strongly facilitating feature in its implementation. Members interviewed saw this as evidenced by the COVID-19 situation and how TaAF made changes to their ways of working, engaging the community and organisations, as well as the ways of applying work streams. The Wider Team also saw TaAF's adaptability as helpful for its implementation but to a lesser extent than the Core Team. The interviewed team members noted that there is a difference between TaAF's approach - the design principles and "doing things differently" - and how this is actually applied in practice.

### **The Trialability of TaAF**

The ability to test and change the implementation of TaAF was seen as a helpful feature for its implementation. In Round 1, the Core Team described how the "test and learn" ethos and absence of key performance indicators (KPIs) from Sport England allowed space to try new ideas, which was beneficial. The Wider Team were more neutral about the trialability of TaAF at this time point. However, in Round 2, the Wider Team members interviewed spoke more positively about the overall plans and benefits of testing and piloting, although noted they had not yet fully implemented anything at that time. The Core Team did not comment as much about the influence of TaAF's trialability and the influence on its implementation in this Round.

In Round 3 of the evaluation, the Core Team members spoke favourably again about the central "test and learn" ethos of TaAF. TaAF was regarded as a pilot in and of itself. The work within the project is being trialled and this was perceived as a feature strongly helping its implementation. The Wider Team members also talked about the "test and learn" approach.

They seemed to view the approach as more fixed but its application was flexible and triable, which came across as helping TaAF's implementation from their perspective.

### **The complexity of TaAF**

The influence of TaAF's complexity on its implementation had generally mixed views in both Teams. TaAF was considered to be a complex project, which can be both positive and negative. Positives were seen to be around TaAF's novelty, it being something new and different. There are also time and resources to manage the complexity, which is helpful. The negatives, however, were around the potential difficulties when trying to communicate the TaAF project to external organisations and in turn, could affect implementation.

In Round 2, the Wider Team remained mixed in their views. Some positive comments in this round included noting that TaAF's complexity had prompted reflections, which allowed team members to have a better understanding of the purpose of the project and what they need to do to achieve this purpose. The Core Team showed a more positive perspective in relation to the complexity of TaAF. TaAF was seen as having the potential to create challenges that can help boost adaptability by working to mitigate these risks related to the project. Some suggestions for mitigating risks included making decisions slowly, employing additional staff, and maintaining a positive attitude.

In Round 3, the Wider Team were fairly neutral about the influence of TaAF's complexity on its implementation. The Core Team seemed to have more mixed views suggesting neither a helpful nor a hindering influence. Some of the positive comments included the context being a challenge that could be worked to TaAF's advantage by enabling them to make a strong offer for Pennine's footprint.

### **The design quality and packaging of TaAF**

The Core Team members interviewed consistently saw design quality and packaging of TaAF as helping its implementation. The Wider Team were more mixed in their views as to whether this was helping or hindering TaAF's implementation. Throughout Round 1, both teams commented positively about the "look, sound and feel" approach and guidance in key TaAF documents and resources (e.g. the "Pathfinder Document"). The Core Team also viewed the branding through the website and social media as helping TaAF's implementation. The Wider team members interviewed also highlighted the availability of materials and branding through the website and social media, which were interpreted as helpful. However, some of the Wider Team members commented on these being too generic and the TaAF identity being "low key".

In Round 2, the Core Team explained that the design principles were assisting with keeping TaAF on track, were helpful when creating new relationships with potential partners, planning new projects, selecting suitable language and monitoring work done. The Wider Team remained

mixed in their perspectives on this feature. The importance of partners being involved in the design and packaging of the project was noted in this round. Comments were made that whilst the branding of TaAF was discussed with the Wider Team, it had not been promoted sufficiently to prevent the perception of a “top-down approach to branding”. There were also differences in terms of the knowledge levels and feelings towards the TaAF design principles in the Wider Team. Some members seemed quite knowledgeable and felt able to use them whilst others felt they needed to go back to them and do more work around them.

In Round 3, the Core Team continued to consider the design quality and packaging of TaAF as helpful to its implementation. In this round, members described TaAF as an approach with design principles - a look, sound, and feel - rather than a tangible brand. Members viewed them as positive and important to help empower partnering organisations and the sustainability of the TaAF approach. It was suggested that partners can retain their own branding but incorporate the TaAF principles into their way of working. The Wider Team were neither favourable nor against the design quality and packaging of TaAF as having an influence over its implementation at this time point.

### **The cost of TaAF**

The costs associated with implementing TaAF were seen by neither team as having a particular influence on the implementation of TaAF. In Round 1, it was felt that there was sufficient money to meet the costs associated with the TaAF pilot work. Money was not a priority, however, and not something the Core Team wanted to be a key factor in people’s or partner’s involvement. In Round 2, the Wider Team showed more mixed perspectives. There were some minor concerns in terms of time costs. Some Wider Team members saw that there was financial support in place, whilst others perceived the pause in TaAF-related work brought on by COVID-19 restrictions had negatively impacted upon costs and being able to spend the funding needed for the work to be carried out. In Round 3, the Core Team members showed slightly more variability in their views on the role of costs influencing the implementation of TaAF. There were positive comments in that costs had been reduced due to the pandemic and there is also perceived to be sufficient funding. However, some interviewees did not comment on this aspect, and there was also a view that there is too much resource available and cost is not what TaAF is about. Comments from the Wider Team on cost were broadly neutral. Box 1 summarises this section.

**Box 1: Summary of facilitators and barriers of the characteristics of the TaAF intervention**

Factors within the Characteristics of the TaAF intervention were seen as helping its implementation more by the Core Team than the Wider Team, who had more mixed views. TaAF's *relative advantage, adaptability, design quality and packaging* were seen to be helping implementation at every round from the Core Team perspective, who also saw TaAF's *intervention source* and *relative advantages* as strongly helping implementation in Round 1, and *adaptability* and *trialability* in Round 3. The Wider Team saw TaAF's *relative advantage* and *adaptability* as helping in Round 1, but to a lesser extent than the Core Team. The Wider Team saw TaAF's *trialability* as helpful in Round 2 and 3, and *adaptability* in Round 3. TaAF's *adaptability* and *trialability* appeared to be the most consistent characteristics helping TaAF's implementation, according to both teams. Table 3 contains a summary across the Rounds for Intervention Characteristics.

Table 3 - Summary table of the findings from the Core and Outer Teams from Rounds 1-3 for

Construct and Description	CORE TEAM			WIDER TEAM		
	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
<b>Intervention Source:</b> Whether TaAF is externally or internally developed				(M)		
<b>Evidence Strength &amp; Quality:</b> The quality and validity of evidence supporting the belief that TaAF will have desired outcome	(M)			(M)		
<b>Relative Advantage:</b> The advantage of implementing TaAF versus an alternative solution						(M)
<b>Adaptability:</b> The degree to which TaAF can be adapted, tailored, refined, or reinvented to meet needs					(M)	
<b>Trialability:</b> The ability to test TaAF and to be able to reverse course (undo implementation) if needed						
<b>Complexity:</b> Difficulty of implementation, reflected by duration, scope, radicalness, disruptiveness, centrality, and intricacy and number of steps required to implement	(M)		(M)	(M)	(M)	
<b>Design Quality &amp; Packaging:</b> Excellence of how TaAF is bundled, presented, and assembled				(M)	(M)	
<b>Cost:</b> Costs and costs associated with implementing TaAF including investment, supply, and opportunity costs			(M)		(M)	

Key

Strong Facilitator VERY HELPFUL	Weak Facilitator HELPFUL	Neutral/Mixed Influence (M) NEITHER HELPFUL OR UNHELPFUL	Weak Barrier UNHELPFUL	Strong Barrier VERY UNHELPFUL
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### 2.2.3.2 The influence of the Outer/External Setting of the TaAF Project on implementation

This section presents the results across four aspects related to the external environment beyond TaAF, that may have an influence over the project's implementation. Overall, the Core Team saw more of the outer setting constructs as helpful in the implementation of TaAF, whereas the Wider team had more mixed views.

#### The influence of population needs and resources on TaAF's implementation

Both teams perceived that there was a good understanding and prioritisation of resources to meet the needs of their target populations, which has helped TaAF's implementation. Overtime, both teams' understanding of population needs and resources appeared to increase. In Round 1, the Core Team members interviewed perceived there to be a sufficient level of awareness of the needs of the community, which facilitated TaAF's implementation at this time. The Wider Team had more mixed views in Round 1. Some of the interviewed members noted that some have a lot of knowledge about the target population's need whereas others are not as sure.

In Round 2, the Wider Team described achieving a greater understanding of the population's needs, which had also increased the importance and priority given to TaAF and its implementation. However, there was some element of doubt about the extent of the impact on populations due to COVID-19. The Core Team members consistently described their concern and empathy for the population in Round 2. This level of knowledge and prioritisation of resources to address these issues came through as strongly helping TaAF's implementation at this time point.

In Round 3, both teams believed that they recognised and understood their target population needs and resources and were able to prioritise them to help TaAF be delivered. At this time point, there was a recognition that poverty and inequality are key issues that impact on TaAF's target populations. It was also noted by the Core Team that it has been difficult to reach the most vulnerable people to further find out what their needs and resources are because COVID-19 has prevented face-to-face contact during this time. The Wider Team also recognised the negative impact that extended lockdowns have had for people and the impact this can have on TaAF being able to fully understand and meet their population's needs. Yet, this factor still appeared to be seen as good enough at this point to continue to help TaAF's implementation.

#### The influence of cosmopolitanism (having external networks) on TaAF's implementation

TaAF was perceived by both teams as being cosmopolitan in their approach. They have a wide and diverse network with external organisations that in turn have helped TaAF's implementation over this study time period. In Round 1, plans to continue collaborations and developing them further were discussed by both teams, especially by the Wider Team.



In Round 2, COVID-19 restrictions and their potential impact were discussed but the strong connections with wider and external partners and organisations were recognised as beneficial for TaAF's response to COVID-19. The Core Team noted the need to maintain and build these connections at this time. The Wider Team also reflected upon the network of connections through COVID-19. Some members felt that whilst some connections had been strengthened during COVID-19, other connections had been impacted by the limited face-to-face interactions. Overall, the Wider Team still appeared to see this factor as helping TaAF's implementation at this stage.

By Round 3, TaAF's cosmopolitanism was strongly helping its implementation from the perspectives of both teams. For the Core Team, they discussed being engaged in information and knowledge sharing and learning with a wide range of connections and partnering organisations at local and national levels. The Wider Team also noted the wide range of connections locally, across Pennine Lancashire, as well as some national organisations focussed on fitness and health. These appeared to be strongly facilitating the implementation of TaAF from members' perspectives.

#### **The influence of peer pressure on TaAF's implementation**

External competitive pressure to implement TaAF did not appear to be influencing the project's implementation at any point of the study. In Round 2, the Core Team showed mixed comments by some members that were interviewed. This included comments that there had been a shift away from being in competition with others. But, there was some mention of concern that the possibility of future funding may evoke competitiveness between partners. The other rounds showed no or very little comment or indication the either team felt this pressure was having an influence on TaAF's implementation.

#### **The influence of external policies and incentives on TaAF's implementation**

There were various different views around TaAF's implementation being influenced by external policies and incentives. In Round 1, the Core Team identified the external influence of Sport England's approach to TaAF as helpful. They also discussed the importance of more local policies, including health and social care regulations, which seemed to be important in shaping the implementation of TaAF. Subsequent time points showed more mixed perspectives in the influence of these.

At Round 2, the Core Team noticed the impact of policies in response to COVID-19 as a hindrance for TaAF's implementation and progress. This included projects having to be paused and the shift to working from home. The influence of Sport England, at the time, was sometimes seen as helpful but sometimes challenging too. They were being flexible, which was seen positively. However, at the time of the interviews, Sport England had not yet communicated about the COVID-19 impact on the TaAF projects and the team. It was unknown to the team if they could

carry on their work as planned or needed to adapt and change. This was challenging as the team did not know if work could be carried out as planned or needed to be adapted and changed. Beyond that, some members noted positive responses with the importance of physical activity and health during COVID and other funding coming through to support this kind of activity. On the ground, however, local lockdowns across Lancashire were perceived as impacting TaAF's implementation with some districts more than others. For example, one district was unable to re-open leisure facilities when others were open nationally. There was regular guidance coming out from Sport England and the government, which was rapidly changing what could be done and how, which again impacted upon a wide range of services related to physical activity. The Wider Team also noted that external policies related to COVID-19 were hindering TaAF but other local infrastructures were helping (e.g. pop up cycle lanes from the Department of Transport and the County Council). Whilst such external policies had created barriers, it seemed that Wider Team members also saw they had also created helpful opportunities too, including the ability to re-evaluate the types of interventions required and the potential to reach out to more people, for example.

In Round 3, mixed views again were expressed by both teams. Some of the same helpful and unhelpful experiences were expressed again at Time 3 suggesting no clear influence of this factor in TaAF' implementation. For the Core Team, COVID-related policy issues were noted as having an impact on TaAF, which have been both positive and negative. A positive aspect was in terms of TaAF now playing a key role in Covid-recovery in Pennine Lancs, and a negative aspect was in terms of the reduced progress that has been made with implementation of interventions and their support. Similarly for the Wider Team, some policies and incentives were seen as having no influence on TaAF whereas others may have a positive influence. Those viewed positively included the impact of national cycling strategy, the national obesity strategy, and also additional funding that had been made available for primary care, which was seen as strengthening TaAF within the wider context. The required responses to COVID-19 policies were also noted as presenting some challenges for TaAF at this time too.

**Box 2: Summary of facilitators and barriers to TaAF’s implementation related to the outer setting**

In relation to the Outer Setting, the Core Team saw slightly more helpful factors than the Wider Team. TaAF’s cosmopolitanism, (external networking) was seen as helping implementation at all evaluation time points by both teams, but particularly in Round 3. The Core Team perceived that knowledge and prioritisation of population needs and resources were helpful at all time points, but particularly in Round 2, related to some extent to the understanding of impacts of COVID-19 and associated lockdowns on local populations.

The Core Team perceived that external policies and incentives were helpful in Round 1. The Wider Team had more mixed views on this aspect throughout the rounds (i.e. some interviewees thought they were facilitating, and some that they were barriers, or unhelpful, with no clear consensus). These findings reflect the context of new policies and external influences constantly changing related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and some of the responses, especially where positively viewed, may be related to benefits of the underlying flexible, responsive approach in such a changing environment. Table 4 contains a summary across the Rounds for Outer Setting.

**Table 4: Summary of the findings for Core and Outer Teams from Round 1 and 2 for Outer Setting**

Construct and Description	CORE TEAM			WIDER TEAM		
	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
<b>Population Needs and Resources:</b> The extent to which population needs, as well as barriers and facilitators to meet those needs, are accurately known and prioritised.				(M)		
<b>Cosmopolitanism:</b> The extent of networks with other external organisations.						
<b>Peer Pressure:</b> Competitive pressure to implement TaAF.		(M)				
<b>External Policies and Incentives:</b> External strategies to TaAF, including policy and regulations, external mandates, recommendations and guidelines, pay-for-performance, collaboratives, and public or benchmark reporting.		(M)	(M)	(M)	(M)	(M)

**Key**

<b>Strong Facilitator</b> VERY HELPFUL	<b>Weak Facilitator</b> HELPFUL	<b>Neutral/Mixed Influence (M)</b> NEITHER HELPFUL OR UNHELPFUL	<b>Weak Barrier</b> UNHELPFUL	<b>Strong Barrier</b> VERY UNHELPFUL
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### 2.2.3.3 The influence of the Internal/Inner Setting of the TaAF Project on implementation

This section presents the results across fourteen aspects related to the internal environment of an intervention or programme that can influence its implementation. These factors are focused around the structural characteristics of the setting, its culture, networks and communications, the setting's implementation climate and readiness for implementation. Typically, the internal setting is the organisation where the intervention is being conducted in. However, as TaAF is a multi-organisational and environmental project, the distinction between internal and external can sometimes be fuzzy. We let interviewees explain their view of the internal setting of TaAF in the way they perceived it to be. We did not restrict to any one organisation but simply asked members to reflect on TaAF's own internal environment and the environments within which it is trying to be conducted.

#### **The influence of TaAF's structural characteristics on its implementation**

The make-up of TaAF and the organisations it is operating within (in terms of their size, how established they are, the stability of members) was generally seen to be helpful for TaAF's implementation over the course of the evaluation.

In Round 1, both teams noted that the characteristics were developed in order to facilitate TaAF's goals and this was helping implementation. One particular aspect of TaAF's make-up was the adoption of a secondment model of employment. Comments on this useful approach were that it brought together a wealth of knowledge and expertise to TaAF, which seemed to help its implementation. The process of identification and employment of locality leads was also viewed as positive and helpful for the project.

In Round 2, perspectives of teams had changed and more mixed views were found about TaAF's structure and its influence on implementation. The Core Team had some comments about TaAF being a small, tightly knit team, as well as it being a larger structure made up of individuals from multiple organisations. This was seen by some as supporting the existing development of TaAF or extending the development of TaAF in the future. At the time of these interviews, changes to Core Team members had occurred because of staff leave or higher workloads in their other, non-TaAF roles. One new member was also joining the Core Team. Whether or not these were helpful appeared to be mixed for the Core Team members. For the Wider Team, the inner and outer settings appeared clearer to them. Yet, the structure was described as more fluid. There were multiple layers, consisting of a Core Team at the top that extended into the community with partners from numerous organisations. The importance of networking and collaboration was key to this structure working well from some members' perspectives. However, due to COVID-19, some felt these had been affected and this structure may have hindered the implementation of TaAF.



In Round 3, the Core Team noted the helpful and beneficial influence of the secondment model approach again. It was noted as helping TaAF's networking, and embedding the TaAF approach within other organisations. There were some further changes noted to the structure of the Core Team. Some members had altered the number of hours they commit to TaAF because of increased commitments in other roles in response to COVID-19, which affected the Team's leadership, albeit not necessarily perceived in a negative way. Members had adapted to changes and taken responsibility for different tasks, which was seen to help TaAF's implementation because of not adopting a rigid hierarchical structure. The Wider Team showed more mixed views at this point in relation to TaAF's structure and influence on its implementation. They too noted the changes to the Core Team and did not perceive it to negatively impact on TaAF itself. Some positive comments included changes to roles and having more new people could be beneficial, for example helping improve communication with colleagues and adding new people into roles may also be helpful.

### **The influence of TaAF's networks and communications on its implementation**

The nature and quality of the networks and communications that TaAF have developed and used was seen largely as helping the project's implementation. This was especially the case from the perspective of the Core Team.

In Round 1, teams noted the variety of different and creative methods of communicating that had been developed and employed within TaAF. These included the use of social media, websites, podcasts, and conversations outside of formal settings. These methods were used in an informal way and were perceived by both teams as helping TaAF's communication, networking, as well as carrying out planning and engagement.

Round 2 saw some differences between the teams' views. At this time, the majority of networking and communicating was done via social media and digital platforms. For the Core Team, there were different methods of communicating being adapted (e.g. WhatsApp, videos, reports, Trello, virtual meetings), which were considered to be effective and helpful for TaAF implementation. For the Wider Team, more mixed views were found. These online methods were viewed as helpful because of the time efficiency and broader reach of communication that they allow. However, the lack of face-to-face and physical contact was perceived to have lost something in the development of new relationships and the more personal side of communication and networking. This seemed to be more of a concern for the Wider Team than the Core Team, although they too recognised this potential limitation. The Core Team also spoke about recent helpful changes to the project management and channels of communication between the Core Team and local network leads. These were described as having moved from an informal to a more formal reporting approach. The communication strategy of using Twitter to promote aspects the programme remained the same at this time point. Having the meetings online was



noted as creating more opportunities for people to speak. All of this contributed to the Core Team perceiving their networks and communication as helpful for the TaAF's implementation in this evaluation round.

By Round 3, the established new ways of networking and communicating were seen as helping TaAF and its implementation. The Core Team felt they had a useful network with a wide range of organisations and partners, which had strengthened since the COVID-19 lockdowns. The use of social media and technology had been increased, which had helped improve two-way communication creating opportunities to development informal and formal to engage and network both within the teams and to external partners. Virtual meetings were described as typically being shorter and more focussed, which was helpful. The trade-off of this was the reduced ability to have more in-depth communication opportunities that face-to-face meeting or working allow. This was echoed by the Wider Team. The Wider Team also noted that a focus on virtual communication and working from home meant that all contact was now planned. The casual or ad-hoc discussions in corridors for example, which can be quite informative, were now lost. Checking in on colleagues can be more difficult too in the remote working set-up. To combat this, the Wider team noted trying other ways to have meetings, such as meeting outside in the sunlight, which can be less formal and more pleasant.

### **The influence of the internal/inner setting's culture on TaAF's implementation**

The culture in which TaAF was operating was seen to be a feature consistently helping TaAF's implementation, especially in the final round from the Wider Team's perspective. In the initial round of interviews, the culture was described as relaxed, flexible, inclusive, and informal. It supported work-life balance and used open, honest and transparent communication systems that has helped promote trust and good working relationships. Team members described there to be a "distributed leadership style", which included allowing ideas, plans, and engagement opportunities to develop organically and in a bottom-up manner, rather than top-down.

In Round 2, the positive views of TaAF's culture continued to be seen to help TaAF's implementation. Both teams noted that in spite of COVID-19 and shifting to virtual working and communications, the ethos and culture of TaAF had remained. However, some members of the Wider Team felt that the virtual does not allow for the same camaraderie as face-to-face communication. Some Core Team members also commented on future physical workspaces that could be help reflect TaAF's culture. Overall, at this time, TaAF's supportive and inclusive approach was still a helpful feature for the project.

The final round of interviews again found culture to be helping TaAF's implementation, most strongly by the Wider Team. The Core Team described a culture of trust, respect, honesty, and looking after each other's wellbeing. There was seen to be a shared understanding amongst the team with regard to seeing things from different perspectives within an open way of working.

For the Wider Team, having strong working relationships that were supportive and caring about team members' wellbeing, having regular meetings and check-ins with colleagues (including informal non-work chats) were all seen as positive and a strongly helpful aspect of TaAF's culture on its implementation.

### **The influence of the implementation climate on TaAF's implementation**

There were generally mixed views with regards to the perceived capacity for change and level of receptivity for TaAF and its expected outcomes over the course of the evaluation. Of exception was the Wider Team in Round 1, where members showed more consistent views that there was a climate for implementation that is helping TaAF. They noted a general receptivity for change by their partners and leaders. They commented positively on the ability to challenge organisations and individuals' ideas, as well as to "*test and learn*" as they move through the TaAF project. The Core Team, however, were more mixed in their views about implementation climate. Some members thought that maybe more support was required for the Wider Team to "*get to grips with the design principles*". Overall, Core Team members interviewed did not appear to have a strong, shared view of the influence that this inner/internal setting feature was having on TaAF's implementation.

In the remaining two rounds, both Teams showed differing or mixed views on this internal setting feature. For Round 2, within the Core Team there was a view that COVID-19 restrictions had presented an opportunity to take a reflective backstep and reconnect with partners and members of the community that may have helped capacity and receptivity to TaAF and change. The Wider Team remarked positively about the strength of existing relationships amongst partners and their increased recognition of need for TaAF. But again, COVID-19 was seen to have had an impact on general capacity and priority for change in response to TaAF. Due to Covid, TaAF was perceived as lacking in priority amongst partners due to having to cope with the impact of restrictions such as furloughing of staff, or dealing with the pressing needs of the community in relation to social isolation, reduced economic circumstances or mental health and wellbeing. In addition, participants noted that physical activity interventions had had to be put on hold due to lockdown restrictions so the focus had shifted to maintaining connections rather than moving forward.

In Round 3, COVID-19 was still seemingly having an impact on the implementation climate, capacity and implementation of TaAF from both teams' perspectives. In some ways this was a barrier for TaAF's implementation because of the lack of momentum and receptivity from the Core Team perspective. The Wider Team also acknowledged the lack of progress due to COVID-19 restrictions. Some concerns about being stuck in a cycle of reflection and relationship maintenance was noted in this round by the Wider Team although this was not perceived as completely negative since it allowed time to be spent on building trust with partners, for example, that in turn, could help boost receptivity and creating capacity for TaAF in their settings.

### **The influence of tension for change on TaAF's implementation**

Both teams commented in the first two rounds about a recognised belief that the levels of inactive populations that needed to change were helping TaAF's implementation, that is, providing a tension for change. In Round 1, teams noted a recognised need for change when approaching physical inactivity in the population due to lack of success with previous provision in inactive populations. In Round 2, both teams felt this need and tension for change was more acute and helping TAAF's implementation, especially in light of the impact of COVID-19 on individuals' mental health and physical wellbeing.

In Round 3, however, the influence of this need or tension for change was spoken about less and more mixed views were seen by those that did comment. Some members noted the priority of the COVID-19 response perhaps overshadowed the implementation of the TaAF project, despite there still being belief in the need for TaAF and addressing population health and wellbeing.

### **The influence of compatibility on TaAF's implementation**

TaAF's compatibility with the internal settings, existing workflows, systems and people were seen to be helping TaAF's implementation from the Wider Team perspective but not the Core Team. The Wider Team viewed the TaAF project as sitting well with other interventions and approaches being used in their organisations, as well as being well suited to their existing roles. For the Core Team, there were some noted concerns of having a lack of time dedicated to TaAF and the differences between how TaAF works and the existing 'traditional' ways of working that may not be compatible and could have an effect on TaAF's implementation.

In Round 2, concerns remained for the Core Team about the old ways of working amongst partners, which were perceived as quite embedded and difficult to change. However, members felt they understood these perceptions well so could work with partners more easily to change them, and so they would perhaps not hinder TaAF's implementation, and so these views were described as mixed. There were some other concerns mentioned relating to the infrastructure of large partner organisations (e.g. the NHS) and the IT infrastructure supporting a team of people from different organisations. The Wider team members again felt that TaAF sits alongside existing interventions (e.g. community response hubs) and external organisations (e.g. GP practices), providing support and facilitation for TaAF and its approach.

At Round 3, the influence of TaAF's compatibility or fit with the setting and its people was again perceived to be having a mixed influence from the Core Team perspective. Trying to do things differently in what was perceived by members as a bureaucratic system of working was reported as challenging but gaining some recognition. TaAF wanted to give permission for people to take risks and do things differently. However, they recognised that some procedures still need to be followed, which can cause difficulty or slow down implementing TaAF. Members felt that using the TaAF approach was starting to change processes and see shifts in some formal working

processes and practices but that progress is slow for this kind of change. For the Wider Team, TaAF's approach and goals are different but compatible with other projects, people and work being done with other external organisations. The "*TaAF approach*" was valued by the team members, and in turn, was perceived as being embedded into the ways they think about projects, organisations and partnerships.

### **The influence of relative priority on TaAF's implementation**

The perceived priority of implementing TaAF was largely mixed by both teams apart from Round 1 where diverging views between the teams were found. For the Core Team, the relative priority given to TaAF was hindering its implementation. Although the secondment approach had been seen as a positive characteristic of TaAF, bringing together a wealth of knowledge and expertise, here, in terms of relative priority, difficulties were identified with regard to the secondment arrangements of the Core Team and the competing roles and priorities that sometimes limited the time to support given to the TaAF project. This was noted as being particularly evident following the COVID-19 outbreak. Conversely, amongst Wider Team members, there seemed to be a strong commitment to the TaAF project. TaAF was seen as being high on agendas and priorities, in addition to job opportunities created to support the work that in turn helped TaAF's implementation.

The following rounds saw more mixed views from each team suggesting no strong influence of this feature on TaAF's implementation. Since COVID-19, TaAF was not a priority for partnering organisations since attention had been taken up with responding to the impact of the pandemic restrictions. Even some TaAF team members had to focus on other COVID-related priorities leading to TaAF work being paused or pushed down the agenda. Yet, for some, TaAF was very much at the top of their agenda because of its focus on health and wellbeing. Some of the Wider Team mentioned focusing their efforts on maintaining existing connections, engagement activities and reflection. Round 3 also found different members stating that capacity of members had changed, reduced, or even that they worked more on TaAF, suggesting a varied perspective of the priority given to TaAF.

### **The influence of organisational incentives and rewards on TaAF's implementation**

This feature of the internal/inner setting showed mixed views in each team across all rounds. In Round 1, some of the Core team commented that there were no specific rewards or recognition for TaAF whereas others commented quite negatively or in frustration that there were no specific incentives. For the Wider team, some commented that the organisation will benefit from TaAF and within their own organisations their work on TaAF is being recognised. Other incentives from the Wider Team included doing "*a job well done*" and having a positive impact from TaAF.

In Round 2, the Core Team noted that there were some incentives for TaAF, although limited and with caveats. For example, being seconded to TaAF for a specific number of hours per week



to qualify. It was felt that this needed to change or to avoid people leaving. Various wider incentives were noted by some, including the potential further funding to extend the project. For the Wider Team, there did not seem to be any examples of personal incentives or recognition for their role beyond the success of the project aims and objectives. There were some thoughts, however, around what incentives there could be for community engagement and community champions.

In Round 3, some of the Core team noted that being part of a major national pilot is an incentive in terms of being able to think about how to do things in a very different way, which offered the rewards of seeing the difference and benefits that TaAF brings to help people and places. However, it was also noted, that promotion was not possible due to the funded nature of the project, which could impact on staff perceptions of career development. The Wider Team similarly noted the absence of monetary or job incentives for staff. Nevertheless, there would be benefits of continued employment if TaAF's improvements work. Also, incentives for partners were being involved in TaAF and not being left out or left behind.

### **The influence of goals and feedback on TaAF's implementation**

Both teams saw the communication of goals and how feedback was given and received as helpful in TaAF's implementation at some time points in the evaluation. In Round 1, both teams found the clear over-arching goals of TaAF helpful. The Wider Team noted that feedback was somewhat unclear. Goals and feedback remained something that was seen as helpful for TaAF's implementation for the Core Team in Round 2. They reported receiving positive feedback from key stakeholders and the localities. Goals were discussed in relation to Path Finder and Accelerator Phases of the project. Members noted the goals, plans and feedback from the localities, with regular monthly updates on plans identified as helpful in terms of the TaAF project. The Wider Team had more mixed views on goals and feedback in Round 2. Members indicated different levels of goal setting and different amounts of feedback because of different circumstances and COVID-19. At this time, work was being paused or on hold leading to goals having to be either reframed or adapted, which has impacted progress of TaAF. Where feedback had occurred, it was helpful and welcomed. However, feedback was noted as being inconsistent and more would be appreciated. In contrast, in Round 3 the Wider Team perceived goals and feedback to have become a much clearer helpful feature for TaAF's implementation. Sustainability of the TaAF approach was noted as a TaAF goal. The feedback from discussions with members of the community (e.g. councillors, health professionals and schools) was positive about TaAF principles and evidence they were being embedded into community practice. This led to the TaAF team being invited to contribute to community planning, particularly with regard to the COVID response. The Core Team members did not show an influence of goals and feedback in this Round.



### **The influence of the learning climate on TaAF's implementation**

This feature of the inner setting was seen by both teams as helping TaAF's implementation throughout the evaluation study. In Round 1, there was a positive consensus about the “*test and learn*” aspect of TaAF resulting in learning across personal and professional boundaries, as well as more broadly across the community. Both teams also felt they worked in places that encouraged learning, which was helpful too. The Core Team members all mentioned being given the “space”, without risk, to try new approaches, which was helpful in implementing TaAF and its new ways of working. The Wider Team members indicated a positive learning climate which was facilitating their implementation of TaAF.

In Round 2, members being interviewed spoke about learning being considered as central to the TaAF ethos and incorporated into every aspect of TaAF activity. The Core Team identified positive examples of learning, such as apprenticeships as well as the recognition of the importance of learning throughout the project. The Wider team were also positive about the opportunities for learning, particularly through reflection and conversation.

For Round 3, the Core Team still maintained that learning was central to the TaAF approach and some gave examples of learning through creative engagement and shared learning with partners, other organisations and government departments. For the Wider Team, their learning through training, reflection and still being able to have a “test and learn” approach was viewed by members as helpful for the TaAF project and its goals.

### **The influence of readiness for implementation on TaAF's implementation**

There were apparent concerns and perceived barriers in terms of TaAF's commitment to implementation within its settings in both teams. This was most clear in the second round of interviews when COVID-19 was in its early stages. The rest of the time, members seemed to have more mixed views over the readiness for implementation affecting TaAF's delivery. Discussions mostly focused on TaAF funded projects across each of the local areas.

In Round 1, both Core and Wider Team showed mixed views on this feature and its influence on TaAF. The Core Team generally felt that there was some time to go before programmes on the ground would be implemented. The Wider Team had some members indicating that implementation on TaAF in their settings was relatively close but then COVID-19 happened.

In Round 2, the Core Team noted the impact of COVID-19 on the ability for aspects of TaAF projects to be delivered across Pennine Lancashire. Although some commitment to TaAF was still observed, the delivery of projects in local areas, discussions, and face-to-face engagement activities had been paused. It was noted that members and partnering organisations had other priorities during the response to the pandemic that impacted on TaAF's implementation. Similarly, the Wider Team highlighted the pause in activities due to COVID-19 and localities were having to revisit previous engagement work, given that COVID-19 had changed the landscape in

which they were intending to deliver TaAF-related interventions.

By Round 3, things had changed again in relation to this feature in that it was not clearly a barrier anymore from the perspectives of either team. The Wider Team showed some differing views in relation to readiness to implement TaAF. It was stated that “*as a team we have loads of doubts about this way of working*” and that the Wider Team are still in the discovery stage. This means work is focused around understanding where groups are with ideas and understanding the TaAF principles, as it was not clear if they actually did understand them at this stage. There have also been delays in delivery of initiatives, which was explained in part by COVID-19 restrictions but also due to the nature of the approach, which is about not rushing into delivery.

### **The influence of leadership engagement on TaAF’s implementation**

The level of commitment, involvement and accountability of leaders and managers was seen to be sometimes quite helpful for TaAF’s implementation. In Round 1, both teams reported *leadership engagement* as being generally positive with leaders perceived as being responsive to the TaAF project albeit sometimes challenging because of the difference between the TaAF approach and the traditional way of running similar initiatives.

In Round 2, both teams noted both helpful and unhelpful issues around this setting feature. Despite the relative priority of TaAF being affected by the response to COVID, the Core Team perceived the engagement of leaders to be have remained positive. Yet, whilst some were able to continue their commitment, others had to commit to other priorities. Some comments from within the Wider Team indicated that engagement by some leaders had remained stable whilst others waned due to competing priorities. It was felt that there was support from the leaders and an understanding that projects have had to be paused and re-started. There was still engagement from senior leaders in the localities, yet, there had been difficulties with other leaders with responsibility for ensuring the funds are available for the work to be done. Retaining engagement could be difficult without the potential of financial resources.

In Round 3, the Core Team described leadership engagement positively and helpful in terms of TaAFs implementation. The commitment to the TaAF principles was described as really good across the district leaders and members of the Core team. In addition, commitment to TaAF principles from leaders of partnering organisations outside of TaAF was seen as positive and helping implement the principles. The Wider Team at this time point did not show a particular influence of leadership engagement on TaAF’s implementation.

### **The influence of available resources on TaAF’s implementation**

The resources dedicated to TaAF’s implementation and ongoing operations were mostly seen as helpful. In Round 1, both teams felt there were sufficient resources for the project at that moment, although there was less certainty whether this would be the case as TaAF continues to

develop.

In Round 2, the Core Team still felt there to be sufficient funding for the project. They also stated that there had been training opportunities made available for anyone involved in TaAF, which was good. There were suggestions for how available resources for TaAF could be improved, which included changing current available office space for the Core Team. The Wider Team members showed more mixed perceptions in this round. Whilst most felt that they had sufficient resources at the time and understood that the focus of TaAF is not on funding but engaging partners into the principles and ethos of TaAF, some comments suggested that there may be issues with resources going forward. They noted that whilst financial resources had been allocated, the actual drawdown of these had not yet occurred, which was a potential cause for concern. Training opportunities received positive comments for helping TaAF.

Both teams in Round 3 perceived there to be sufficient available resources that were helping TaAF, although each team had slightly different reasons. The Core team were positive about the funding available for TaAF-related work stating that there are sufficient levels of funding available. They were also positive about the availability of community assets and the ability to tap into other community funding if needed. The Core Team felt the approach of TaAF and its principles are a useful resource in their own right. They can help embed different ways of doing things that reduce the need for extra funding. The Wider Team were also positive about available resources for TaAF, mostly because costs of delivering projects of work related to TaAF are low and can be shared with community and partnering organisations who also contribute resources to the work.

### **The influence of access to knowledge and information on TaAF's implementation**

The ease of accessing information and knowledge that can help deliver TaAF was seen as mostly positive and helpful, especially from the Wider Team perspective. In Round 1, the Wider Team members showed a clear sense of where and when help was available. The Core Team members differed in their perception of the extent to which help was considered to be accessible, but overall, both teams saw this feature as helping TaAF's implementation.

In Round 2, the Core Team had more mixed views about this feature's influence whilst the Wider Team still saw it as helping TaAF's implementation. Some of the Core Team still indicated that knowledge and information about TaAF could be accessed. This tended to be communicated through conversation, and most participants said there was someone they could ask if they needed to know something or need information and that people were easily accessible. The Wider Team remained positive about accessing information and identified a variety of ways they could access this through the communication networks and who they would access depending on the specific issue. They also identified access to training, which was mostly focused around social media use.

In Round 3, The Core Team still did not show a particular influence of this feature. Some commented about it and that they themselves were happy to take any questions or queries to Core Team meetings. The Wider Team, however, saw the access to knowledge and information as very good and strongly helping with the delivery of TaAF. They spoke positively about access to colleagues from within TaAF to get information and advice when needed, as well as there being plenty of training courses available for staff (e.g. asset-based community development) that were helpful.

### **Box 3: Summary of Inner Setting's Influence on TaAF's Implementation**

The Inner Setting was the most changed across the rounds with many more factors perceived as facilitating implementation in Round 1 than at any other point for both teams. It was in this domain that many of the impacts of Covid-19 and the related restrictions were felt. By Round 3 there was some recovery for the Wider Team, but not for the Core Team.

Barriers: the Core team identified relative priority as a barrier in Round 1 and both teams identified readiness for implementation as a barrier in Round 2. In Round 2 for both groups this was related to the changes in commitment, priorities and externally imposed restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. By Round 3, although not becoming a facilitator, this was no longer seen as a barrier. While there were no overall barriers perceived in Round 3, there were still a lot of mixed views. However, as TaAF has developed and interviewees have a longer-term perspective, culture of TaAF and accessibility of knowledge, learning and training were seen as strongly facilitating factors for the Wider Team.

Table 5 summarises the barriers and facilitators for Inner setting.



Table 5: Summary table of the findings for Core and Outer Teams from Rounds 1, 2 and 3 for Inner Setting

Construct and Description	CORE TEAM			WIDER TEAM		
	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
<b>Structural Characteristics:</b> Social architecture, age, maturity, and size of TaAF.		(M)			(M)	(M)
<b>Networks &amp; Communications:</b> Nature and quality of networks and communications within TaAF.					(M)	
<b>Culture:</b> Norms, values, of TaAF.						
<b>Implementation Climate:</b> Capacity for change, receptivity to and expectation of TaAF outcomes	(M)	(M)	(M)		(M)	(M)
<b>Tension for Change:</b> Degree to which current situation is seen as needing change.						(M)
<b>Compatibility:</b> Fit between meaning/values of individuals, perceived risks of TaAF and fit with existing workflows/systems.	(M)	(M)	(M)			
<b>Relative Priority:</b> Perception of the importance of implementing TaAF.		(M)	(M)		(M)	(M)
<b>Organisational Incentives &amp; Rewards:</b> Incentives eg. awards, performance reviews, increased respect.	(M)	(M)	(M)	(M)	(M)	(M)
<b>Goals &amp; Feedback:</b> Communication of goals, how feedback given/received					(M)	
<b>Learning Climate:</b> How safe & valued individuals feel to learn and develop knowledge and understanding.						
<b>Readiness for Implementation:</b> Immediate indicators of the decision to implement TaAF.	(M)			(M)		(M)
<b>Leadership Engagement:</b> Commitment, involvement, and accountability of leaders and managers.		(M)			(M)	
<b>Available Resources:</b> Resources dedicated for implementation and on-going operations.					(M)	



<b>Access to Knowledge &amp; Information:</b> Ease of access to and practicality of information & knowledge about TaAF		(M)	(M)			
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Key

Strong Facilitator	Weak Facilitator	Neutral/Mixed Influence (M)	Weak Barrier	Strong Barrier
VERY HELPFUL	HELPFUL	NEITHER HELPFUL OR UNHELPFUL	UNHELPFUL	VERY UNHELPFUL

### 2.2.3.4 The influence of the characteristics of individuals on the implementation of TaAF

This section presents the results across five aspects related to the people delivering the intervention that can influence its implementation. Overall, this group of factors were discussed far less than other areas, and with less clear consensus between members of the teams. It is summarised in Table 5 below.

The influence of the individuals’ knowledge and beliefs about TaAF on its implementation  
 This factor was seen to be mostly helping TaAF’s implementation. In Round 1, both teams felt they had a clear understanding of the TaAF project and there was faith that people were on board with TaAF as well as enthusiasm influencing perceptions, with people being very positive about the “doing things differently” approach.

In Round 2, the Core Team remained positive in their knowledge and beliefs about the TaAF approach. However, the Wider Team became mixed in their views about this and reported uncertainty about whether the scale of the project matches the scale of the problem they are now facing, in relation to COVID-19.

In Round 3, the Wider Team members’ perspectives of the knowledge and beliefs about the intervention were positive. The team believed that the TaAF approach is making a positive impact on the target population, the community groups and organisations they work with. Some Core Team members also had some similar positive comments, but this was not universal for all members.

The influence of the individuals’ self-efficacy on TaAF’s implementation  
 Overall, both teams viewed individuals’ levels of self-efficacy as helping TaAF’s implementation. In Round 1, Wider Team members indicated confidence to be able to deliver TaAF. Confidence was gained from having the time and scope to try and make change, whilst having the support from other localities and partnerships, although comments were more mixed for the Core Team. It was noted that confidence could go up and down depending on daily challenges, but that

understanding of the project as well as having the capacity and the right skills to be able to deliver it helped.

In Round 2, the Core Team perceived there to be better self-efficacy levels, with belief in having the skills to deliver the positive outcomes of TaAF more apparent. Some members stated feeling confident and prepared to implement TaAF due to the length of time they have been able to allocate to plan the delivery, which was helpful. The Wider Team commented less on these aspects of individuals and their influence on implementation.

In Round 3, both teams perceived that there was a belief that team members had confidence, ability and self-efficacy that they and fellow team members can carry out and complete the plans, actions and goals of TaAF and its work. The Core Team reported that there was a general feeling of confidence, although as in Round 1, that it can still come in waves and is influenced by the different challenges they face. The Wider Team members also felt confident in the individuals involved in TaAF because they trusted their experienced members of staff, their ability to respond to changes, and to adapt to circumstances or feedback.

The influence of the individuals' stage of change on TaAF's implementation

Neither team saw this factor as having a particular influence on TaAF's implementation. There were some mixed views at times. This included at Round 1 for both Teams, involving the levels of preparedness for changes. Round 2 again had mixed views from the perspective of the Core Team members, although readiness for change was a key theme throughout, "there's a lot of positives about doing it the way we're doing it, I'd say certainly the flexibility to be able to change is the biggest one"

In Round 3, the Wider Team had slightly more comments than previously, and this time these were variable. This included some comment on role change in TaAF, but one of these role changes was perceived as positive and was believed to be having a positive impact with colleagues.

The influence of the individuals' identification with the organisation on TaAF's implementation

While there was clear identification with the aims and principles of TaAF as a programme throughout, how individuals perceive the organisation and their relationship with it did not seem to have much influence on the implementation of TaAF. Comments were fairly neutral for both teams in Round 1 and for the Wider Team in Round 2. In Round 2, although the Core Team spoke more about feeling confident that individuals showed commitment to the TaAF project, both teams again spoke little about identification with the organisation as having an influence on TaAF's delivery. In Round 3 this was neutral for both teams.

The influence of other personal attributes of individuals' on TaAF's implementation

There were few comments relating to the influence of individuals’ personal attributes. In Round 1 members of the Core Team mentioned the dynamics and skill within the team, while others discussed issues relating to their capacity but nothing particularly influencing implementation in this respect. In Round 2, the Core Team spoke about personal attributes in TaAF members that are aligned with the TaAF approach and helping its delivery. These included communication skills, knowledge and empathy levels to be able to discuss and reflect upon things as a team. They also spoke about leadership roles in the TaAF Teams being filled by individuals who have wide and relevant experience, good connections, and passion to bring to the project. The Wider Team did not show any particular influence of personal attributes in Rounds 2 or 3. The Core team also made little comment about particular attributes and their influence in the final round.

**Box 4: Summary of individual characteristics’ influence on implementation**

Overall, characteristics of individuals seemed fairly limited in terms of their influence on implementation throughout the three rounds. However, it was clear that knowledge and beliefs about the intervention, understanding of its aims and principles were perceived as facilitators for both the Core and Wider Teams particularly at the beginning of the programme, in Round 1, with positive or mixed views thereafter. Self-efficacy, or confidence in one’s own ability to bring about implementation, was also seen as a facilitator for both teams on two of the occasions, but with suggestions that external challenges could also have an impact on this. Other aspects of individual characteristics were not broadly brought up with the exception of characteristics such as expertise, experience and passion, particularly seen as having an influence in Round 2 for the Core Team. Findings are summarised in Table 6.

Table 6: Summary table of findings for the Core and Wider Teams from Rounds 1, 2 & 3 for Characteristics of Individuals

Construct and Description	CORE TEAM			WIDER TEAM		
	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
<b>Knowledge &amp; Beliefs about the Intervention:</b> Individuals’ attitudes toward and value placed on TaAF as well as familiarity with facts, truths and principles.			(M)		(M)	
<b>Self-Efficacy:</b> Individual belief in their own capabilities to achieve goals.	(M)					
<b>Individual Stage of Change:</b> phase an individual is in, as he	(M)	(M)		(M)		(M)

or she progresses toward skilled, enthusiastic, and sustained use of TaAF.						
<b>Individual Identification with Organisation</b> how individuals perceive the organisation, and their relationship with that organisation.						
<b>Other Personal Attributes:</b> other personal traits	(M)					

Key

Strong Facilitator	Weak Facilitator	Neutral/Mixed Influence (M)	Weak Barrier	Strong Barrier
VERY HELPFUL	HELPFUL	NEITHER HELPFUL OR UNHELPFUL	UNHELPFUL	VERY UNHELPFUL

### 2.3.3.5 The influence of the processes on the implementation of TaAF

This section presents the results across eight aspects related to the planning, execution, reflecting and evaluating of TaAF, as well as key people that can influence these processes. A summary table can be seen below for this main area (see Table 6).

#### The influence of planning on the implementation of TaAF

This aspect of TaAF showed some of the strongest facilitating influences on implementation during the initial stages, before having less of an influence in later evaluation rounds, as may be expected. In Round 1, planning was seen as a strong facilitator by both the Core and Wider Team. There was no overarching implementation plan at this time, which was perceived as helpful as it created an awareness of the need to regularly reflect, adapt and refine plans as the project evolves. Planning activities involved making connections, building networks, and using creative engagement activities to bring key people, key organisations and partners together in the planning phase of TaAF, which was perceived as really helpful to TaAF’s implementation at this stage.

In Round 2, the Core Team again perceived the planning situation as helping TaAF’s implementation, whereas the Wider Team had more mixed views at this time. The Core Team again commented that not having a detailed implementation plan at this stage was positive.



However, COVID-19 restrictions were identified as making planning difficult at this time point. New approaches for planning, such as using Trello, a digital project management tool, were helping TaAF's continued implementation. Similar to the Core Team, the Wider Team reported no over-arching detailed plan, which they felt was consistent with the flexibility of the TaAF ethos and approach. However, part of the work for the Wider Team involved making plans and setting timescales for interventions and activities to be in place by a particular time, which was challenging if it was unclear what those interventions and activities might be at the outset. Most team members commented on the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on the plans for activities and intervention delivery. Some commented that they had decided to go back a step in terms of planning and re-focus on engagement, amending or altering planned activities and interventions to reflect the current situation.

Round 3 did not see a particular influence of planning on TaAF's implementation from either team. There were some differing views from the Wider Team with regards to planning; some members spoke about plans to formalise ideas into a more structured plans for the future, but a lot of groups were not ready to move forward with ideas. Whilst there were some action plans in relation to TaAF and related work, key milestones had to be delayed due to COVID lockdowns. Interviewees reported that it had been difficult over the previous 12 months to move beyond the planning stage with TaAF. They also commented that different parts of the work are planned differently. An overarching plan for TaAF work was mentioned by some of the Wider Team but that is was 12 months behind. Such a plan was also described as more organically developing rather than a formal one comprising of some key principles and an approximate idea of what was planned but no long-term, tangible plan was in place. This was separate to the existence of a clear financial plan that was noted, which has funding allocated to specific posts and profile raising of TaAF.

### **The influence of engaging on the implementation of TaAF**

The engagement with TaAF and its engagement activities were spoken about a lot and were seen by the Core Team as a consistently helpful factor in TaAF's implementation. In Round 1, engaging with organisations and developing collaborative partnerships were described by both teams as a key and central aspect of TaAF from its commencement. Examples of positive outcomes from engagement activities were noted, including getting support for writing planning documents, holding away days and engaging with Imagination Lancaster. Having key individuals to engage with partners was considered highly important, including ensuring they are positive and championing the TaAF approach. Recruitment was also considered an important part of the engagement process in terms of recruiting the right people to roles. On occasion, this had not always worked out well but in the main it has been positive. The insight manager was identified as being particularly beneficial in reassuring leads about evaluation.

In Round 2, engaging new members into the Core Team was viewed as positive and helpful for



TaAF from this team's perspective. Engaging with partners and the public throughout the year allowed for learning and greater awareness of the target population(s). For the Wider Team, more mixed views were noted around engagement. Some indicated that COVID-19 restrictions had resulted in both barriers and facilitators to engagement of TaAF. Engagement work had stopped for some, but individuals were hopeful that conversations around TaAF would continue by keeping contact ongoing. Some members perceived that the lack of face-to-face meetings had had a negative impact in some circumstances, whilst others noted the adoption of social media platforms and linking with other organisations has increased engagement of both partnering organisations and the public. Given the pandemic situation, engagement with TaAF was not necessarily high on the agenda at this time.

In Round 3, both teams perceived engagement and associated activities as helpful for TaAF's implementation again at this time point. The Core Team noted that existing professional networks of Core Team members, the secondment model, and members' skills and experience in partnership working was facilitating engagement with TaAF. Creative ways of engaging partners due to COVID-19 restrictions (e.g. virtual coffee mornings, walks and talks) were helpful. It was also noted that time had also been spent maintaining and strengthening existing relationships since the last round and there had been beneficial work with local leadership to engage specific groups in the community. There were similar comments from the Wider Team in terms of maintaining and strengthening existing relationships. Also, time had been spent on fostering a bottom-up approach to engagement whereby community groups can come to TaAF with ideas for discussion, so TaAF principles can be embedded into these ideas. Additionally, co-design of projects helped engagement and the furthering of discussion around TaAF principles with community groups and individuals.

### **The influence of opinion leaders on the implementation of TaAF**

These types of leaders - the individuals that can have a formal or informal influence on the attitudes and beliefs about TaAF and its implementation - were seen mostly as helping TaAF's implementation. This was especially consistent for the Wider Team at every time point in the evaluation, and strongest for the Core Team in the second round of interviews.

In Round 1, the Wider Team were generally positive about this construct. They reported that organisations and the community showed mostly a positive interest about TaAF and were excited about the project. Overall, this was perceived as helping TaAF's delivery. It was noted by some, however, that there were mixed levels of support received by organisations and members of the community. But this did not seem to be a barrier for TaAF from the Wider team perspective. The Core Team were more mixed in their perceptions about this and the influence this was having on TaAF.

In Round 2, *opinion leaders* became a strong facilitating factor for TaAF's implementation from

the Core Team perspective. Here, Core and Wider Teams members were perceived as important opinion leaders. They were seen to be very well placed due to their secondments as they could engage key members of organisations into the TaAF ethos that in turn, helped with TaAF's implementation. The Wider Team also showed a general sense of positivity that influential people had become connected or engaged with TaAF, which was helpful. At this point in time, some of these relationships and connections were perceived as still being in the early stages of development.

In Round 3 of the evaluation, the Wider Team appeared to see practice managers from Primary Care Networks (PCNs), colleagues and staff in the leisure trusts as influential opinion leaders and were helping TaAF's implementation at this stage. The Core Team members interviewed at this stage spoke less about the influence of key opinion leaders.

### **The influence of formally appointed implementation leaders on the implementation of TaAF**

The formally appointed leaders to implement TaAF were seen by both Teams as mostly helping its delivery. In Round 1, the Core Team members perceived having formally-appointed leaders, such as the programme manager, project co-ordinator, communications lead, and locality leads, as helping TaAF's implementation because of the different roles and influences they have. The Wider Team had more mixed comments in this area, with some mentioning issues to do with recruitment into some roles, as well as some job changes that had occurred, which, overall, did not appear to be seen as having any particular influence on implementation at this stage.

In Round 2, both teams indicated that the key, appointed leadership roles in the TaAF teams had been filled by individuals with a wide range of relevant experience for TaAF. They had good connections and passion to bring to the project, which were helping factors for TaAF's implementation at this stage.

In Round 3, the Wider Teams perceptions of these staff members helping TaAF's implementation remained. Staff were viewed as experienced, skilled and committed to TaAF. For the Core Team, changes to roles and the amount of time to work on TaAF were noted. Some of these were spoken about positively as helping TaAF's implementation whereas others as less helpful.

### **The influence of champions on the implementation of TaAF**

The influence of champions was examined. These are described as people who dedicate themselves to supporting, marketing, and 'driving through' TaAF, for example, Sport England are considered to be champions. The influence of Champions on implementation was generally perceived as mixed or neutral, but was perceived as more facilitative by the Wider Team in the later stages of the evaluation.

In Round 1, there was no particular influence by champions at this stage, and there were some

comments on the need to identify more formal champions for TaAF in the future.

In Round 2, the Core Team members showed a variety of different views about champions and their role with TaAF and its implementation. Some suggested that the idea of champions was not necessarily relevant for the TaAF, whereas some suggested that championing was part and parcel of the role of Core Team members. Some saw the champions as being external partners and the influence varied depending on current priorities around the COVID-19 restrictions. For the Wider Team, champions seemed to be helping TaAF's implementation. Team members acknowledged the benefits of champions. There were variations across districts whether there were champions in place and whether they had been fully considered. Like the Core Team, there were different opinions about who was perceived to be championing TaAF. Some thought it was the role of TaAF team members and others saw external partners and organisations as TaAF's champions.

In the final round of interviews, the Core Team again had differing views about champions and how they were influencing TaAF's implementation. For the Wider Team, champions were seen to be those not necessarily formally appointed but who talk with others about TaAF principles and what TaAF are trying to achieve. They were seen as ambassadors of TaAF that do "*cheer-leading*" for TaAF in their areas. Staff and colleagues were regarded as champions too and there was some comment that formally appointed champions might be useful. Those championing seemed to be perceived as helping TaAF's implementation from the Wider Team's perspective.

### **The influence of external change agents on the implementation of TaAF**

Those external individuals that formally influence TaAF and their decisions showed different influences at different stages of the project evaluation.

At Round 1, both teams saw these agents as helping TaAF's implementation. The Solution Finders Group (the wider steering group) were regarded as important and helpful agents in shaping the TaAF Project and its implementation by the Core Team. For the Wider Team, individuals with some sort of power or status in the locality were the ones who were specifically commented in as helping implementation.

In Round 2, both teams showed more mixed views about these agents and their influence on TaAF's implementation. Whilst there were good connections with organisations with some key individuals with important influence on other organisations and the community (e.g. senior staff such as chief executives of local authorities), views were mixed about their influence. Some commented that the TaAF approach was still not fully understood and embraced by some key change agents. TaAF was perhaps not on the priority list of some external change agents. However, the Core Team felt that the COVID response had helped increase positive attitudes to the TaAF way of working. In Round 3, the Core Team showed mixed views and not all participants commented on this aspect. They suggested that it is not fully clear how helpful or not external

change agents are, although there was some work going on in terms of engaging key people who have the potential to be external change agents, some of whom are very supportive and have positive views of TaAF. Nevertheless, it was noted that due to COVID-19 their thoughts have “been elsewhere” due to other responsibilities. For the Wider Team stakeholders, partnering organisations, and Sport England were also seen to be helping and influencing TaAF and its decisions positively.

### **The influence of executing on the implementation of TaAF**

The carrying out of the implementation according to plan did not appear to have a particular influence over time, although the Core Team perceived more influence in the latter stages of the evaluation. In Round 1, there was limited evidence of the project being executed with both teams scoring as neutral overall. Where activities had been executed they were happening mostly around engagement of people and organisations and appeared to be in keeping with the implementation aims. Not having funding secured was a concern for execution at that time.

Executing remained neutral for the Wider Team in Round 2, but the Core Team reported more positively on executing some of the plans of TaAF. This was mostly short-term digital projects responding to COVID-19, with TaAF’s input. In the Round 3, the Wider Team again did not appear to see executing as having a particularly strong influence on TaAF’s implementation. Some projects had been launched and delivery is taking place but not all localities were yet in a position to deliver activities. However, the Core Team perceived TaAF’s plan to be happening, which was helpful to overall implementation. Members discussed activities being carried out that related to embedding TaAF ideology into systems, networks and across partners. There was also discussion of TaAF’s involvement in the execution of the Covid response in Pennine Lancashire.

### **The influence of reflecting and evaluating on the implementation of TaAF**

The influence of feedback on progress and quality of TaAF’s implementation has been mostly perceived as helpful. This was consistent for the Core Team but was a strong facilitator for the Wider Team at Round 2.

In Round 1, the Core Team commented on the reflection and evaluation work planned and/or underway that was helpful to TaAF’s implementation. This included working with external research partners (e.g. the Lancaster Evaluation Team) to collect evidence about different aspects of TaAF and conducting informal reflections in smaller groups and teams. The Core Team also described plans to continually reflect and evaluate due to the ever fluid and changing nature of the TaAF project. The Wider team appeared to have more mixed views about these activities and their influence on TaAF’s implementation.

Round 2 saw both teams highlighting how helpful reflecting and evaluating was for TaAF at this



time. A substantial amount of reflecting and evaluating had happened over recent months, which was described as a central aspect of the TaAF project and its commitment to learning. For the Wider Team, the circumstances surrounding COVID-19 and the restrictions were perceived as an opportune time for reflecting and evaluating that had been taken advantage of and in turn, strongly facilitating TaAF implementation from their perspective. The Core Team also saw reflecting and evaluating as helping TaAF at this stage, although to a slightly lesser extent than the Wider Team. This was mostly around the accuracy of the feedback as some members raised concern about whether there had been exaggerated feedback from partners because of expectations around funding. There was also evaluation feedback from the Lancaster University Evaluation Team that was seen as beneficial in capturing what was happening and prompting the team to think about actions moving forward in TaAF.

In Round 3, again, the Core Team acknowledged that reflecting and evaluating were happening and helping TaAF's implementation. Reflection and evaluation were seen as inherent or built into the TaAF process. Reflections from external sources were also noted as feeding into the TaAF process, such as the recent and ongoing evaluations from Lancaster University that have been useful to support learning, shared learning, and make changes where appropriate. The Wider Team returned to a mixed view about the influences of reflecting and reevaluating on TaAF's implementation at this stage. Reflection had been helpful to identify areas where partners and organisations were not clear about the TaAF approach, as well as on methods of engagement. It was also noted that there has also been some considerable discussion about evaluation and plans being in place for evaluation going forward. However, there was some suggestion that there might have been some "*over-reflection*" and a potential hindrance to action and implementation of TaAF.



**Box 5: Summary of influential factors related to TaAF’s “Process”**

The Process domain remained relatively stable across round. Both teams agreed that Planning was a strong facilitator at the earlier stages (Round 1) and coincided on their opinions of the facilitating role of Engagement and External Change Agents at this stage. In Round 2, Opinion Leaders was strongly facilitating for the Core Team, and for the Wider Team, was a consistently facilitating factor throughout. Reflecting and Evaluating, seen as a core principle of TaAF, was confirmed as a facilitating factor for the Core Team at all stages, with the Wider Team perceiving it to be strongly facilitating at Round 2, and it was clear that the COVID-19 situation had provided important opportunities for reflecting, evaluating and perhaps re-evaluating the implementation of TaAF, which was perceived as a positive effect. Table 7 summarises the findings for the Process set of factors.

Table 7: Summary table of the findings for the Core and Wider Teams from Rounds 1, 2 and 3 for Process

Construct and Description	CORE TEAM			WIDER TEAM		
	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
<b>Planning:</b> Extent to which workflows are planned in advance and quality of plans					(M)	(M)
<b>Engaging:</b> Attracting and involving appropriate individuals to TaAF					(M)	
<b>Opinion Leaders:</b> Individuals who have formal or informal influence on the attitudes and beliefs	(M)					
<b>Formally Appointed Implementation Leaders:</b> Individuals who have been formally appointed with responsibility for implementing an intervention			(M)	(M)		
<b>Champions:</b> Individuals who dedicate themselves to supporting, marketing, and ‘driving through TaAF.		(M)	(M)			

<b>External Change Agents:</b> Individuals affiliated with an outside entity who formally influence or facilitate TaAF decisions positively.		(M)	(M)		(M)	
<b>Executing:</b> Carrying out or accomplishing the implementation according to plan.						
<b>Reflecting &amp; Evaluating:</b> Feedback about the progress and quality of implementation accompanied with regular personal and team debriefing.				(M)		(M)

Key

<b>Strong Facilitator</b>	<b>Weak Facilitator</b>	<b>Neutral/Mixed Influence (M)</b>	<b>Weak Barrier</b>	<b>Strong Barrier</b>
VERY HELPFUL	HELPFUL	NEITHER HELPFUL OR UNHELPFUL	UNHELPFUL	VERY UNHELPFUL

### 2.2.3.6 Summary of Findings from the Process Evaluation - Core and Wider Team perspectives

#### (i) Most significant factors and changes over time

A notable finding for this evaluation of TaAF is the low number of factors that were perceived as barriers by the teams that may hinder implementation. When they did occur, they were not lasting barriers. This is a particularly optimistic finding given the circumstances over the past two years. The factors seen as unhelpful were Relative Priority in Round 1, and Readiness for Implementation in Round 2 (by both the Core and Wider team). None of these factors were rated as strongly unhelpful, and none of them featured in Round 3, showing the role of development, and also changing challenges, over time.

In addition to most factors scoring as helpful or mixed, there were some salient strongly facilitating factors that are important to highlight. These were: Source of the intervention, Relative Advantage of TaAF over other interventions (particularly for the Core Team), and Planning at Round 1; Population Needs, Opinion Leaders, and Reflecting and Evaluating at Round 2; and Adaptability and Trialability, Cosmopolitanism (Networks), TaAF Culture, and Access to Knowledge and Information at Round 3. These strongly facilitating factors, as they changed across time, are illustrative of the development of TaAF, the importance of its adaptability and in depth understanding of, and links with, local community leaders and organisations, and significantly, the role that characteristics of TaAF have played as the programme has weathered and adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, the period where the fewest of the factors were perceived as facilitating was Round 2, which corresponds to the period associated with the most restrictions on physical activities, strictest COVID-19 lockdown and furloughing of staff. This was particularly felt by the Wider Team who perceived fewer facilitating factors at this time point.

While COVID-19 may have dominated some of the timelines in this programme, normal development and flexing was also occurring. While difficult to separate out, factors such as TaAF Culture, Access to Knowledge and Information and Learning Climate all seemed to be robust elements of the intervention whereby even if there were mixed views in Round 1, this had become positive by Round 3.

#### (ii) Main differences between team perspectives

Overall, the Core Team perceived more factors to be facilitative than did the Wider Team (63 as opposed to 51), with the main difference being in the Intervention Characteristics set of factors, for example, Intervention Source and Relative Advantage (see above tables). Given that the Core Team were all Core TaAF staff, and the Wider Team came from a range of projects, one may have expected there to be more mixed views in the Wider Team. This was only marginally so (35 in the Core Team as opposed to 39 in the Wider Team). Again, the biggest

difference was in the perceptions of the Intervention Characteristics, particularly at Rounds 1 and 2.

### 2.2.3.7 Implications and future suggestions

The evaluation method used (the CFIR) has a range of suggestions for items which were perceived as barriers or which had mixed or neutral reviews, that may enable these aspects to become more facilitating. These findings have been used to develop suggested actions or strategies from the [CFIR-ERIC tool](#), which draws upon the work of others who have investigated implementation of interventions. These are not directives from Lancaster University. They may not be possible or relevant for TaAF. This will be up to the TaAF team to decide. They may help inform discussions of what may be useful and practical moving forward to address mixed or neutral views, creating more facilitating factors or further enhancing existing ones to support TaAF's implementation.

These actions were fed back to the Core and Wider Team at each time period both in a report and a live presentation. The recommendations that were fed back were derived from the Expert Recommendations for Implementing Change tool (ERIC) but also from comments made by members during the interviews. Where a specific action was recommended for several of the factors, it has been mentioned only once. Appendix 1 shows the recommendations for each construct for all Rounds. These were sometimes relevant for the Core Team only, the Wider Team only or both teams. Box 6 summarises these recommendations.

#### Box 6: Summary of Recommendations for each team at each time point

For the Core Team, the most common recommendations in order of frequency were:

Round 1: Identify and prepare Champions; Alter incentive/allowance structures; Conduct local consensus discussion;

Round 2: Alter incentive/allowance structures; Identify and prepare Champions; Assess for readiness and identify barriers and facilitators; Build a Coalition.

Round 3: Identify and prepare Champions; Alter Incentive/Allowance structures; Develop a formal implementation blueprint; Build a Coalition; Conduct local Consensus discussions

For the Wider team, the most commonly recommendations in order of frequency were:

Round 1: Identify and prepare Champions; Alter incentive/allowance structures and, Conduct educational meetings;

Round 2: Identify and prepare Champions; Alter incentive/allowance structures; Build a Coalition.

Round 3: Identify and prepare Champions; Assess for Readiness and Identify Barriers and Facilitators; Alter incentive/allowance structures; Build a Coalition; Conduct local Consensus discussions

Although it is important to note the different recommendations at the different points in time and for the different contexts above, **putting it all together, across time and across the teams**, the most common recommendations were: Identify and Prepare Champions; Alter Incentive/Allowance Structures; Build a Coalition; and Conduct Local Consensus Discussions.



Continuing to Assess and Identify Barriers and Facilitators to TaAF delivery would also be encouraged.

### **Learning from Success**

While these recommendations for areas that were not perceived uniformly as facilitating are important for implementation development and improvement, it is really important to also take note of those factors (Section 2.2.3.6) that were consistently or eventually facilitating, or facilitating at specific stages (e.g. working well at the initiation of TaAF, facilitating in a time of great change and upheaval), that is, the key strengths of the intervention. These are important learnings to keep using and strengthening, and to share with other Sport England projects and with the wider community of projects within TaAF's influence

## Study 2: Process Evaluation of Physical Activity Programmes funded by TaAF

### 2.3.1 Adaptations to Approach

- **Delayed Start Date:** In April 2020 discussions between the TaAF Team and Lancaster Team identified that the Local Authority Districts and their partners were still not ready for recruitment to this study to go ahead. Unfortunately, this delay was then increased further due to the impact of Covid-19 restrictions. It was therefore agreed with the TaAF team that this study would commence once the programmes were ready, but still within the original timeframe of the project.
- **Reduced Rounds:** As the start date had to be delayed for the physical activity programmes, it was agreed in April 2020 that two rounds of data collection would be conducted rather than the original three.
- **Change in Target Group Programmes** - Due to challenges caused by Covid-19 in TaAF's two targeted groups (DWP and New Mums) it was agreed that it would not be possible to involve them in this level of evaluation at this time. In September 2020, it was agreed with TaAF that these two targeted groups would no longer be approached to participate in this study.
- **NHS Inclusion** - The original proposal explained the rationales for the selected projects to be included in this research. This included explaining that the NHS would not be involved due to the longer time scales and additional work required to be able to study this group (related to ethical permissions). In the Summer of Year 1, TaAF requested that the Evaluation Team change this and include NHS staff for the New Mums target intervention. The Evaluation Team held additional meetings with the relevant groups and people within TaAF and the Evaluation Team to be able to do this. This included confirming deadlines for when TaAF would need to provide the information required for gaining all the necessary approvals. In September 2020 it became clear that the delays to the pilot and the impact of Covid-19 on the NHS would mean it was difficult for TaAF to confirm the target group progress and NHS involvement would not be possible. This fed into the decision to focus on a universal programme.
- **Focus on a Universal Programme** - In order to offset against it no longer being possible to include the target groups originally planned, it was agreed that one of TaAF Universal work programmes, the Active Lifestyles Hub, would replace these groups. The Active Lifestyle Hub, which is run across Pennine Lancashire, was considered to be a suitable workstream for the evaluation and would provide useful insight for TaAF from a wider perspective. It was agreed that due to the size and scope of this workstream, this would benefit from trying to engage a larger number of individuals in the study, and so it was decided that the Evaluation Team would aim to recruit up to 15 people for this programme with a minimum of five people. That is, Active Lifestyles Hub would be equivalent to two programmes due to its scope and size.
- **Reduction in the number of Physical Activity Programme Evaluations:** As all Round 1 data collection had to be completed by December 2020 at the latest to enable a gap before Round 2, and, given the existing delays to Study 2, it was agreed that a reduction from eight to four

programmes included in this study was necessary. It was also agreed that inclusion in the evaluation would be based on the readiness of programmes in each locality. In addition, it was agreed that the Active Lifestyles Hub plus two programmes, one from any one of the localities would constitute the four programmes. This was agreed on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

### 2.3.2 Introduction

This section will describe the barriers and facilitators influencing the implementation of three physical activity programmes that volunteered to be part of the process evaluation research by Lancaster University. Details of the interviews and timescales are summarised in Table 8 and the summary of the aims and structures of the Physical Activity Programmes (PAPs) given below. There were two evaluation time points carried out in this study over a ten month time period and the main findings from each round are presented in turn below. The evaluation focused on what the perceived barriers and facilitators were for how interventions were being implemented, and to use those insights to make suggestions for members, participating organisations, to consider when going forward and possible actions that could be taken. The results show the factors influencing the delivery of programmes across the five categories within the evaluation framework being used (i.e. the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR), see Section 2.1.4). These are discussed below. Specifically, factors identified as influencing all three interventions in a helpful way are presented first, followed by strongly helpful factors and activities for at least one programme. Any factors hindering or acting as a barrier for at least one programme are then presented and discussed in this section.

Table 8: Timescales and numbers of interviewees for Study 2: Physical Activity Programmes study

Project/Organisation	Round 1		Round 2	
	Dates	Number of interviewees (out of total maximum staff/volunteers - approximate)	Dates	Number of interviewees
<b>Active Lifestyle Hub</b>	October – November 2020	8 (20)	June- July 2021	7
<b>The Big Connect</b>	November 2020	3 (5)	June- July 2021	2
<b>How Active Are You?</b>	December 2020	2 (5)	June- July 2021	2

### 2.3.3 What is the Active Lifestyle Hub (ALH)?

The interviewees provided a description of the background and development of the ALH and how it is connected to physical activity service provision (“Up and Active” and “Refresh”) across East Lancashire. They described the ALH as a different, more aligned, collaborative way of working across East Lancashire.

A hub triage model was already being used effectively in Blackburn with Darwen to support the public to access the right services for their needs (such as Refresh) and has its own funding. In the other five areas of Pennine Lancashire, a health-related physical activity programme (Up and Active) was already established. Originally funded by Lancashire County Council, this funding was then withdrawn in 2020. Following a call for continuation of the service by local health professionals, funding was replaced by Sport England via TaAF. This new funding was provided to continue the provision of the Up and Active Service, but also expand the existing Blackburn with Darwen Hub to offer the hub triage model across the other five areas of Pennine Lancashire as a one-year pilot to ‘test and learn’, providing a single access point.

The main goals of the ALH and the physical activity services (Refresh and Up and Active) for their service users, are to improve mental wellbeing and physical activity, along with encouraging and promoting lifestyle change.

### 2.3.4 What is The Big Connect?

Interviewees described The Big Connect as part of a “network” or “movement” called “Rossendale Connected”. Big Connect is an online conference (hosted and recorded via Zoom) to bring people together to talk about, discuss and promote health and wellbeing and physical activity in the community. It is structured around a network of people and organisations with a common interest in physical and mental health and wellbeing. The Big Connect comprises of a steering/planning group and has a flat hierarchy. It was seen as developed partly internally and partly externally in response to COVID-19 and lockdown restrictions; internal in the sense that it sits within the umbrella of the larger project in Rossendale (Rossendale Connected), and external in terms of having input from a wide range of different organisations not necessarily part of Rossendale TaAF team. Overall, it was seen as part of a larger network or movement rather than a distinct or separate organisation. It was estimated that around 10 people were on the steering group and around 60-70 people attended The Big Connect conference. At the time of the interviews, one virtual conference had been delivered and another was planned for 2021.

### 2.3.5 What is “How Active are You?”

“How Active are You?” is one of a number of projects run by One Voice, a not-for-profit organisation based in Blackburn with Darwen that works predominantly with individuals from the BAME community to support health and wellbeing. There is one over-arching goal for “How Active are You?” described positively by interviewees, and that is to support their target population of ladies from the BAME community to be more active and get involved in physical activity. “How



Active are You?” has 3 members of staff involved in the delivery and a number of committed volunteers. It is supported by external funding to help women from the BAME community to become more physically active, although the project approach has been internally developed by One Voice as physical activity is something they are keen to support.

### 2.3.6 Study 2 Findings

The CFIR was used to examine interviews with each group, and individual detailed feedback reports have been given directly to the contributors. However, given the small numbers in each PAP and resulting potential identifiability of comments and findings, to protect identity, findings will be presented here in a combined fashion.

#### 2.3.6.1 Helpful factors common to all programmes

There were a number of factors that were seen by interventions as helping their implementation or delivery. In Round 1, there were seven factors that all programmes perceived to be helping their implementation. In Round 2, there were three helpful factors common to all interventions. Of these, two factors were perceived as helpful factors and activities at both time points. These were the programmes’ relative advantage, and their goals and feedback. Details of all these factors across the two rounds are presented in the following sections.

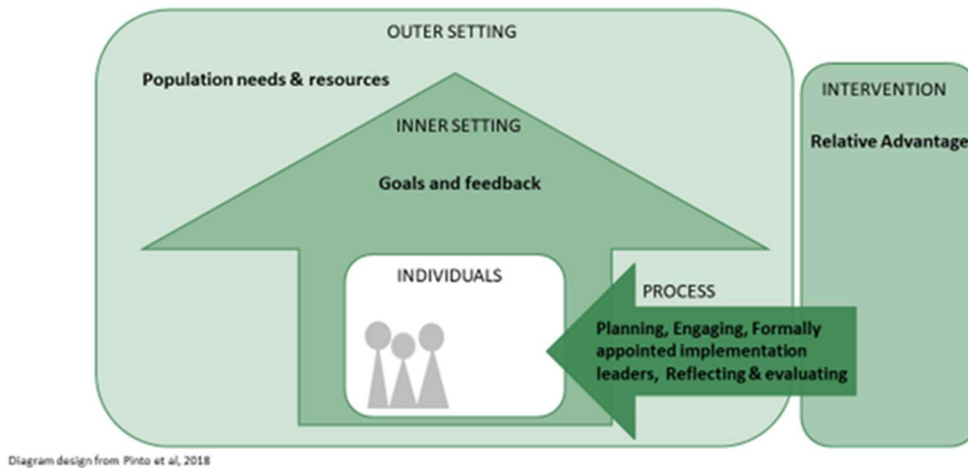
##### Round 1 - helpful factors common to all

In Round 1 there were seven helpful factors common to all interventions, illustrated in Figure 5. These were: relative advantage, population needs and resources, goals and feedback, planning, engaging, formally appointed leaders and reflecting and evaluating. These highlight the important influence that aspects of the characteristics of the programme/intervention itself, the inner and outer settings of the programme, and in particular, the processes related to the programme and its implementation.

## Round 1

### How is the implementation of the Physical Activity Programmes going?

Helpful factors common to all interventions



**Figure 5: Helpful Factors for all three programmes in Round 1**

With regards to the characteristics of the interventions/programmes, the intervention's relative advantage compared to other programmes was seen to be helpful for these TaAF-related programmes' implementation. Those involved in these programmes noted that their programmes were unique in their specific approaches. They were collaborative with multiple organisations or partners, which appeared to be helping their programme's implementation.

In terms of the settings of these programmes, two factors appeared to helping all three programmes' implementation in this round. The first was related to the outer setting, in terms of having a clear knowledge of the population needs and resources, which was often facilitated by having good connections and regular participation and engagement with the local community to help understand their target population needs and prioritise resources. This included having an awareness of their target populations' cultural factors and barriers that may affect their engagement with programmes (e.g. health issues, socio-economic circumstances, the impact of COVID-19). The second of these factors related to the setting was observed when exploring the inner settings of the programmes, a common feature related to their goals and feedback, which were found to be helpful for all programmes' implementation. Having goals was seen as helpful for developing an effective service. Whether a single over-arching goal at times or having several goals, importantly, these goals were reflected upon regularly through feedback from stakeholders. Feedback was reported as generally positive for the programmes, even at this early stage of implementation for programmes, which was encouraging for the general test and learn ethos of TaAF.

As can be seen in Figure 5, there were a number of factors related to programmes' process that were found to be helpful. One area was planning, which was particularly helpful when programmes' plans were continually collaboratively and reflectively revisited and revised. This also helped programmes' engagement, that again, was seen to help contribute to programmes' implementation. Engagement was seen to happen more when a lot of time and effort was put in to building relationships with clients, staff and partners. This included, for example, spending time on motivating, encouraging, listening to individual needs, and empowering others who were or may be involved in the programme and its delivery. Regular contact was highlighted as important to aid this engagement. Having several people involved in leading the implementation was also considered important by those implementing these programmes. It was noted, however, that having a specific individual who can take the lead and keep everyone connected was a particularly strong facilitator for implementation, with some interviewees referring to these people as "Championing" the project. Finally, programmes showed that reflection and evaluation were important for their implementation. Time was regularly planned to do this where possible. It seemed that having opportunity to discuss processes and agree changes on an ongoing basis was helpful. Collection of, and reflecting on relevant data (e.g. outcome metrics, monitoring of client progress, case studies and stakeholder feedback) was also noted as helpful for programmes and their implementation.

### **Round 2 - helpful factors common to all**

In Round 2, three factors were found to be helping all programmes' implementation. These were: the programme's relative advantage, goals and feedback, and leadership engagement. These highlight the important influence that aspects of the characteristics of the programme/intervention itself, and the inner settings of the programmes, had on programmes and their implementation. This is illustrated in Figure 6.

## Round 2

### How is the implementation of the Physical Activity Programmes going?

Helpful factors **common to all** interventions

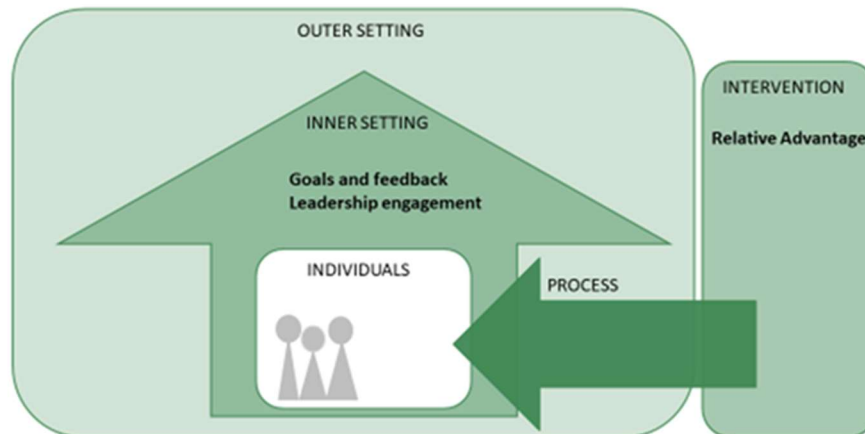


Diagram design from Pinto et al, 2018

**Figure 6: Helpful factors for all three programmes in Round 2**

With regards to the characteristics of the interventions/programmes, the intervention's relative advantage compared to other programmes were seen to be helpful for these TaAF-related programmes' implementation. Like in the earlier round, the relative advantage of the interventions related to their uniqueness compared to other programmes. Comments also included features such as programmes' ease of accessibility for target populations, offering support throughout programmes, being collaborative with multiple organisations to create a network of long-lasting relationships, and having a holistic approach to wellbeing whereby activities could be tailored to meet an individual's/client's physical, mental and/or emotional wellbeing.

The other two helpful factors for all programmes related to the inner settings or places where the programme's interventions sat or were being delivered from. Programmes talked about receiving helpful feedback from different groups, including Together an Active Future (TaAF), staff delivering interventions, and those participating in the interventions. In this round, there were also comments about the usefulness of having plans to gather feedback and use this to support the planning and setting of goals for future work. Setting goals and targets was also considered as generally helpful. Some of the goals and target from programmes included in this evaluation includes developing working relationships with partners, receiving referrals; and helping people into activities associated or being delivered by the programme.

Having engaged leadership was also seen as a helpful factor for these programmes. Activities that helped raise awareness of the programmes and their benefits to leaders, managers and



supervisors, was considered helpful for boosting leaders' engagement levels and programme's implementation. Leadership engagement was seen to come from various groups, such as those delivering activities, partners, the localities, and the Core TaAF team. Leaders were seen to offer their support to programmes or were available to offer support where needed. Leaders wanting to be kept informed was also reported positively by programmes, as were leaders listening and responding positively to suggestions from staff involved in programme delivery. Showing an understanding with regards to the social situations and time inputs of staff trying to deliver these programmes were also noted as positive and helpful for implementation.

### 2.3.6.2 Strongly helpful factors for at least one programme

There were other factors and activities that may have been helpful for one or two programmes included in this study. Some were found to be very strongly helpful. Although not present for all programmes, they may highlight particular activities or features worthy of exploring more to see if any learning can be shared to other programmes.

#### Round 1 - strongly helpful factors

There were 12 factors found to be very helpful for the implementation of at least one of the programmes being evaluated. These were: the programme's relative advantage; complexity; design quality and packaging; its cosmopolitanism; the inner settings culture; tension for change; relative priority given for the programme; the planning; engaging; having formally appointed implementation leaders; opinion leaders; and the executing of programmes' plans. Although not for all programmes, these do highlight the particularly strong influence of these aspects related to the programme's characteristics, the inner and outer settings of programmes, and the processes related to the programme and its implementation for some.

Within the Intervention Characteristics domain there were three factors that were very helpful and these were: the relative advantage of the intervention, the level of complexity or simplicity of the interventions and the design quality and packaging. Relative advantages were considered to be the collaborative nature of interventions involving multiple organisations or partners as well as the uniqueness of the intervention. It was considered very helpful if the intervention was quite simple and any potential barriers were viewed as possible to overcome. Having a good punchy brand and plenty of marketing via social media was perceived as particularly facilitating.

Within the Outer Setting the cosmopolitanism of the intervention was very helpful. This involved having wide partnerships and connections as well as being part of a wider network coming together with one aim. Extensive and wide connections with a wide array of partners with different interests in the community was seen as particularly helpful e.g. local councillors, charitable organisations and members of the voluntary sector, the local leisure trust, professionals, mental health support services, chief officers of major organisations in the

district.

Within the Inner Setting there were three factors that were very helpful and these included: the culture of the intervention, tension for change from what has been offered before and the relative priority given to the intervention. A culture of empowering people in the community and helping people improve their lives through education and health and wellbeing was considered to be very helpful to implementation. In addition to this, working relationships which are supportive, warm and compassionate, where those working to support the intervention are appreciated and valued were perceived as very helpful and linked to a strong identification with the organisation. Recognising the need for change to what has happened before was considered as very positively helping the implementation effort. Changes needed may be different for each intervention but might include: the level of support provided to clients, efforts required to build positive relationships and positive reinforcement of physical activity as good for mental wellbeing and health. Other changes might include: a single system of working which reduces complication and confusion amongst health professionals, makes working less fragmented, standardising what the public have access to. When the intervention was perceived as a high priority this was very helpful to implementation.

Within the process domain there were five factors that were very helpful for implementation and these included: planning, engaging, formally appointed implementation leaders, opinion leaders and executing (delivery). Planning was very helpful when it was collaborative and reflective. Engaging was very helpful when a lot of time and effort was put in to building relationships with clients, staff and partners. Having several leaders but specific people who keep everyone connected was also very helpful. Having ‘the right people listening’ and involved in supporting the development of the intervention was very helpful. Opinion leaders were identified as key people from large organisations or health professions or people with a working knowledge of the process of the intervention as well as individuals within the local authority and they were described as having very positive influence. Despite numerous challenges and barriers working hard to deliver some physical activity interventions was seen as very helpful. This involved regular meetings, contact and speaking with clients on a consistent and regular basis and trying to get out the community where possible. Good planning was also important.

## **Round 2: Strongly helpful factors**

There were six factors identified by interviewees as very helpful for implementation of at least one of the interventions in Round 2 and these were: adaptability, population needs and resources, networks and communications, culture, planning, and, executing.

Being adaptable in response to COVID-19 restrictions was very helpful in order to deliver activities. For example, altering activities to fit the numbers, doing activities online, and having contingency plans in case circumstances suddenly changed enabled delivery. In the outer

setting, understanding the needs and resources of the target population in terms of cultural barriers and expectations relating to physical activity as well as worries about fitness or body shape was very helpful. In addition, being very aware of time barriers that the target population experienced and their need to juggle family responsibilities and time constraints was important. In the inner setting a major benefit was the sharing of networks. Other benefits included support with grant funding applications, opening up connections with other organisations with specific expertise, and linking organisations who might have similar interests. Communications included social media, Whatsapp and Zoom meetings. In addition, a culture of empowering people in the community and helping people improve their lives through education and health and wellbeing was considered to be very helpful to implementation. In addition to this, working relationships which are supportive, warm and compassionate where those working to support the intervention are appreciated and valued are very helpful, linking to a strong identification with the organisation. With regard to processes, having more than one planning group with a smaller one driving the intervention forward facilitated planning, making it simpler and enabling more people to be involved, particularly the voluntary sector. Having regular planning meetings that were broadly about health and wellbeing was considered helpful. Also, despite numerous challenges caused by COVID-19 restrictions, hard work of staff and volunteers to deliver physical activity interventions was somewhat successful. Holding focus group meetings, contacting and speaking with the target population on a consistent and regular basis facilitated activities and this was endorsed by participation and feedback from the target population. In addition, when delivery was perceived as relaxed and very positive it was very helpful as was understanding health and wellbeing from different perspectives.

### 2.3.6.3 Challenges and barriers to programme implementation

Across both evaluation time points, there were no factors from the evaluation framework that were identified as being a consistent barrier that was negatively influencing the delivery of the programmes. There were some barriers found in Round 1 for at least one programme, a lot of which were influenced by COVID-19. These were not perceived as a barrier in Round 2. The barriers in Round 1 were related to: the implementation climate of the inner setting and their readiness to implement the programme, the cost of the programme, and the external change agents. These will be discussed in more detail in this section below.

In Round 1, organisations were seen to be particularly affected by COVID-19 and its restrictions. These were seen to be affecting their capacity for change and commitment to delivering these programmes at that time. The priority of people had changed as well as what was allowed to happen, making delivery of programmes and their activities a real concern for some programmes interviewed. However, for those that did not see this as a barrier to their programme's implementation, COVID-19's impact on implementation was seen as something that could be overcome through rethinking the original plan, doing more collaboration, and adapting to the current circumstances.

Other barriers noted by at least one programme included the programmes' costs, which was noted as a potential barrier for implementation and delivery of services because it was unknown/not certain whether funding resources were going to be in place or if they would be sufficient to deliver the planned work of staff, or if target group members would be able to avoid the fees associated with taking part in the programme. At this time, there was also some concern by at least one programme that their external change agents may have unhelpful attitudes towards participation in physical activity, which was perceived as potentially hindering the implementation of their programme to their area and target group.

## Summary for Study 2

Seven factors were shown across all three programmes as helping their implementation in Round 1 of the process evaluation. These were: relative advantage, population needs and resources, goals and feedback, planning, engaging, formally appointed leaders, and reflecting and evaluating.

In Round 2 of the process evaluation, there were 3 helpful factors common to all interventions and these were: goals and feedback, relative advantage, and leadership engagement. Across both evaluation rounds, the programmes' relative advantage, and, their goals and feedback, were perceived as factors helping all three programmes' implementation. The findings suggest these factors, related to the inner setting of the programme and characteristics of the programmes, were stable enablers for helping these different interventions be delivered in their respective areas and target populations. Sharing the learning and experiences of these interventions may be useful for other programmes starting or already on their journey with TaAF-related work.

Strongly helpful factors and activities by at least one programme were found in all except one of the five domains of the evaluation: Intervention Characteristics, Inner and Outer Settings and Process, with no strongly helpful factors in Individual Characteristics being noted (e.g. individual self-efficacy, knowledge and beliefs).

Across both evaluation rounds, four factors were found to be strongly helpful for one or more of the programmes evaluated. These were the culture of the inner setting of the programmes, the relative advantage of the intervention over other interventions, planning and the delivery (or execution) of the interventions.

In terms of barriers influencing programmes' implementation, there was no consistently identified barrier across all programmes. There were some potential barriers to implementation identified by at least one programme in Round 1 of the evaluation, which included unsupportive



attitudes of external change agents and the costs associated with the programme's delivery. Also, the readiness of settings to implement programmes in their areas and their climate for implementation, which was seen to be particularly affected by COVID-19 and the associated restrictions at the time. Not every programme saw these as barriers for their programme and its delivery, and in the second round of the evaluation, these concerns had disappeared.

## 2.4 Study 4 - Delphi Study for Toolkit Development

### Original Plan

The aim of this study was to:

Develop resources to allow individuals or groups at local levels in Pennine Lancashire to be able to conduct their own evaluations using the proposed evaluation approach.

This study was planned for the second year of the project, starting in October 2020. An in-depth interview study involving up to 25 key stakeholders was originally proposed. Each interview would last 60 minutes to help understand what the content should be for the toolkit and how best to present it for the intended audience (i.e. individuals., teams, volunteers delivering physical health projects in their own communities and LADs). The Evaluation Team would also make notes on their own experiences and insights gained from speaking to TaAF members throughout the studies 1 and 2, and it was planned that they would hold meetings with key stakeholders to discuss these reflections and capture their insights to feed into this interview study before it began.

### 2.4.1 Adaptations to Approach

However due to the delays outlined above, the design and timescale of this study was adjusted. A Delphi process was chosen. This is a recognised method used for arriving at a group opinion or decision by surveying a panel of experts or stakeholders, with a report or aggregated findings being shared with the group after each round. Two 3.5 hour group workshops were run in July and October 2021 respectively with 18 attending the first workshop and 7 attending the second. The first workshop covered what the toolkit should contain, how it should look and how best to deliver it to the target audience. The feedback gathered from the first workshop informed the creation and design of the process evaluation toolkit. The second workshop offered the opportunity to gather feedback on the draft of the toolkit. Following on from the second workshop, changes were made to the toolkit to incorporate the feedback given. Figure 7 illustrates the organisation of the Delphi process.

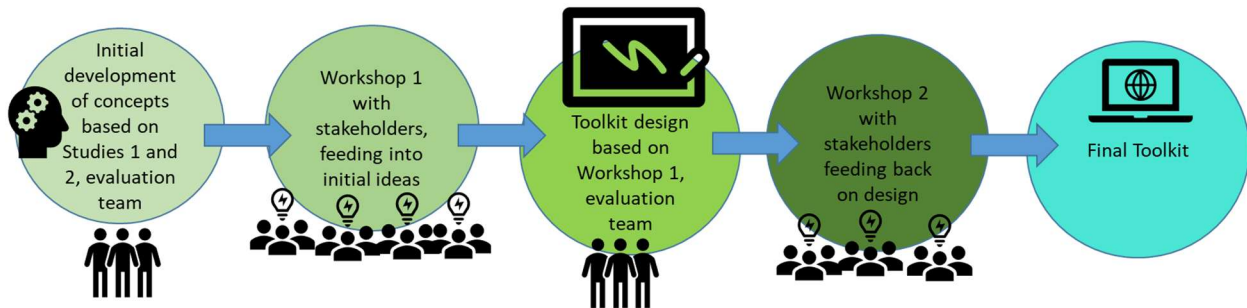


Figure 7: Illustrating the Delphi process to design the Evaluation Toolkit.

### 2.4.2 Delphi Workshop 1

The first Delphi workshop was held on 21st July 2021 with eighteen people that attended from a range of Pennine Lancashire areas. The workshop took place at the Prairie Sports Village in Burnley. It lasted just over 3 and a half hours and lunch was provided.

In this session, four main topic areas were discussed: 1) the barriers the target groups might have for carrying out process evaluations, 2) how to overcome these barriers, 3) the design and content of the toolkit, 4) the CIFR.

#### Findings from Workshop 1

##### *Main barriers for people doing process evaluations*

Participants were asked what they felt were the barriers or difficulties were when carrying out process evaluations. Participants discussed as a group and provided the following suggestions:

- Perception of “evaluation” - people can be ‘fearful’ of it as a word and often people don’t understand the value in it or why it should be done. It can also mean different things to different people and can be off putting.
- Timing of the evaluation - participants suggested that they had previously found that ‘evaluation’ had been carried out at the end of a project and not during. This therefore meant that they felt that they lost the changes and ‘learning’ that had happened during the ‘journey’ of the project. The evaluation also needed to fit with the changing nature of a project so by evaluating at more regular timepoints in a project it would enable the evaluation team to be more ‘pro-active’ rather than just ‘reactive at the end of a project’.
- Deciding what was important - the participants suggested that knowing what to prioritise when evaluating, and what tools/measures should be used would be useful. Feeling overwhelmed or not knowing what ‘tools’ or ‘measures’ are tried and tested and validated could be an issue. But also having the option to pick and choose what measures or ways of collecting data were the most useful was important, having flexibility within a range of tried and tested options. Sometimes too much information is collected because the aims at the start are not clear, so those evaluating really need to think what is the purpose of the data

they are collecting. Also collecting so much data can sometimes stop people participating and wastes time.

- Lack of skills and knowledge in analysing data - participants suggested that they often did not feel like they had the skill or knowledge to analyse any data they collected as part of the evaluation process, citing examples where video interviews had been carried out but how to make the most use of these interviews was a barrier.
- Sharing the findings from an evaluation - participants suggested that they were not always sure how best to share findings from an evaluation e.g. in what format, and with whom, as they felt that structured reports were not always engaging and were not sure what to include when sharing findings with stakeholders.
- Lack of confidence - participants suggested that they did not feel confident in carrying out a process evaluation as they had 'analysis paralysis' and were not sure where to start or what steps to take.
- Real life - Participants suggested that evaluation had to reflect the time and resources constraints of 'real life' projects and that evaluation that was needed was not a piece of university research.

#### *Overcoming the above barriers*

Participants were then asked to discuss and provide their thoughts on how an evaluation toolkit might try and address these (barriers). They provided the following suggestions:

- **Clear and easy to use** - participants suggested that having step by step guidance on how to carry out a process evaluation would help to boost confidence and remove the mindset of evaluation being hard and something people don't/can't do.
- **Reflection** - Participants suggested that having space to reflect on what went well and what could have been better and be improved upon next time when carrying out a process evaluation would be helpful. Reflection should also not just be carried out at the end but should be a continual thing throughout the journey (circular and ongoing process) so that learning can be done on a continuous basis and not just at the end. In addition, in terms of the confidence to say what didn't go well, participants suggested that sometimes this is avoided due to who will be seeing the evaluation at the end, if it's internal then they felt they could be honest but if it is external e.g. a funder, then they were unsure what to include. Guidance on how and who to share reflections and findings with was requested.
- **Culture change** - participants suggested that the organisations they worked in needed a 'culture change' towards making process evaluations part of a normal procedure that is carried out when implementing projects or programmes. This means that a united front is created where everyone is following the same guide. Having a standard process evaluation toolkit that everyone could use would help with this culture change.
- **Tried and tested measures** - Have a list of resources/tools/survey measures that are tried and tested
- **Data collection and analysis** - Videos were considered as data evaluation and people

discussed whether they were appropriate, and what to do with them. They thought that maybe having a range of ways to capture data that links in with what your aim is in the first place

- **Accessibility** - Make resources accessible by working with communities and partners to co-create and co-design them so they are more bespoke and tailored to what that person/community needs e.g. breaking down what a survey should look like and be like. Giving people flexibility and allowing them to take ownership by recognising who in the team/community might be best placed to deliver the evaluation and in what way would be helpful.
- **Timelines and logistics** - Logistics of how to run an evaluation, when are you going to measure things, who will do the measuring and what will the evaluation look like e.g. videos? Knowing where to start with an evaluation process and having a guide that can always be referred back to, for everyone including community partners is needed. Have guidance on creating realistic timelines for projects that everyone can agree on e.g. a GANTT chart or flow chart. A set of guidance questions on what needs to be thought about before you start an evaluation are needed.

#### *Main toolkit design and content features*

Participants were asked what they felt a process evaluation should look like and what it should contain, with examples. Participants discussed as a group and provided the following suggestions:

- **Functionality** - People said they would like the option of having digital and physical resources. Digital resources might look like a word doc with hyperlinks or a webpage with interactive elements like pages turning.
- **Image and tool led** - Participants suggested they did not want large chunks of text. Participants stated that the length of the toolkit was not an issue but preferred it to contain more images, diagrams, checklists, templates and case studies/examples rather than text. The images used in the toolkit needed to reflect the users.
- **Usability** - participants suggested that they would like guidance on how long each section of the toolkit would take and what equipment would be needed e.g. pens and paper or a laptop etc. Participants stated that being able to easily access the sections of the toolkit without having to read the whole document would be useful.
- **Colour scheme** - Participants said this should be reflective of TaAF - rainbow colours with mostly white but with a pop of colour, with a “Less is more” approach to colours. People also commented that we have to keep in mind accessibility, for example, some older people can’t read white on yellow text. Also, the cost of printing should be taken into account - materials should be able to be reproduced in black and white.
- **Future proofing** - Would like to have the toolkit user tested to check for whether it’s useful, logical and user friendly. And for it to be able to be updated and improved upon as time goes on.



### *Main feedback about the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CIFR) and making it easier for the target groups*

Participants were asked how accessible and suitable the CIFR was and how it could be better designed for non-expert evaluators. Participants discussed as a group and provided the following suggestions:

- **Language** - terminology was difficult to understand and seemed very 'academic'. Language was very formal so you could make it more basic and introduce some visual aspects such as diagrams. Perhaps tailor it for reading age of 10 or basic plain English.
- **Simplify** - participants stated that the CIFR felt complicated and academic and suggested that it could be simplified and made more practical.
- **Snapshot vs changes** - the participants suggested that they felt that the CIFR only looked at the process at a point in time whereas the participants were more interested in looking at the 'journey' and changes over time, so would like to see how the CIFR could be applied in that way.
- **Name of the CIFR** - the participants suggested that they did not like the acronym of the CIFR as it linked to perceptions of difficulty and evaluation which they felt to be off putting. This framework and its labels were generally found difficult to understand.

#### **2.4.2 Toolkit development following Workshop 1**

Following on from the first workshop the process evaluation team analysed the suggestions provided by the participants in the workshop. The process evaluation team designed the toolkit within the constraints of the time and resources available. Table 9 below describes how the suggestions and feedback from the first workshop was addressed in the toolkit.

Table 9: Toolkit development process

Content and design feedback	How we addressed these
A clear and easy to use step by step guide to boost confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A step by step planning section was included with top tips for success</li> <li>• Easy to fill in worksheets and templates for each section and the CIFR were included</li> </ul>
Information and guidance on how to do data analysis e.g. qualitative and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A section on the benefits and limitations of different data collection methods is included</li> <li>• A template for basic analysis</li> <li>• Links to further resources on how to carry out qual and quant analysis</li> </ul>
How to identify who will be seeing the results of your information and how to tailor it to that user (e.g. funder)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A section has been included on alternative ideas for presenting the findings of the evaluation</li> <li>• A section on tips for building good relationship with funders and tailoring how findings are presented to satisfy funder requirements</li> </ul>
Evidence based/tried and tested tools and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about using the tried and tested evidence based Consolidated framework for implementation research.</li> <li>• An easy to use template/worksheet on using the CIFR in interviews, focus groups and surveys.</li> <li>• Links to further resources on evidence based information and resources</li> </ul>
How to create timelines of when different elements of the process evaluation should be carried out and the logistics involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action plan template for a successful process evaluation with each of the steps needed in an easy to fill in format</li> <li>• Tips on what steps need to be taken at each stage and who should be responsible for each section</li> </ul>
Examples and case studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheets and templates with worked examples for each section of the toolkit</li> </ul>
Guidance on how to decide on the aims of the process evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SMART goal setting (aims) worksheet</li> </ul>
Guidance on how to capture the 'journey' of the programme/project rather than just pre/post	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance on how the CIFR can be carried out at several timepoints during program/project delivery</li> </ul>
Digital and physical resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical toolkit resource that can be printed out or used on a computer</li> </ul>
Image led (images need to reflect users)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representative images and graphics used throughout</li> </ul>
No large chunks of text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bullet points, diagrams, images, graphics and templates to break up the text</li> </ul>
Templates and checklists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Templates, checklist and worksheets to fill in</li> </ul>

Colours reflective of TaAF but still be able to be printed in black and white	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bright colours coordinated to match the different sections of the toolkit. Still able to be printed in black and white for accessibility.</li> </ul>
Language and terminology need to be accessible and not too technical (reading age of 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explanations and text written in simplified easy to read plain English and checked using a readability checker</li> </ul>

### 2.4.3 Findings from Workshop 2

The aim of the second workshop was to gather feedback on the draft design of the process evaluation toolkit designed by the Lancaster University evaluation team. The design and contents of the toolkit were based on the feedback gathered in the first workshop. The second Delphi workshop took place on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at Lodge House in Burnley. Seven people attended the workshop. The workshop took place over three and a half hours and covered two main areas; 1) feedback the toolkit, including strengths and weaknesses of the design and content, 2) suggestions for any changes and improvements.

#### *Feedback on toolkit design and content*

Participants were asked in the second workshop to look through the toolkit and think about what they thought were positives and negatives about the toolkit, the participants suggested that these were the main positives and negatives:

**Positive** - overall, participants liked the layout and structure. They liked the ‘top tip’ boxes, templates/worksheets and planning sections were particularly helpful. They found the description of what a process evaluation was useful and commented on how the colour scheme matching the sections worked well and helped the sections flow throughout.

**Negative** - the CFIR section was still text heavy, confusing and they didn’t like the colour scheme. The CFIR language, label and name was unappealing. Participants didn’t like the ‘contact an expert’ tone and felt that more templates and encouragement could be used to boost confidence.

#### *Suggestions for improvements to the toolkit*

Participants at the workshop were also asked to give feedback on what could be improved in the toolkit, what needed further explanation and any changes to the design, the participants gave the following main suggestions:

- **Worksheets/templates** - participants suggested having more worksheets to fill in on topics such as how to do quantitative and qualitative analysis, examples of completed worksheets, examples of case studies and templates and a simplified version of the five main areas of the CIFR in a template to use.
- **Language** - participants suggested some alternative wording for sections of the toolkit, such as the names of the five main CIFR domains, the title ‘process evaluation’, and removing more academic terminology.

- **Strategies** - participants suggested making the matching of unhelpful factors from the CIFR and the suggested strategies that can help improve those factors into a more easy to understand diagram.
- **CIFR** - participants suggested simplifying the CIFR and thinking about it as more of an 'approach' to do evaluation by reducing it down to just the 5 main domains rather than including information about all 39 constructs, or a simpler version. They also suggested creating an easy to use template with questions and prompts that could be asked in interviews, focus groups and surveys with an accompanying rating system.
- **Design** - participants suggested coordinating the colour schemes with the sections and making sure font and design elements are consistent throughout with as much use of images, graphics and space on the page as possible. Also, matching the proposed phases of a process evaluation in the resource to different colours would be good to do.

#### 2.4.4 Finalising the toolkit

The final toolkit is 46 pages in length and incorporates many of the suggestions where they were feasible. Whilst the toolkit developed by Lancaster university is evidence based and co-designed with TaAF to reflect discussion in the two workshops, there is always room for improvement and development in the future. It is expected that the final version of the toolkit produced by Lancaster University in conjunction with TaAF and other partners will enable partners to carry out their own evaluations going forward using a united systematic guide. There is possibly potential for further collaboration with TaAF and Lancaster University to explore the impact and usability of the toolkit once it has been tried and tested by TaAF and partners, although this would need to be discussed with TaAF at a later date.

Suggestions from the workshops that could be used by TaAF include making the pdf of the toolkit interactive. This will require hosting and ability to provide this functionality. The pdf is being shared in the portfolio and can therefore be used to do this. Having voice overs of the text may also be a possibility, which would help with accessibility. In addition, having shared stories and case studies of programmes that have tried doing their own process evaluation could be captured and incorporated into the toolkit later. This could be a really nice feature to include. As time goes by and feedback is gathered on the toolkit, more and more resources and details could be added. Currently, the toolkit length is as long as was requested by participants in the Delphi Study. However, in the future, a longer length toolkit may be seen as more helpful and not off-putting. Gathering evaluation and feedback from users would help understand this more.

#### 2.5 A new CFIR questionnaire

Collecting and analysing qualitative data, from interviews for example, and then scoring the content can be a resource-intensive process, especially when done in the systematic and rigorous manner the academic researchers at Lancaster university employ. Exploring a way to gather data and use the CFIR in a quicker way was another aim of this package of work to help inform the



development of a toolkit for use by non-academic evaluators in the future. One approach was using a questionnaire and the research team have developed questionnaire items that could capture the CFIR constructs. Further experts at Lancaster University were consulted in this process. Questionnaires were completed by individual participants in addition to taking part in the interviews, where possible, to be able to compare the results and establish whether the questionnaire could be a reliable and valid alternative tool.

### *Development process and the final questionnaire*

The questionnaire comprised of 68 questions in total (including demographics and a social desirability measure) and 46 examining the 5 main areas of the CIFR. For each question participants were required to state whether they felt that the factor in question was helpful or a hindrance to delivering the intervention and to what degree ('strong barrier' or 'weak facilitator'). It was also possible to state whether the factor was either helpful or a hindrance, or by rating as 'neutral' or 'not applicable to the delivery. Input from experts on the CFIR was sorted and drafts of the questionnaire and items sought from team members on this project and these framework experts. The feedback and input were incorporated before including it in the process evaluation studies. Scores from the questionnaire were going to be compared to scores from the hand-scoring of researchers analysing the interview transcripts.

For Study 1, in Round 1, all 16 participants started the survey but only 4 completed. Most stopped after the first page. In Round 2, only 7 participants began the survey and 5 completed. In the final Round 3, 6 began the survey and only 2 completed it fully. For Study 2, Round 1 all 13 participants started the survey and 9 completed the questionnaire. In Round 2, 4 out of 8 participants completed the questionnaire. Both studies showed low completion making it too small to allow a comparison between both methods of scoring (i.e. questionnaire versus hand scoring from interviews).

### *Learning points*

The low respondent numbers for the questionnaire made it hard to draw conclusions as to how useful and efficient it is in its current form. A challenge faced by the research team and participants alike was that in its current form the questionnaire is long and time consuming which is off putting for potential participants and equally time consuming to analyse for researchers/users of the questionnaire. In addition, the participants in the current studies were required to take part in a 60 or 90-minute interview with a researcher as well as filling out the questionnaire. Participants anecdotally reported feeling that doing both took up too much time. However, feedback from the Delphi study suggested that questions are useful and if we can give these that would be good. Some example questions have been provided. The delays to the studies however, along with some studies overlapping, meant we were not able to do further in-depth work on this to have it re-developed and tested in time for the toolkit study. The Delphi study

also suggested there may be a simpler ways to structure a framework to guide process evaluations for this target group. Future work on this would be really useful with lots of input from future users.

## 3.0 Strand 2: Qualitative Evaluation

### 3.1 Introduction, Aims and Objectives

The aim of the life course strand of the Together an Active Future (TaAF) evaluation is to gain an in-depth understanding of individuals' relationships with and attitudes towards physical activity (PA), within the context of their lived experiences, and as narrated in life course interviews in two phases. This has the potential to illuminate important learning about: people's relationships with PA and the key life events that participants believe to be important to these; reasons and motivations for taking part; changes experienced as a result of participation in PA; and the impact of these changes on the lived experiences of participants involved in this strand of the evaluation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on the TaAF pilot and, as we will outline in the following pages, this has in turn had a bearing on the life course evaluation. To overcome the challenges faced, we worked closely with the TaAF Core Team to adopt a flexible approach to the evaluation.

### 3.2 What is a Life Course Evaluation?

*As an approach, or method, for understanding individual lives and really connecting with another's experience, there may be no equal to the life story interview [...] People telling their own stories reveal more about their own inner lives than any other approach could.*

(Atkinson, 1998, p.24)

A life course approach has been adopted because it is relevant for exploring 'how people make sense of their experiences and of the world around them' (Goodson, 2001, p.20). Biographical methodologies are powerful research tools. Life stories are important to people's identities because, as Atkinson (1998) explains, 'Storytelling is a fundamental form of human communication. It can serve an essential function in our lives. We often think in story form, speak in story form, and bring meaning to our lives through story' (p.1). Similarly, McAdams, Josselson and Lieblich (2006) state that 'We are all storytellers, and we are the stories we tell ... our narrative identities are the stories we live by' (p.p.3-4). This is therefore an important methodological approach in understanding individuals' lives, experiences, and relationships with physical activity.

The objectives of the life course interviews include (though are not limited to):

- Exploring each individual's relationship with physical activity at the outset of their participation;

- Through the use of the life course tool, establishing the key life events that participants believe to be important to their attitudes towards and relationships with physical activity;
- Identifying people's reasons and motivations for taking part in the physical activity intervention;
- Drawing on reflective diary entries to explore any changes experienced by individuals over a five-month duration, between the initial and follow-up interview;
- Understanding the impact of these changes on the lived experiences of the participants involved in this strand of the evaluation.

### 3.3 Methods

The Lancaster evaluation team worked closely with the TaAF Core Team to support them in deciding where to focus the resources for this strand of the evaluation. As the four cohorts were identified, great efforts went into working with the relevant stakeholders to gain access to and recruit participants to take part in life course interviews. As a result of COVID restrictions, recruitment to Cohorts 2, 3 and 4 of the life course evaluation was delayed. In April 2020, the Lancaster University Evaluation Team provided an update to the TaAF Core Team and highlighted some potential impacts of the COVID-19 situation for the evaluation (Holland et al. 2020).

At the outset of the pandemic, an ethics amendment was promptly submitted to and authorised by Lancaster University's Faculty of Health and Medicine Research Ethics Committee (FHM REC), enabling the evaluation team to undertake life course interviews by telephone. We have maintained a close working relationship with both the TaAF Core Team and locality leads and, as a result, have recruited successfully to all four cohorts.

This study used life course methodology to understand individuals' lives, experiences, and relationships with physical activities. We conducted two individual, one-hour interviews with people who were participating in TaAF projects. The interviews took place five months apart to capture change over time. In between interviews, participants were contacted via text or email and asked some follow up questions. The aim of this was to maintain contact with participants between interviews, and keep them engaged with the research. This was a more flexible approach and less demanding for participants than the original proposed reflective diary keeping.



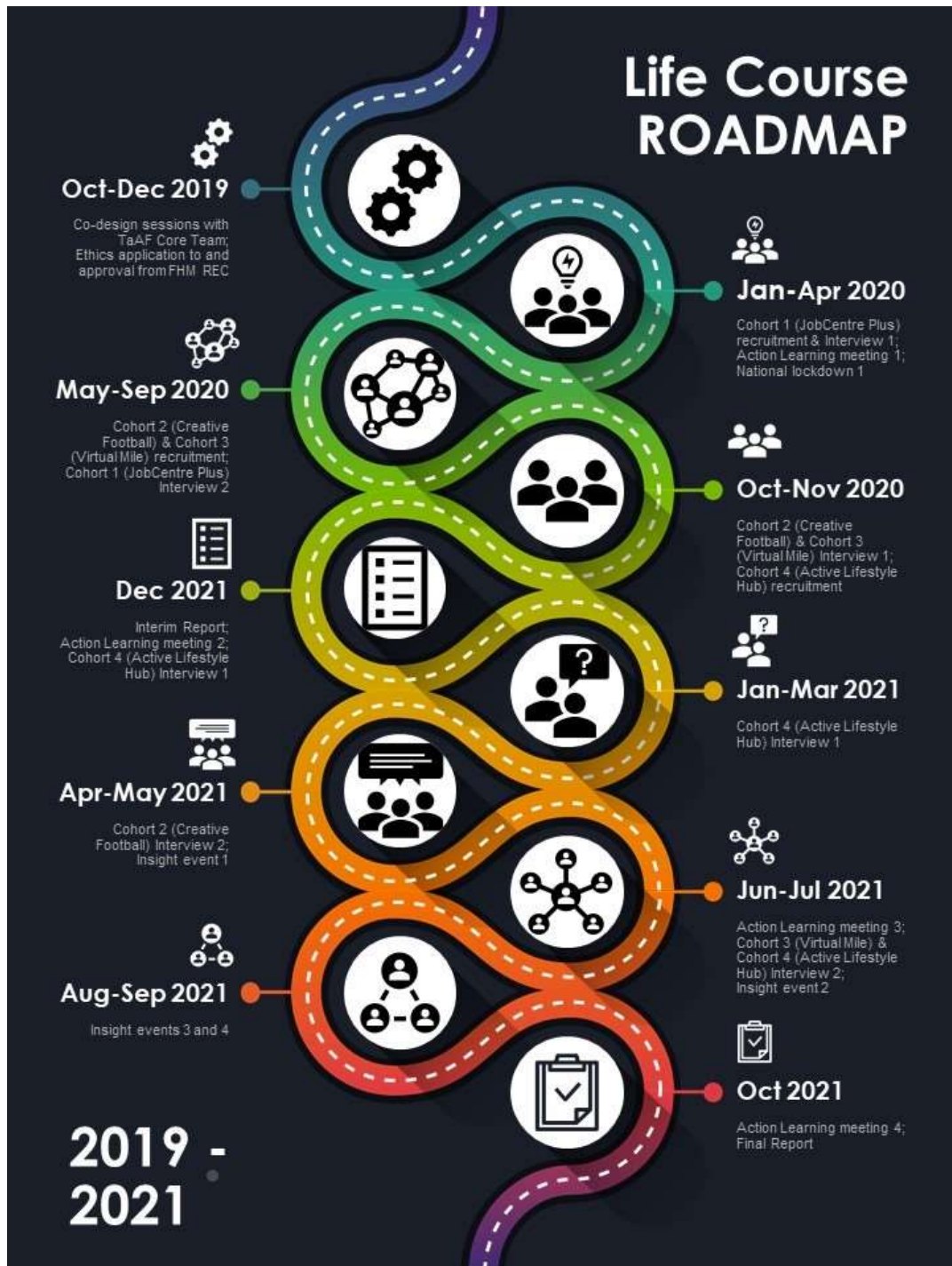


Figure 8: Life Course Evaluation Timeline

### 3.3.1 Life course cohorts



The first cohort of participants recruited to the life course evaluation were individuals who were Job Centre Plus customers (part of the Department of Workplace and Pensions (DWP)). The TaAF Core teawith DWP to reach their identified target of people who are not in employment. Participants in this cohort attended two events hosted by TaAF at a Job Centre Plus in Pennine Lancashire. *‘The events were designed to build a relationship with DWP customers and staff, gain their insight and ideas on what could help people be more active and hook them to want to become involved in designing and testing out solutions that could help them and others in a similar situation’* (Jamie Waugh, TaAF Programme Manager).



Participants in the second cohort are members of Creative Football. Creative Football works alongside Sport England and TaAF to provide a range of bespoke football initiatives. *‘Football is used to informally engage people, provide an anchor to the heart of relationships, and understand and help wider needs’* (Creative Football, n.d). This project had to adapt due to regulations and restrictions introduced as a result of COVID-19. At the time of interviews, sessions with limited numbers were taking place instead of the usual projects, including Blokes UTD and Girls UTD.



The third cohort is made up of individuals who participated in the Virtual Mile in Rossendale. In May 2020, the primary school cross-country championships were due to be held; however, this was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and, instead, the organisers decided to host a virtual mile competition. The challenge of running or walking a mile was open to anyone of any age or ability, and participants were asked to record and send in their best time. Due to our life course methodology, we recruited adults aged 18 or over to take part in this evaluation cohort.



The fourth cohort was the new Active Lifestyle Hub. The Active Lifestyle Hub is known to the public as 'Up and Active'. This workstream supports people in Lancashire to be more physically active.

### 3.3.2 Co-design

Within the first six months of the project, a number of co-design activities took place. In October 2019, a co-design process was undertaken with members of the TaAF team and locality leads to develop an approach for recruiting and interviewing participants. The TaAF team came together and discussed as a group what they would like to understand following the life course interviews. They took part in a series of small group tasks and decided on a set of questions they would like answering. These questions were incorporated into the interview schedule, with some examples suggested on the day illustrated below in Figure 9.



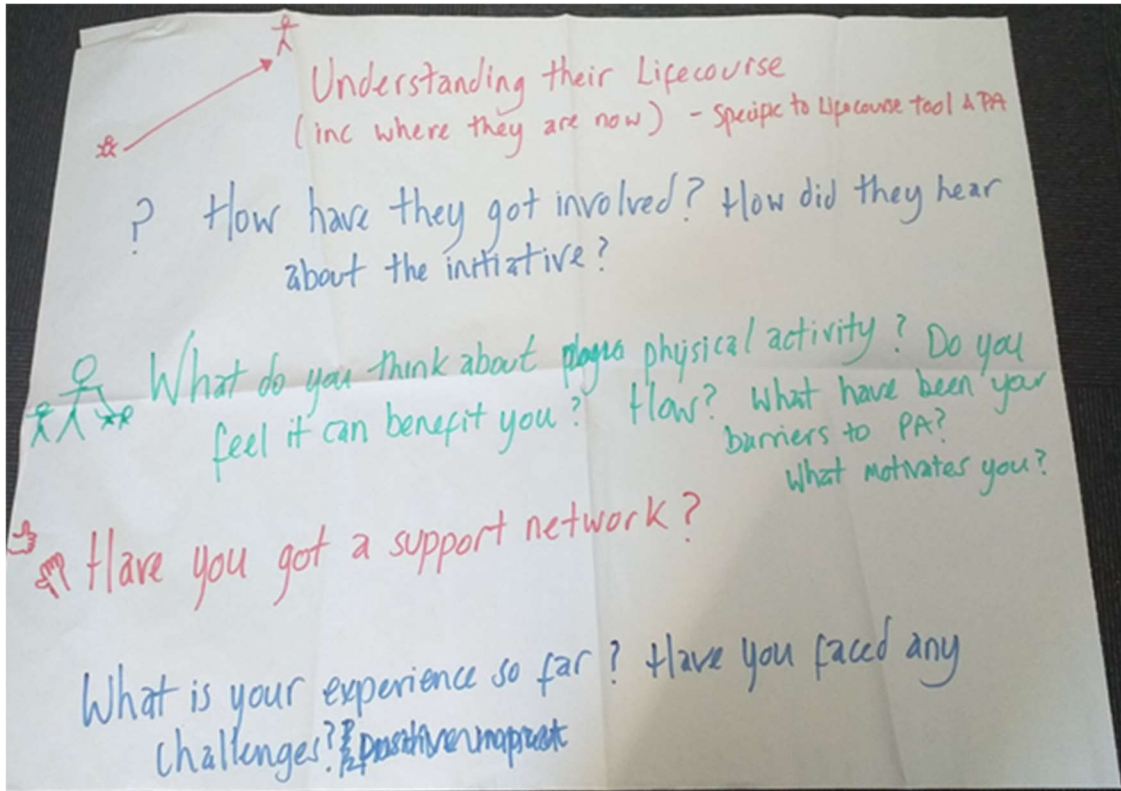


Figure 9: Image from flipchart taken in the life course interview co-design session

As part of their creative engagement work, the TaAF Core Team developed a ‘Life Course Reflection Tool’ to explore the relationship between key life events and physical activity levels. The Lancaster evaluation team drew on this tool to create a document to use in the life course interviews. This evaluation resource is entitled ‘Life Course Notes’ and is presented below in Figure 10.



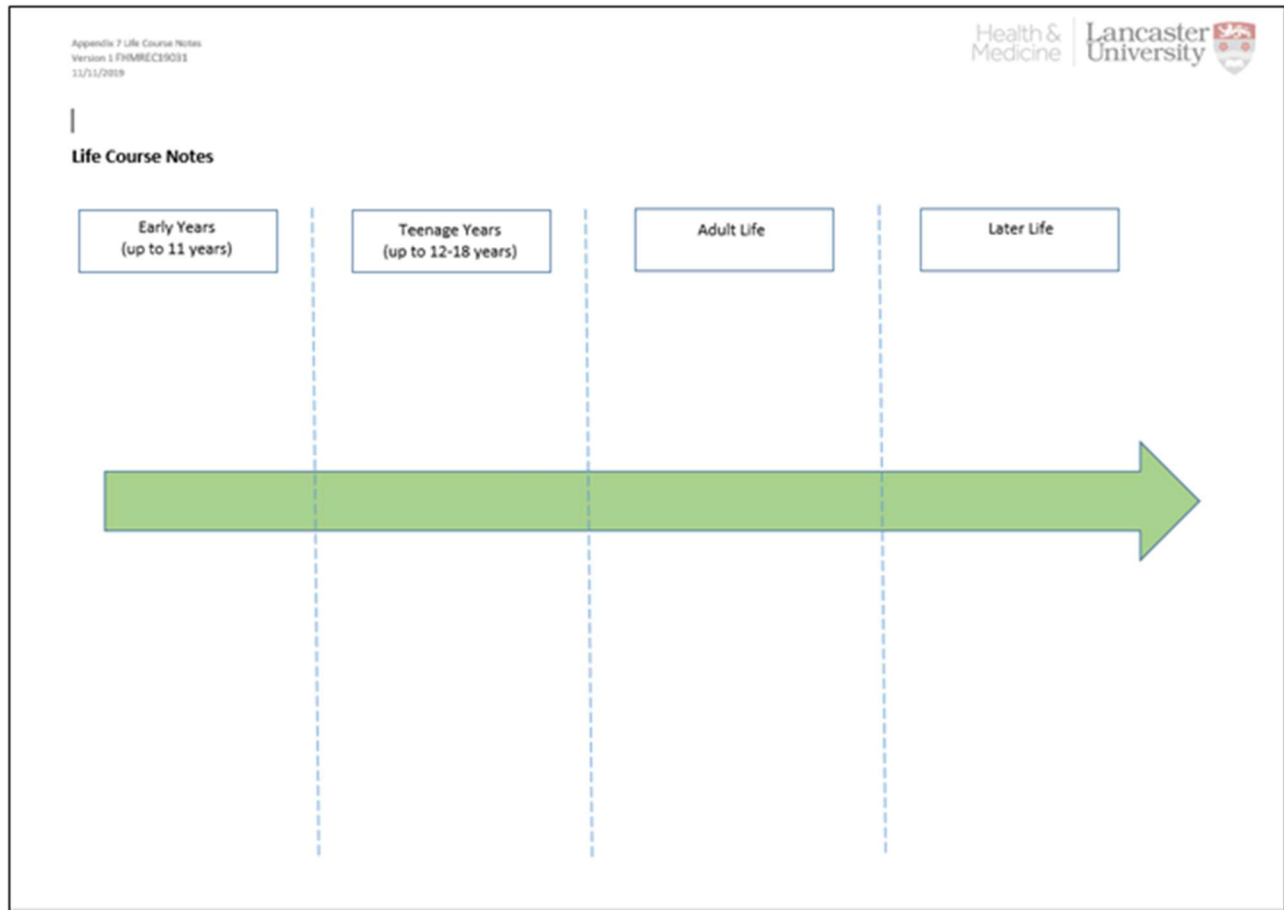


Figure 10: Life Course Notes

### 3.3.3 Data analysis

All life course interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. These interview transcripts, along with researcher notes, were then analysed thematically with the aid of Nvivo qualitative software. As described below, there were two key strands of data analysis: one for each of the four participant cohorts (within-cohort data analysis) and one for the cross-cohort data analysis.

#### 3.3.3.1 Within-cohort data analysis

The identification of emerging themes and initial coding were undertaken by two members of the evaluation team (BG and SV), then shared and agreed during data analysis meetings. This process allowed for the verification of the coding framework and enabled researchers to develop an analysis of the situation (Bowling, 2014). This was completed for each of the four

participant cohorts.

An overview of the data analysis process undertaken for each of the four cohort's data is illustrated below in Figure 11, and included the following key stages:

- Listen - After each interview, the researchers listened back to the interview audio;
- Read - Once an interview had been transcribed by a professional transcriber, the researchers read through the transcript. As they did this, they 'cleaned' the transcript, removing any identifiable data to ensure a participant's anonymity;
- Note - After reading a transcript, the researchers jotted down any notes outlining their initial thoughts about the transcript and any key points that appeared to be emerging within it;
- Code - The researchers used a computer software called Nvivo to assist with the coding of the transcripts. Researchers coded the transcripts and used Nvivo to help organise these, which then allowed the codes to be brought together to develop themes;
- Discuss - Following coding, several discussions took place to ensure the analysis captured and represented the data. There were several layers to these discussions including those which took place between the researchers, as part of action learning meetings, and in deliberative panels (insight events);
- Repeat - Qualitative data analysis is an iterative process. Following the discussions outlined in the previous point, the researchers engaged in further discussions and amended the coding before the analysis was complete.

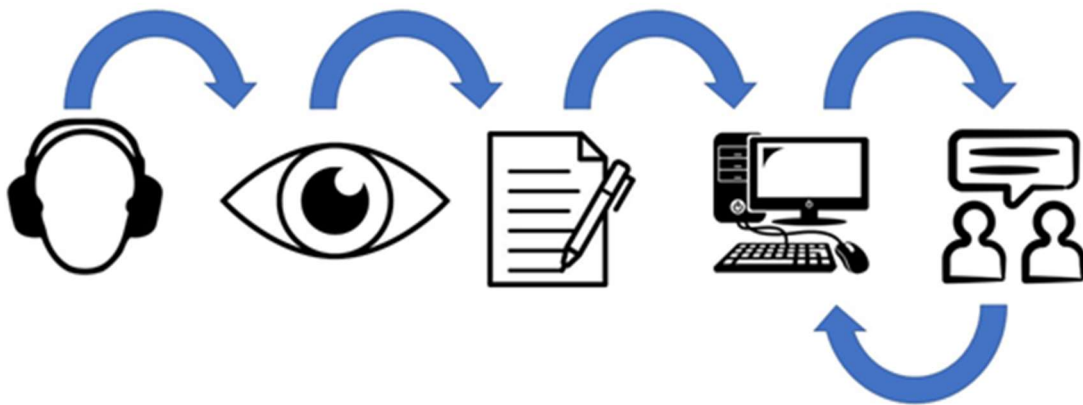


Figure 11: The qualitative data analysis process for within-cohort data analysis

### 3.3.3.2 Cross-cohort data analysis

The cross-cohort data analysis in the TaAF life course evaluation was informed by the concept of 'thematic networks', which offers 'a way of organizing a thematic analysis of qualitative data' (Attride-Sterling, 2001, p.387). Within this thematic analysis approach, basic themes are first

identified within the data, which are then grouped into organizing themes and, finally, into global themes. A thematic network ‘is developed starting from the Basic Themes and working inward toward a Global Theme’, with networks ‘presented graphically as web-like nets to remove any notion of hierarchy, giving fluidity to the themes and emphasizing the interconnectivity throughout the network’ (Attride-Sterling, 2001, p.389). This analytic approach is illustrated in Figure 12:

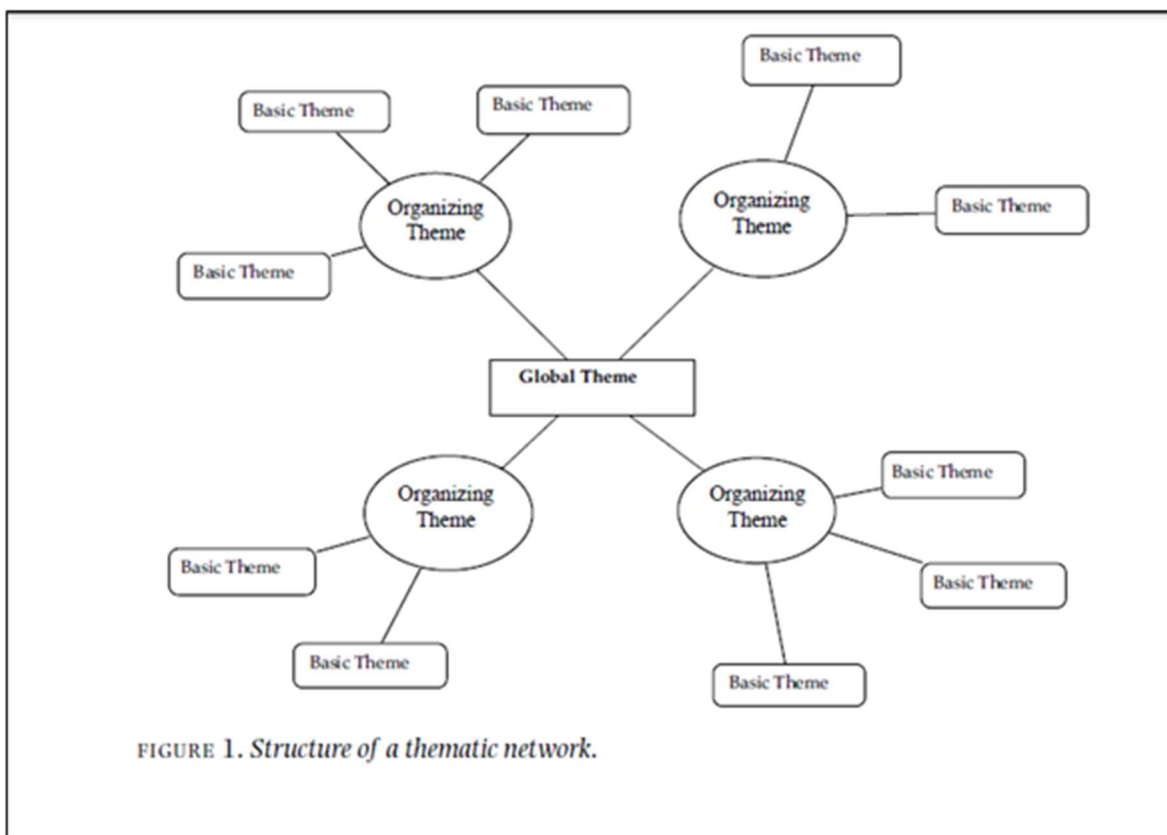


Figure 12: Structure of a thematic network (Attride-Sterling, 2001, p.388)

### 3.3.4 Action Learning Meetings

An action learning approach was utilised in this strand of the evaluation to provide time and space to reflect with the TaAF Core Team on the evaluation data being collected and the initial themes emerging from the data analyses. Action learning meetings enable participants to engage in shared learning, allowing time for both reflection and action (Dunphy et al. 2010), which, in turn, supported the TaAF Core Team’s decision-making processes and next steps. As illustrated in Figure 13, there are a number of stages within an action learning approach and, importantly, this supported TaAF and Sport England’s desire for both rapid review and rapid learning.



Figure 13: Stages of action learning (SCIfE, 2020)

### 3.3.5 Deliberative Panels (Insight Events)

There are a number of strengths to deliberative panel research methodology, particularly for health-related research. As a research and evaluation approach, deliberative panels enable the validation and fine-tuning of outcomes by producing an informed and collective view resulting from deliberation. Deliberative methodology can play a key role both in participatory research and in shifting research findings from data analysis to meaningful recommendations for policy, practice and guidance for employers. Studies show that different stakeholder groups support the use of ‘a shared decision-making mechanism’ and consider participant interaction to be important (Abelson et al, 2003; Cleary and Edgman-Levitan, 1997; Gagliardi et al, 2008; Mitton et al, 2009).

The use of deliberative panels in the life course strand of this evaluation was important for a number of reasons:

- It enabled other stakeholder groups to contribute to this strand of the evaluation, for example, but not limited to, physical activity providers, and members of the TaAF core team;
- It contributed to data analyses;



- It provided important opportunities for verifying and fine-tuning the qualitative findings from each cohort.

As the follow-up life course interviews were completed, a deliberative panel was held with a wider group of participants from each of the four cohorts - i.e. a total of four deliberative panels. There is no single approach to using deliberative panels and so each insight event was co-designed with the TaAF core team. For each insight event, we invited members of the TaAF Core Team, Sport England, and individuals who had been involved in organising the physical activity intervention the cohort participated in. Participants were presented with a visual overview of the research and the emerging themes in the relevant cohort data, following which a discussion was facilitated. This methodology allowed for an exploration of aspects that participants thought required revision.

## 3.4 Study findings

### 3.4.1 Within-cohort findings

The life course evaluation comprises four participant cohorts: Job Centre Plus; Creative Football; Virtual Mile; and Active Lifestyle Hub. Infographics and audio recordings are used in this report to present the findings from each of these four participant cohorts. It is hoped that these resources clearly present the key findings from each of the four different cohorts, and that they can be used by TaAF colleagues to support dissemination and development activities as their work continues.

An overview of the participants within each of these four cohorts is presented below, with further detail provided in the accompanying infographics and audio recordings.

#### Cohort 1: Job Centre Plus

Five JobCentre customers were interviewed at two time points (n=10 interviews). The participants were three men and two women, aged between 20 and 50 years. Four of the five people lived alone, and they had been involved with the JobCentre between 12 months and 25 years - mostly several years.

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#### Cohort 2: Creative Football

Three Creative Football participants were interviewed at two time points, while two participants were interviewed once (n=8 interviews). The participants were two men and three women, aged between 20 and 50 years.

2 men, 3 women

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### **Cohort 3: Virtual Mile**

Three Virtual Mile participants were interviewed at two time points, while one participant was interviewed once (n=7 interviews). All participants were women, and were aged in their 30s and 40s. Virtual Mile participants were the most active of our participants across the cohorts.

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### **Cohort 4: Active Lifestyle Hub**

Five Active Lifestyle Hub participants were interviewed at two time points (n=10 interviews). Participants were three men and two women, aged between 35 and 65 years. The people taking part in this cohort were therefore at very different life stages. For example, one participant had two young children, while two participants were retired.

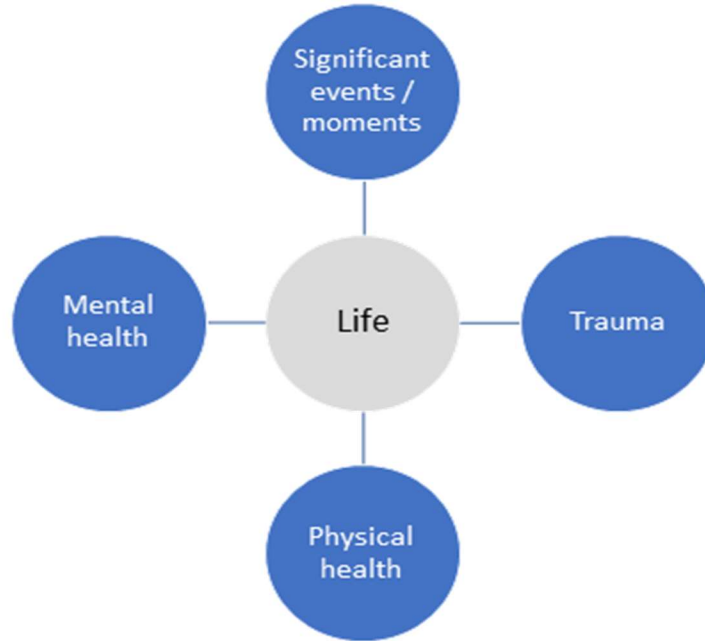
[Together an Active Future | Lancaster University](#)

### **3.4.2 Cross-cohort findings**

Following the data analysis across the four cohorts, four Global Themes have been identified within the data: Life; Identity; Networks; Perceptions of physical activity

Below is a summary of the four Global Themes, and the Organising Themes and Basic Themes from which these have been developed.

## Global Theme 1: Life



GLOBAL THEME: LIFE	Organising Theme			
	Mental health (MH)	Physical health	Significant events / moments	Trauma
Basic themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving mental health</li> <li>• Drinking</li> <li>• MH symptoms</li> <li>• Difficulties with crowds</li> <li>• MH difficulties</li> <li>• Negative impact on MH &amp; wellbeing – COVID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weight</li> <li>• Ill health</li> <li>• Negative impact on physical health – COVID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance struggles</li> <li>• College</li> <li>• Children</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Employment – enjoyment</li> <li>• Military Service</li> <li>• Negative impact on life – COVID</li> <li>• Positive impact on life – COVID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic abuse</li> <li>• Bereavement (loss)</li> <li>• Concern for family</li> <li>• Grieving</li> <li>• Family difficulty</li> <li>• Judicial system</li> </ul>

Figure 14: The organising themes related to the Global Theme “Life”, with table giving the underlying basic themes

This Global Theme summarises some of the aspects of life that have a key influence on the way in which people live. This incorporates both positive and negative experiences that have been present throughout individuals' lives, and how these have at times influenced decisions and actions. This theme addresses what is currently happening in people's lives, along with experiences that have happened in the past.

### Organising Theme - Mental Health

Many participants referred to mental health as being a significant factor in their lives - whether past or present. They talked about experiences such as anxiety and depression, and how these had often negatively impacted on their lives. Some participants described having found ways to manage and improve their mental health, through support from health professionals and by changing their alcohol or drug use. However, other participants described how their mental health problems could be exacerbated by stressors in their lives, such as financial struggles and concerns.

*'Yeah and then I can have days where it's just a meltdown and then I can't sleep and like I said I started hallucinating, that were frightening, I went to doctor's, he were really good. I said I'm so frightened.'*

*'I do, yeah but it's like I say, as soon as you start feeling things are starting to go I feel a bit better. It's the anxiety of, what if I get a letter tomorrow saying, this benefit is going to get stopped or that benefit's going to get stopped, I'm like-, it's the constant worry of homelessness almost. It's the uncertainty thing.'*

Some participants also discussed how the Covid-19 pandemic had negatively impacted upon their mental health. This tended to refer to the impact of the lockdowns and other restrictions imposed as a result of the outbreak, with many participants describing feelings of isolation, loneliness and lower mood as a result.

*'I'm not really enjoying any of it, it's almost like our lives are being taken away from us, but I suppose it's one of those things that have got to happen.'*

*'I wasn't doing so well at first, I was all right up until May, I'd say May and then I just I had a bit of a bad tumble, where I've never been on tablets before but I sort of caught myself but I knew I needed them, getting to the point where I was breaking down all the time, taking it out on the kids, over-eating, wasn't going out, couldn't be bothered.'*

### Organising Theme - Physical Health

Participants' physical health was often a prominent discussion point, with improving or worsening health having an impact on their ability to undertake paid work and other activities. Participants' lives were also disrupted by physical health problems including injury, periods of recovery, long-term health conditions, and more acute physical health problems.

*'I walk about ten paces or so but you know it's like my back starts to sort of, excruciating pain.'*  
*'Cos I wasn't eating very well towards the end of my drinking. Thirty eight, 39, I must have*



*been really unfit then because I'd been sick every other week. Wasn't eating properly, this is where it was taking its toll a bit.'*

### Organising Theme - Significant events/moments

Participants shared events and moments that had happened over the course of their lives that had in some way been significant. This theme incorporates both positive and negative life events, and included childhood, teenage years, adulthood and later life. It addresses experiences of education and employment, as well as having children, military service, and experiencing financial difficulties.

*'Obviously managing the birth of me kids, you know, is something that you cherish for the rest of your life.'*

*'Yeah it makes me happy being going to work and earning, well I know I'm not earning that much but I am earning.'*

The COVID-19 pandemic, and the associated lockdowns and restrictions, was significant for the majority of participants, although it affected participants in different ways. For some, this had positive impacts, such as the opportunity to spend more times with family and places not being as busy.

*'It did, [the lockdown] helped a lot yeah. Yeah just having less people around all the time, plus it's more a case of you kind of had to get out to make the most of that time...'*

*'Yeah. It has [helped] in a positive sense, it's just that you know I'm not cooped up in my room as much as I used to be before. I was diagnosed with depression as well. I am gradually spending more and more time with the family, speaking to them, talking to them [...] I don't know if withdrawn is the right word but before I couldn't manage to be in the same room as if there was more than one other person in there. I couldn't stand that noise [...] it felt overcrowded. So yeah things like that aspect has changed.'*

For some participants, however, the pandemic had been dominated by negative experiences. This included isolation and boredom, concerns about family and friends, and not feeling in control.

*'Well not really good because me mum's just turned 69 and she lives on her own and she's been ringing me up crying her eyes out and there's nothing I can do.'*

*'I've just not been active, just sat like a cabbage basically in the flat, watching the telly and you know I'm not a reader, I listen to a lot of music but I don't know it gets you down a bit. It's just this bloody surreal situation isn't it really this Covid thing, it's like something out of H.G. Wells or something innit, you know it's strange.'*

### Organising Theme - Trauma

Participants discussed traumatic experiences that had occurred throughout their lives, with some experiencing multiple traumas. These experiences included bereavement, grief and loss. They were sometimes contained to a single point in time, while for others they were experienced over a protracted period of time. In both instances, participants discussed the long-term impacts of

these traumas on their lives.

*'There's one thing that still, I believe is still with [my wife] and me, although we don't talk about it, is we lost our first child into stillbirth. She would have been 17 if she was still around. Still missed.'*

*'I just can't let him go, it's been like seven years since he passed away. But in all them seven years I can't move on..... Can't move on and I miss him.'*

*'A lot of deaths in my family happened at one time and that led me to alcohol.'*

Other traumas that participants discussed focused around families. This included family difficulties, concerns for family members, and some experiences of domestic abuse.

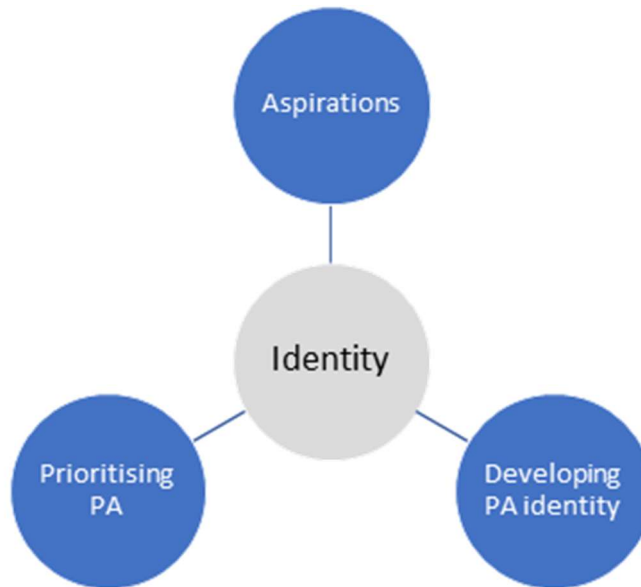
*'My daughter was out of my life during the drinking time. I didn't know where she was or anything like.'*

*'I used to cycle to visit him, miles and miles, we'd get there and then he'd hide even in the rain and we was like drenched me and me brother and he'd just ignore, even though we'd see him at the window, but obviously he didn't want us to see him in that state, I understand that now.'*

Some participants discussed their involvement in the judicial system. For some this related to spending time in prison, and for others it related to them being a victim of crime and going through the judicial system processes.

*'Well I were revving meself up for it and revving meself up for it and I were in a really bad state, really bad. And then it did go to court and it were the day.'*

## Global theme 2: Identity



GLOBAL THEME: IDENTITY	Organising Themes		
	Hopes and Aspirations	Developing PA identity	Prioritising PA
Basic themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aspirations</li> <li>• Hopes for the future</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Childhood PA</li> <li>• Active in childhood</li> <li>• Parental influence in childhood PA</li> <li>• Active teenager</li> <li>• Active when working</li> <li>• Active family</li> <li>• Adulthood activity</li> <li>• Bereavement and PA (impact)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Importance of PA</li> <li>• Benefits of PA</li> <li>• Limited PA (activity, knowledge, options)</li> <li>• PA enjoyment</li> <li>• Change in activity levels</li> <li>• Juggling commitments</li> </ul>

Figure 15: The organising themes related to the Global Theme “Identity”, with table giving the underlying basic themes

This Global Theme is made up of three organising themes: Aspirations; Developing Physical Activity Identity; and Prioritising Physical Activity.

The Global Theme of Identity relates to the extent to which an individual's identity is associated with physical activity. As outlined below, different sources and experiences throughout life have shaped individuals' perceptions of the personal importance of physical activity.

### Organising Theme - Developing Physical Activity Identity

Each participant had their own individual relationship with physical activity that had developed throughout their life as a result of different experiences and influences. All participants described being active as children. For some, childhood activity was linked to playing outside with friends, or to structured sessions through school such as PE lessons.

*'As a child we used to be active, we used to be out on the streets playing football, active, messing about, running around.'*

*'Oh when I were a child we were really active because we used to skip, we used to play rounders with my mum, and skipping, you know football, yeah we were really active when we were kids.'*

In addition to these experiences, other participants also highlighted the importance of parental influence in relation to childhood physical activity. This included parents encouraging them to be active and creating opportunities for them to be active, along with a sense of being part of an active family.

*'Bike rides, we used to cycle for miles, me and me brother, he's a year apart from me me brother so a lot we did together so it was like cycling, then all out so you kick the ball and then you'd all run and hide, just everything like that, walking, swimming, we went swimming every Saturday it was like a routine. Swimming every Saturday.'*

*'what's got me into physical activity has got to be early years and teenage years and my mum saying, go out and play[.....] it was never being indoors, it always just go out and play, yeah. Everybody was out, you know, we were all out playing on our bikes or whatever we were doing.'*

There were important periods of transition in people's lives, such as moving from school to further education or work. Other key transitions included when having a family, or experiencing a bereavement. These key events and transitions influenced participants' activity levels and, in turn, contributed to defining their PA identities - essentially whether they saw themselves as an active person, or a gym person, and so on.

*'And then I probably didn't do anything for a long long time, and I think the reason I started doing anything again was so 12 years ago my dad died quite suddenly, of well bits and pieces but generally just wasn't a fit man, didn't look after himself much [.....] So once I'd obviously recovered from having [my daughter], I wanted to do something for charity, as most people do when you lose someone [...] but I wanted to do something that kind of pushed me somewhere that I wouldn't have normally gone.'*



*'I was very active in my teenage years, and sports, exercise, even through college I was very active, but when I in the early twenties, mid-twenties, you know exercise and all that took a back seat.'*

*'I've always been fit because of things I enjoy doing, which is riding my bike, skating, out and walking in parks and going in the woods.'*

### **Organising Theme - Prioritising Physical Activity**

The majority of participants discussed the benefits of physical activity. However, the extent to which it was prioritised differed between participants. For some, being physically active was a low priority due to more important needs such as securing employment and financial stability. For others, there was the motivation and desire to be active but this often had to compete with other commitments and responsibilities, such as family life. Some participants' physical activity was central to their lives and it was prioritised and scheduled into their lives.

*'You know it is a juggle and you're always mindful that you need to, where do you need to be next? But you know I think it just automatically kicks in as a parent but you do end up being at the bottom of the pecking order and it's about making that time and sometimes exercise is the last thing on my mind.'*

*'Because it has a nice pool and it's got a sauna and steam room and it were just a lot more, I just enjoyed it more, on my membership then I could take [my child] in for free. So yeah it was just a nice, it's the village gym and it's just a nicer gym really. Yeah and 'cos of where I live, it's literally five minutes down the motorway.'*

*'I would never have thought that I would say that I enjoyed [physical activity]. Exercise was always a chore, you know I've had countless gym memberships, I used to hate the thought, it would annoy me throughout the day at work knowing that I had to go to the gym after work, it was a chore, just never felt like I fitted in you know, just generally didn't like it - whereas now because it's in the comfort of my own home and I'm in control...'*

### **Organising Theme - Aspirations**

Participants were asked in interview about their aspirations or hopes for the future, including in relation to physical activity. The answers that people gave were quite varied, and seemed to very much depend on their current circumstances and current levels of activity. For instance, some participants who were currently inactive discussed how they could not aspire to be physically active until they had tackled priorities such as finding employment, having some form of stability, or improving their physical health.

*'But my main goal is trying to get employment, maybe if I get employment I might get into the gym, but yeah, it's really hard getting employment.'*

*'My main goal is to get my health back on track.'*

Some participants had no hopes or aspirations at all. They were very much living one day at a time and not considering what the future might bring for them.

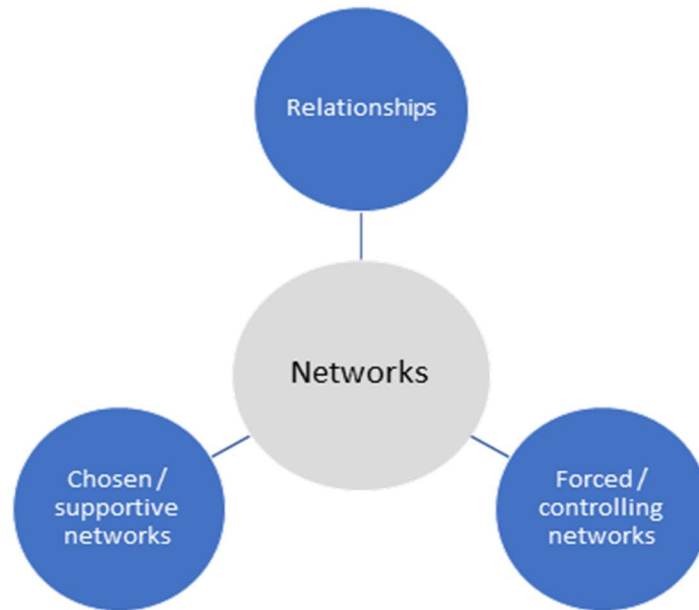
*'My future's very simple compared to the last, I just want to be healthy and happy. Healthy and happy with a roof over my head and that is the three things that I want. I'm not really asking too much I don't think.'*

*'I don't really hope or dream about anything really, I just take one day as it comes you know as it comes.'*

For other participants, who were active or trying to increase their activity levels or fitness, physical activity did form quite a large part of their aspirations.

*'Yeah definitely, just carrying on the gym, I mean I've found, I've struggled a lot over the years with various joint complaints and I've had like sciatica as well and I got really bad through lockdown with that, but I've found kind of things, since I've moved back on it since February I've not had as many problems...'*

Global theme 3: Networks



GLOBAL THEME: NETWORKS	Organising Themes		
	Relationships	Chosen / supportive networks	Forced / controlling networks
Basic themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support network</li> <li>• Dog companionship</li> <li>• Importance of knowing someone</li> <li>• Finding out about PA activity</li> <li>• Feelings of belonging – not being alone in their situation</li> <li>• Feeling safe</li> <li>• Negative impact on relationships – COVID</li> <li>• Positive impact on relationships – COVID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health coach</li> <li>• Organisers</li> <li>• MH professional support</li> <li>• Support of family</li> <li>• Support of dogs</li> <li>• GP intervention</li> <li>• Support during COVID</li> <li>• Encouraging / introducing to PA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MH treatment</li> <li>• Hospital admission</li> <li>• Waiting for help MH)</li> <li>• Job centre – negative / lack of control / fear / lack of understanding</li> <li>• Fear of losing benefits</li> <li>• Lack of control</li> <li>• Lack of support during COVID</li> </ul>

Figure 16: The organising themes related to the Global Theme “Networks”, with table giving the underlying basic themes

This Global Theme is made up of three organising themes: Relationships; *Chosen/ supportive networks*; and *Forced/controlling networks*. It relates to the networks that individuals have and are part of in their lives, and the extent to which these influence decisions, actions and their motivation and capacity to be physically active. These networks are unique to the individual and look different for each person. Some of these networks are considered to be chosen and supportive, while others are perceived as being forced upon them and controlling.

### Organising Theme - Relationships

Participants referred to many different relationships in their life course interviews. Sometimes these were personal relationships, while at other times these were more formal. Personal relationships related to people's families, friends, neighbours and dogs. More formal relationships included professionals working in a variety of capacities, often related to employment, healthcare, and education.

*'I'm alright if I've got my little dog with me, but I still feel down, now. Obviously with everything that's gone on.'*

*'Luckily when I started uni, my daughter's mum had moved back up this area, to [Town Name]. She got in touch with one of my friends and yeah I got my daughter back in my life, which is great.'*

*'and then I got myself a job but then I was working 80 hours a week for them, it were mad, that were really bad and they used to exploit us like they used to pay us on an apprenticeship wage, which was like £2.65 but they used to pay us £2.60 so it was 5p short, they didn't even pay us any holiday'*

Participants' relationships with others were sometimes positive and sometimes challenging or negative. COVID-19 has also impacted on relationships, in both positive and negative ways. As mentioned above, the pandemic and the subsequent social restrictions meant, for some, being able to spend more time with loved ones. Others, however, had very little contact with family and friends during this period of time and, as a result, felt lonely and isolated.

The significance and impact of people's relationships can be better understood in relation to the networks through which they exist, as discussed in the following two Organising Themes.

### Organising Theme - Chosen / supportive networks

In their daily lives, participants were part of different networks and they described the positive influence of some of their support systems. These networks were ones in which participants had chosen to be a part, and they were referred to as being supportive. This included networks which provided them with support in terms of their day-to-day lives, and with aspects of their lives including health and wellbeing. These networks were made up of friends, families, neighbours, and their dogs. Chosen and supportive networks also included people in professional capacities, such as mental health workers, and those who had provided them with support during the COVID-19 pandemic.

*'Yeah, he said, don't worry about it. And he said, if you ever feel like that again, knock on the*



*door. We've got a spare bedroom, don't be frightened on your own. I mean they're lovely.'*  
*'I look back on what I've achieved, where I've come from, what me mum's done, my mum's done an fantastic job, and I just look at it like that instead of looking what I've missed out on, so it's looking what I've missed out on and what I've gained from me mum and how strong I've become through me mum bringing us up and not me dad.'*

*'Obviously I visited my GP who has got me in touch with the Mental Health team.'*

There were also networks that were helpful and supportive of participants' physical activity. These included professionals such as health coaches, along with less formal sources of support and encouragement such physical activity organisers.

*'I think the cycling was actually suggested by a health - you know one of these who think about your health and dieting and so on, 'cos I think it was done through Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council I get help where they ask you questions about your health and she was the one who suggested the cycling.'*

### **Organising Themes - Forced / controlling networks**

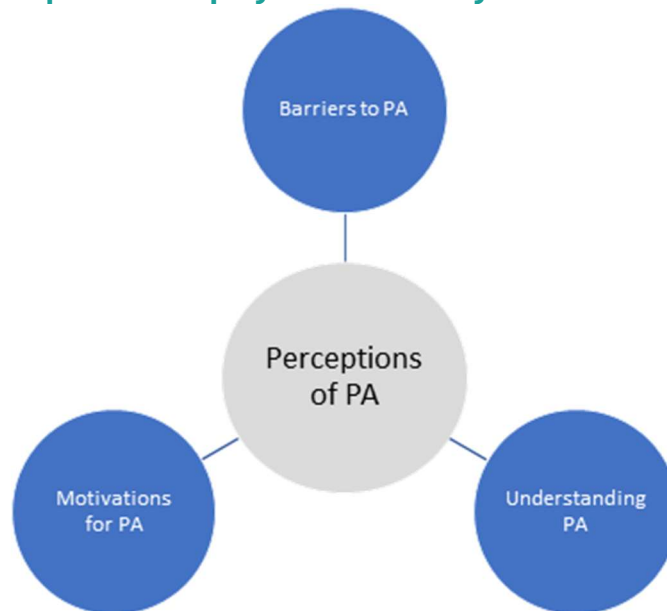
In addition to chosen / supportive networks, there were examples of forced or controlling networks within participants' lives. These were the networks in which people felt they had to participate, and they tended to be negative examples of participants' networks. These networks were perceived by participants as restricting an aspect of their lives in some way. Controlling networks were associated with official - and therefore powerful - organisations. Examples of this in participants' data include enforced healthcare, for example waiting for mental health treatment, and interactions with the JobCentre, which was linked to participants' financial concerns and feeling of instability. This also involved the absence of support, such as during the COVID-19 period.

*'I said, it was just the fact walking in and I mean I hate even going to see work coach. I walk in Job Centre and I'm a nervous wreck.'*

*'Hospital when they put you on drugs, on medication sorry, there was a gym outside the unit thing but I never went to it'*

*'I don't agree with them tablets I were on, I think a better way to get out of my problems is talking.'*

## Global theme 4: Perceptions of physical activity



GLOBAL THEME: PERCEPTIONS OF PA	Organising Themes		
	Motivations for PA	Barriers to PA	Understanding PA
Basic themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Influence of MH on PA</li> <li>• Influence of PH on PA</li> <li>• Motivation challenges</li> <li>• Motivation to improve</li> <li>• Technology motivates</li> <li>• Children as motivation</li> <li>• Bereavement prompts PA</li> <li>• Encouragement from others</li> <li>• Inclusivity – easy to access</li> <li>• Positive impact on PA – COVID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PA financial restrictions</li> <li>• Employment prevents PA</li> <li>• Fear of being judged</li> <li>• Negative impact on PA – COVID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confidence</li> <li>• PA with support</li> <li>• No discussion with GP about PA</li> <li>• Social aspect of PA</li> <li>• Dogs and PA</li> <li>• Walking</li> <li>• Benefits of running</li> <li>• Active at home</li> <li>• Valuing PA / what counts</li> </ul>

Figure 17: The organising themes related to the Global Theme “Perceptions of Physical Activity (PA)”, with table giving the underlying basic themes

This Global Theme is made up of three organising themes: Barriers to physical activity; Motivations for physical activity; and Understanding physical activity.

This Global Theme addresses the perceptions of what physical activity means for participants. It comprises different aspects including an understanding of what physical activity is and what it means at an individual level. The theme also addresses individuals' motivations to be physically active, along with the barriers that can prevent people from being physically active.

### Organising Theme - Motivations for physical activity

Participants expressed different motivations for being physically active. Motivation for physical activity came from different sources, including:

- motivation to improve health or fitness
- being motivated by technology (such as a step counter on a watch)
- being motivated by children
- being motivated following a bereavement
- wanting to meet people
- being encouraged by others
- having opportunities that are easy to access
- and, for some, the circumstances around COVID-19 motivated them to be more active.

'I decided to treat myself to an Apple watch and I'm obsessed with like stats and things like that and if I've got a watch, it was the same when I had the Fitbit to an extent, it tells me I've got these things to do today, I've got to do them and I find it really difficult to not do them.'

'This is another massive boost in my life as well. My daughter is another reason like, you know to get well, to be healthy, and also set an example for her as well.'

'So getting more active, that's what I want out of it. I want to get more active and be able to like meet new people and not be shy.'

### Organising Theme - Barriers to physical activity

Participants discussed some of the barriers that prevent them from being as physically active as they might like to be. Barriers to being physically active included financial restrictions, being in employment, fear of judgement, mental health, and the impact of COVID-19.

'Things like, I wanted to start going back to the leisure centre and going swimming again, but with the Bees card it's always busy on the free sessions and I just can't deal with it at the moment.'

'But things like that do, for people on benefits it is expensive, you know. It's an expenditure that we don't prepare, we don't have extra budget for in our income. And even though it might be £10 a month, that £10 a month still you know is not budgeted for people on benefits.'

'I got a job and then I couldn't go back to the cycling because I think they were mainly in the morning like 11ish or 12ish. And but 'cos I got a job I couldn't go back to the cycling but once my job had finished I tried to go back but there was a fixed time, I turned up on that time and

there was nobody there and when I tried to find out about it apparently you have to pay for it now.'

'I ended up going to physiotherapy 'cos of me feet, and they said you need to stop sports now, you're going to be crippled by the time you're 40 if you don't stop. So I had to give up.'

'I did a lot of travelling, so that's hard, when you're away sometimes you can't do like a regular, you know if you know it's a class that you might go to on a certain time each week, it's difficult to get into things like that 'cos you might not be around at the same time every week.'

### Organising Theme - Understanding Physical Activity

This Organising Theme relates to how participants appear to interpret and understand physical activity. Each participant had a unique perspective of physical activity. This included what they felt 'counted' as physical activity and how much value they thought was placed on particular physical activities. For some, physical activity involved participating in vigorous, organised activities, while for others it involved being active around the home. There were examples of participants who were active within their day-to-day life, such as walking to the shops and doing housework. However, because they were not taking part in organised activities, they did not see themselves as being physically active.

'I don't think of keeping active and fit as a general thing that I should do, do you know what I mean? It's like I mean when I was younger I'd do sports and that, I'd play squash and that, that was just it wasn't because I were trying to keep fit, it was because I just wanted to play squash or play football, I just wanted to do that. I've never been a type of person that has to regimentally keep fit, do you know what I mean?'

Participants also discussed the aspects of physical activity that they enjoyed and the things that helped them to be active. This included enjoying being physically active with their family and their dogs. It also included social aspects of group physical activity, and the benefits experienced from walk and/or running.

'I've got a couple of friends who quite often come with me [...] and also a friend of my husband who is a massive walker and knows the hills round here like the back of his hand, so he's generally our guide. I've found places that I didn't know existed, so yeah so it's kind of with family but with a couple of friends.'

'I had a struggle to get out before. Now I'm going out with the dog I've got a reason to be going out and I've given myself that reason to go out, and I feel a bit more comfortable with my dog as well.'

'...there's quite a few girls on my street so we kind of set up like a little Friday night walk, and what we used to do is just go for a walk and that were like our Friday night out, we'd take pictures saying Friday night out down [our area] and things.'

'Parkrun will definitely be on the cards because it's just that I love the feeling of it you know, the drive there, the parking up, the walking down, being around everybody and just the different people that you see, the variety of people, the young children that do it, people that are doing it with their dogs, through to some you know really old people that you know if I can be doing



that when I'm in my seventies you know I'll be very happy, so I think it's a great thing and we'll definitely be back to that.'

However, there were also aspects of people's relationships with physical activity which were more negative. These included participant views that they could not be physically active without support, feeling of low confidence around being physically active, and the lack of discussion about physical activity with health professionals such as GPs.

'You know I can get myself to the gym but if the help isn't available that I need, then I don't think I'll be going there after one. I'll probably get myself there a couple of times, but then after that I'd be lacking the confidence to go there. But if the help that I needed and the information that I needed was being given to me you know, and was available for me as and when I needed it or as and when I want it, I would be more likely to attend'

'Nobody mentioned about exercise or anything, to be fair I've been pretty not too bad weight wise, but if I went now they'd probably mention it.'

### 3.5 Key learning points from the life course evaluation

There are eight key learning points from the TaAF life course evaluation findings. These are listed below, and also feature in a short animation and infographic. It is our hope that these resources support and inspire further conversations about the relationships between people's lives and physical activity, and what this means for the work of Together an Active Future.

**1) Mental and physical health can sometimes act as motivators to be physically active. However, people also told us how ill health can get in the way of being active.**

This included addiction, anxiety, depression, injuries and illnesses.

**2) Difficult life events and traumatic experiences can also prevent people from being physically active. When life is challenging and people are experiencing a transition, physical activity is often not a priority.**

Challenges and transitions included bereavement and grieving, family difficulties, financial struggles and domestic abuse.

**3) Everyone we spoke with had been active in childhood.**

This often changed as people began juggling family and work commitments.

**4) People who described themselves as physically active adults had often been encouraged to be active as a child.**

In these examples, key factors included parental influence and being from an active family.

**5) Having supportive networks and relationships is important for people’s physical activity levels. People often became involved with a physical activity through these supportive networks, and encouragement from others was very important.**

These networks and relationships involved family members, friends, physical activity organisers, healthcare professionals, and dogs.

**6) Some people’s lives included examples of forced or controlling networks. These tended to be negative examples of networks, and were perceived to restrict an aspect of life in some way.**

Forced or controlling networks were often associated with powerful organisations, and included experiences of enforced health care and involvement in the JobCentre.

**7) For some people, physical activity was about having time for themselves, while for others the social aspect was important.**

This often included having fun and not feeling alone.

**8) Feeling safe and that they belonged led to people continuing their involvement in physical activity.**

This included feeling welcome and not being judged.

### 3.6 The final action learning meeting: reflections and actions

The final Action Learning Meeting was held online on Monday 18th October 2021. Members of both the TaAF Core and Wider teams attended this meeting. The cross-case analysis and key findings were presented (by SV and CS), followed by a facilitated discussion focusing on the key learning. In line with an action learning approach, this led to the development of a series of actions for those who attended and who will be continuing to work on the TaAF programme over the next few years. Notes and actions were shared with all attendees following the event. Discussions and the emerging actions highlighted the importance to TaAF of the following key learning:

- Life events and the concept of different transition points within people’s lives were of particular interest to the TaAF team, including how to ensure people are encouraged and supported to be physically active at these times;
- The concept of people living their lives through participation in different networks was of interest to the TaAF team. In particular, attendees thought it could be useful to consider different types of networks in their future work (whether these are chosen and supportive, or forced and controlling), including where particular organisations may sit within this;
- The choice of language when conducting research about people’s physical activity was considered to be important. The group discussed the barriers created by the term ‘physical

activity’, and Sport England’s recent shift to use the alternative term ‘movement’. It was agreed that the choice of language needs to be consistent, as it can have a significant impact on what different stakeholders think ‘counts as’ or value as physical activity;

- Those in attendance at this final action learning meeting thanked the evaluation team for the opportunity to hear about, discuss and reflect on the learning from the life course evaluation. The action learning approach has been valued by and has benefitted the TaAF Core and Wider teams. Feedback received also acknowledged the importance of sharing the data analysis approaches used, making it clear how themes and key findings had been developed in a systematic and robust way.

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## 5.0 Evaluation Strand 3: Quantitative strand

### 5.1 Introduction, Aims and Objectives

The importance of the assessment of an intervention is well established, including physical fitness and health-related fitness (e.g. Lamb et al., 1988). Assessment allows us to obtain a cross-sectional view of ‘where we are now’ or a more longitudinal view of ‘how things have changed’ from some baseline measurement. In the present context, physical fitness assessment of the population would provide a view of the Pennine Lancashire region’s fitness levels, while assessment prior to and following a physical activity intervention would provide some information as to whether the intervention was successful (however success was defined). Both of the above examples would allow better understanding of what works, what initiatives should attract more funding, and, essentially, what can help improve the region’s health.

The aim of the quantitative strand, therefore, was to enable a more objective evaluation of physical and mental fitness of the Pennine Lancashire residents, following various Local Authorities’ interventions, assisting the creation of a more holistic picture of the fitness levels in the region. The means to achieve this relied on three parts, a) to develop a battery of physical tests to assess functional ability and questionnaires to assess physical activity levels, b) train volunteers to take reliable functional ability measurements and use the standardised questionnaires to obtain quantitative data from Pennine residents to assess the impact of the physical activity and other initiatives implemented by the local partners, and c) prepare an online database where the data obtained could be entered and used by all partners, as well as TaAF, to obtain a more general picture of the region’s physical and mental wellbeing and impact of TaAF projects.

### 5.2 Methods

Initial discussions around the best way to achieve the above were held with TaAF and various options were identified. One was the more conventional approach, as described in the proposal, where workshops would be organised and the volunteers would receive education on the tests and what they measure, as well as training on conducting the tests, data collection and recording. The second, more novel, option was to develop an app that could be used to either have the tests ‘on’ it, so the volunteer could use the app for a reminder of the tests, for measurement data entry, or a possible additional option to select the relevant aspects needed (e.g. the mental wellbeing questionnaire only, or the physical tests, or a combination of options etc) to allow efficient testing with the greatest relevance to the initiative. Regardless of the option, videos of the tests, conversion of the questionnaires to online and development of a database had to happen.

Following the pandemic outbreak, which meant that certain restrictions were in place (e.g. no face-to-face training or testing, unclear of the timeline for 'return to normality', locality projects pushed back / not happening at all), a different approach was required. Thus, further discussions with the TaAF core team, resulted in a somewhat different approach in that the assessment would target the end-users directly, in terms of them being enabled to self-assess. This would be achieved by the creation of the short clips showing how to complete the physical tests and 'conversion' of paper-based questionnaires to an online format, allowing wider dissemination and ease of collecting data, while maintaining the resources available, thus increasing sustainability.

After extensive consideration of various tests and questionnaires, it was deemed that the best option of physical tests is the short physical performance battery (SPPB) (Guralnik et al., 1994). SPPB covers three main physical fitness areas (balance, walking speed, leg strength), provides a composite score as well as enabling utilisation of the individual scores from two out of the three tests for comparison with to population norms for the composite as well as the individual test scores. A crucial advantage of the test is the ability to conduct it with minimal equipment (i.e. needing only a mobile phone, a chair and a tape measure). With regards to the questionnaires, the ones chosen for use were the General Practice Physical Activity Questionnaire (GPPAQ, Department of Health, 2013), used widely in NHS general practice to provide a simple physical activity index for ages 16-74 years of age; the Neighbourhood Environment Walkability Scale (NEWS) (Cerin et al., 2006), providing a measure of perceived neighbourhood attributes hypothesised to influence physical activity (e.g. proximity of recreation facilities, walking/cycling facilities); and the International Fitness Scale (IFIS) (Ortega FB et al. 2011), providing a very quick and simple self-assessment of physical fitness. These questionnaires did not require a license and it was deemed they would allow TaAF to collect all the relevant information as well as enable comparisons with previous literature and norms.

For the physical tests, a set of instructions were developed and feedback obtained on their clarity, comprehension and ease of use. Following the feedback on the written instructions, three separate videos were developed detailing how each test could be run, and feedback was obtained again on clarity, with any issues addressed and the videos updated. The full set of instructions, along with any norms are available are in Appendix 2.

For the questionnaires, the published versions were 'converted' to online using a freely available survey tool (SurveyMonkey). The initial surveys were disseminated to different TaAF groups for feedback on ease of use, comprehension, clarity and design, with some aspects such as initial wording or introduction (not affecting the actual validated questionnaires) amended as result of the consultation.

The database was created on Microsoft Excel, as discussed confirmed it was the application that

most people would be familiar with, while the wide range of platforms compatible with this format (e.g. various Open Office providers, Google documents etc; data protection needs to be assessed for all platforms) means it can be used widely with little restriction to format. The database requires an identification code made up of the person’s date of birth (DOB) and the first 5 digits of postcode, for identification purposes for repeat testing, as well as height and weight measurements. Subsequently, the individual test scores can be entered and the SPPB scores can be calculated, while there are respective columns (with dropdown menus) for recording the scores from the questionnaires.

Links to the video clips, surveys and database can be found in Section 5.3.

### 5.3 Delivered materials

The table below contains links to each one of the relevant items described above, along with any necessary comments.

Item	Link	Comments
Balance video	<a href="https://bit.ly/3DOdTsx">bit.ly/3DOdTsx</a>	All videos have been saved on Google Drive ( <a href="https://www.google.com/intl/en-GB/drive/">https://www.google.com/intl/en-GB/drive/</a> ). Click ‘Go to Drive’, enter the email ( <a href="mailto:taafquant2020@gmail.com">taafquant2020@gmail.com</a> ) as username and TaAF2020 as password, to access the videos.
4m walking speed video	<a href="https://bit.ly/2YN3huG">bit.ly/2YN3huG</a>	
5 sit-to-stand video	<a href="https://bit.ly/3AlyEUr">bit.ly/3AlyEUr</a>	
GPPAQ*	<a href="https://bit.ly/3mYvl6Q">bit.ly/3mYvl6Q</a>	<b>Login details</b> for the google account linked to the SurveyMonkey account: Gmail account: email - <a href="mailto:taafquant2020@gmail.com">taafquant2020@gmail.com</a> / password - TaAF2020 Survey Monkey: Username - <a href="mailto:taafquant2020@gmail.com">taafquant2020@gmail.com</a> / Password - QuantTaAF  *An online calculator for the GPPAQ exists here - <a href="https://bit.ly/3aL1Tvb">bit.ly/3aL1Tvb</a>
NEWS	<a href="https://bit.ly/30pmCmp">bit.ly/30pmCmp</a>	
IFIS	<a href="https://bit.ly/3llwJul">bit.ly/3llwJul</a>	
Database	<a href="https://bit.ly/3vq38tu">bit.ly/3vq38tu</a>	The Excel file has been saved on Google Drive ( <a href="https://www.google.com/intl/en-GB/drive/">https://www.google.com/intl/en-GB/drive/</a> ). Click ‘Go to Drive’, enter the email ( <a href="mailto:taafquant2020@gmail.com">taafquant2020@gmail.com</a> ) as username and TaAF2020 as password, to access it.

The validation of the SPPB test included younger adults as well as older adults. Nevertheless, the test is primarily designed for and applied to older individuals. Although norms are presented for younger ages (as young as 40 years) it is clear to see that there appears to be a ‘ceiling



effect' (ie little change in scores) until the later ages, so it may be difficult to see changes in younger, fitter populations. For those populations, the IFIS (for youth) and the GPPAQ (for all other populations) will provide a better estimate of physical fitness.

The questionnaires were developed on SurveyMonkey for ease of access, use, download and administrative rights, as the surveys are to be managed by TaAF rather than Lancaster University. The downside of that is that the free version, only allows dissemination but not downloading of the results (although online analysis is possible). Currently, there is a small registration cost for downloading the results, with no minimum registration time stipulated. The survey can be exported, however, if some other platform is to be used.

The database includes six worksheets; the main one, where all the scores are to be recorded on (and calculations of waist circumference/height ratio, total balance score and SPPB scores are included), four more that assist/remind of the scoring for each test, and the final one which includes the options for the drop-down menus for Sex, GPPAQ score and IFIS score on the main worksheet. For simplicity, only 30 participants rows in the main sheet have been filled with the formulae and only 1 testing occasion has been included. The rows can be dragged down and the columns can be copied and pasted, in order to achieve the required number of participants and required number of re-tests.

Finally, consideration was given to other tests or tests aspects. These are briefly presented below, along with the reasons for not using them.

*Flexibility* (e.g. back scratch, chair / sit and reach) - although useful for functional and mobility limitations, if there is no helper to assist and the measurement is relying on using the camera afterwards, the test can become complicated.

*Gait speed distance* - studies have used several different distances (Graham et al., 2008) but 4m was chosen as a distance that has been used by most studies and it is not too long to safely conduct indoors.

*Handgrip strength* - handgrip strength is a very good indicator of overall physical wellbeing, with norms across the life span (Dodds et al., 2014). However, the requirement of a specialised equipment prohibits its use.

Overall, it was deemed that the presented battery of tests (physical and questionnaires) presents the easiest to use, inexpensive, simple but robust battery of tests that can be scaled up, if needed.

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## Appendix 1 -Recommendations based on Findings from Rounds 1, 2 and 3 of Study 1.

RECOMMENDATIONS	FRAMEWORK'S MAIN AREAS WITH THE FACTORS THIS STRATEGY COULD ADDRESS		
	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3
<p><b>Identify and prepare Champions:</b> explore identifying potential champions who could be prepared on how they can do the following: increase understanding of the development of TaAF; promote the evidence strength and quality that supports TaAF; promote the advantage of TaAF over other programmes; support, market and drive the implementation of TaAF</p>	<p><b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Evidence Strength &amp; Quality <b>Process</b> Opinion Leaders, Formally Appointed Implementation Leaders, Champions <b>Characteristics of Individuals</b> Individual Stage of Change</p>	<p><b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Intervention Source, Evidence Strength &amp; Quality, Relative Advantage <b>Outer Setting</b> Peer Pressure <b>Inner Setting</b> Leadership Engagement <b>Characteristics of Individuals</b> Knowledge &amp; Beliefs about the intervention, Individual Stage of Change <b>Process</b> Engaging, Champions</p>	<p><b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Intervention Source, Evidence Strength &amp; Quality, Relative Advantage <b>Outer Setting</b> Peer Pressure <b>Inner Setting</b> Leadership Engagement <b>Characteristics of Individuals</b> Knowledge &amp; Beliefs about the intervention, Individual Stage of Change <b>Process</b> Opinion Leaders, Formally Appointed Implementation Leaders, Champions</p>
<p><b>Alter incentive/allowance structures:</b> look to incentivise the adoption and implementation of TaAF; explore if there is any potential for incentives and allowances from external bodies relating to TaAF to be altered to help facilitate implementation; look at altering incentives and allowance structures to facilitate a positive implementation climate;</p>	<p><b>Outer Setting</b> Peer Pressure, External Policies &amp; Incentives <b>Inner Setting</b> Implementation Climate, Relative Priority, Organisational Incentives &amp; Rewards</p>	<p><b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Cost <b>Outer Setting</b> Peer Pressure, External Policies &amp; Incentives <b>Inner Setting</b> Implementation Climate, Relative Priority, Organisational Incentives &amp; Rewards</p>	<p><b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Cost <b>Outer Setting</b> Peer Pressure, External Policies &amp; Incentives <b>Inner Setting</b> Implementation Climate, Relative Priority, Organisational Incentives &amp; Rewards</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS	FRAMEWORK'S MAIN AREAS WITH THE FACTORS THIS STRATEGY COULD ADDRESS		
	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3
explore how their teams and organisations will offer incentives and rewards for TaAF work and consider whether changes could be made to facilitate TaAF.			
<b>Assess for readiness and identify barriers and facilitators:</b> explore the current environment for implementation of TaAF, in particular exploring what individuals perceive as barriers and facilitators and helping them overcome obstacles; assess various aspects of the organisation(s) and determine its degree of readiness to implement, barriers that may hinder implementation, and strengths that can be used in the implementation effort.	<b>Inner Setting</b> Implementation Climate, Readiness for Implementation	<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Triability <b>Inner Setting</b> Structural Characteristics, Implementation Climate, Readiness for Implementation <b>Process</b> Planning, Executing.	<b>Inner Setting</b> Structural Characteristics, Implementation Climate, Readiness for Implementation <b>Process</b> Planning, Executing.
<b>Build a coalition:</b> recruit and cultivate relationships with partners in the implementation effort of TaAF eg. around a single issue or an urgent issue in order to influence something such as public policy. Reasons for forming a coalition might include pooling resources,		<b>Outer Setting</b> External Policies & Incentives <b>Inner Setting</b> Networks & Communications, Readiness for Implementation <b>Characteristics of Individuals</b> Individual Identification with the Organisation <b>Process</b> External Change Agents	<b>Outer Setting</b> External Policies & Incentives <b>Inner Setting</b> Readiness for Implementation <b>Characteristics of Individuals</b> Individual Identification with the Organisation <b>Process</b> External Change Agents

RECOMMENDATIONS	FRAMEWORK'S MAIN AREAS WITH THE FACTORS THIS STRATEGY COULD ADDRESS		
	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3
or developing political clout.			
<b>Conduct educational meetings:</b> consider holding educational meetings to gain a deeper understanding of TaAF and its development, to understand its evidence strength and ensure those who need to know about this have access to the information.	<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Intervention Source, Evidence Strength & Quality	<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Intervention Source, Evidence Strength & Quality <b>Inner Setting</b> Access to Knowledge & Information	<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Intervention Source, Evidence Strength & Quality <b>Inner Setting</b> Access to Knowledge & Information <b>Characteristics of Individuals</b> Knowledge and Beliefs about the Intervention
<b>Develop a formal implementation blueprint:</b> look at creating a formal document which outlines TaAF in a clear way to help the team members and external bodies navigate the complexities. The implementation blueprint could include aims and purpose of the implementation, scope of the change, timeframe and milestones and progress measures. This plan would need to be updated over time.	<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Complexity	<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Complexity <b>Inner Setting</b> Goals & Feedback <b>Process</b> Planning	<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Complexity <b>Inner Setting</b> Goals & Feedback <b>Process</b> Planning, Formally Appointed Implementation Leaders
<b>Promote adaptability:</b> explore how the elements of TaAF, including TaAF's design and packaging might be adapted for their needs and then share this. The Core	<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Design Quality & Packaging <b>Inner Setting</b> (Compatibility)	<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> (Adaptability, Complexity, Design Quality & Packaging) <b>Inner Setting</b> Compatibility	<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> (Complexity, Design Quality & Packaging) <b>Inner Setting</b> Compatibility

RECOMMENDATIONS	FRAMEWORK'S MAIN AREAS WITH THE FACTORS THIS STRATEGY COULD ADDRESS		
	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3
Team could promote the adaptability of TaAF and how it can be compatible with existing traditions, workflows and norms amongst the team, and any bodies with whom they are networked.			
<b>Conduct local consensus discussions:</b> The teams could consider opening up discussions in the team about this to explore it further and gain consensus on the priority of TaAF. The Core Team could hold discussions about the compatibility of TaAF to existing workflows and norms. This could help gain a consensus on any changes that could help facilitate the compatibility of TaAF. The Wider Team could hold discussions about individual identification with the TaAF team and connected organisations. This could help gain a consensus on identification with TaAF.	<b>Inner Setting</b> Relative Priority <b>Characteristics of Individuals</b> Individual Identification with the Organisation	<b>Inner Setting</b> Compatibility, Relative Priority <b>Characteristics of Individuals</b> Individual Identification with the Organisation	<b>Inner Setting</b> Tension for Change, Compatibility, Relative Priority <b>Characteristics of Individuals</b> Individual Identification with the Organisation
<b>Access new funding:</b> The Core and Wider Teams could explore additional, new funding opportunities to support the costs of TaAF.	<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Cost	<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Cost <b>Inner Setting</b> Organisational Incentives & Rewards, Available Resources	<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Cost <b>Inner Setting</b> Organisational Incentives & Rewards
<b>Conduct ongoing</b>	<b>Characteristics of</b>	<b>Characteristics of</b>	<b>Characteristics of</b>



RECOMMENDATIONS	FRAMEWORK'S MAIN AREAS WITH THE FACTORS THIS STRATEGY COULD ADDRESS		
	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3
<b>training, make training dynamic and provide ongoing consultation:</b> To create positive self-efficacy and increase confidence in their ability to execute the aims of the TaAF, offering ongoing dynamic training and consultation with team members is recommended.	<b>Individuals</b> Self-Efficacy, Individual Stage of Change	<b>Individuals</b> Self-efficacy	<b>Individuals</b> Self-efficacy
<b>Purposely re-examine the implementation:</b> re-examine how they aim to implement TaAF and what could be done to facilitate the execution of this.,	<b>Process</b> Executing	<b>Process</b> Executing	<b>Process</b> Executing
<b>Audit and provide feedback:</b> collect and summarise performance data over a specified time period and use it to monitor, evaluate and modify TaAF	<b>Process</b> Reflecting and Evaluating	<b>Inner Setting</b> Goals & Feedback	<b>Inner Setting</b> Goals & Feedback <b>Process</b> Reflecting & Evaluating
<b>Conduct cyclical small tests of change:</b> look at ways of documenting and reviewing changes at regular time points to see how they can test, learn and change where needed.	<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Triability	<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Triability	

RECOMMENDATIONS	FRAMEWORK'S MAIN AREAS WITH THE FACTORS THIS STRATEGY COULD ADDRESS		
	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3
<b>Develop educational materials:</b> The Teams could develop and format manuals, toolkits and other supporting materials to explain TaAF		<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Design Quality & Packaging <b>Inner Setting</b> Access to Knowledge & Information	<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Design Quality & Packaging <b>Inner Setting</b> Access to Knowledge & Information
<b>Involve executive boards:</b> The Teams could involve existing governing structures in the implementation effort, including the review of data on the implementation process.		<b>Inner Setting</b> Leadership Engagement <b>Process</b> External Change Agents	<b>Inner Setting</b> Leadership Engagement <b>Process</b> External Change Agents
<b>Make training dynamic:</b> Both the Teams could consider offering ongoing dynamic training with team members for them to feel confident in progressing towards delivering TaAF. To create positive self-efficacy amongst the Wider Team, and increase confidence in their ability to execute the aims of the TaAF, they could offer ongoing dynamic training and consultation with team members.		<b>Characteristics of Individuals</b> Self-efficacy, Individual Stage of Change	<b>Characteristics of Individuals</b> Self-efficacy, Individual Stage of Change
<b>Change physical structure and equipment:</b> The Teams could evaluate current configurations and adapt as needed the physical structure and/or		<b>Inner Setting</b> Structural Characteristics, Available Resources	<b>Inner Setting</b> Structural Characteristic

RECOMMENDATIONS	FRAMEWORK'S MAIN AREAS WITH THE FACTORS THIS STRATEGY COULD ADDRESS		
	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3
equipment to best accommodate TaAF.			
<b>Develop and implement tools for quality monitoring:</b> explore what is available or could be made available to monitor the implementation of TaAF alongside monitoring quality.	<b>Process</b> Reflecting and Evaluating		<b>Process</b> Reflecting & Evaluating
<b>Obtain and use population and family feedback:</b> discuss engagement plans and explore gathering feedback from the target population to facilitate understanding of needs.	<b>Outer Setting</b> Population Needs & Resources		
<b>Conduct local needs assessment:</b> conduct and analyse data related to the need for TaAF and then use this to explore the advantage of TaAF		<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Relative Advantage	<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Relative Advantage <b>Inner Setting</b> Tension for Change
<b>Inform local opinion leaders:</b> inform providers identified by colleagues as opinion leaders for TaAF in the hope they will influence the adoption of TaAF		<b>Process</b> Champions	<b>Process</b> Opinion Leaders, Champions

RECOMMENDATIONS	FRAMEWORK'S MAIN AREAS WITH THE FACTORS THIS STRATEGY COULD ADDRESS		
	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3
<b>Promote network weaving:</b> identify and build on existing high-quality working relationships and networks within and outside the team to promote information sharing, collaborative problem solving and a shared vision/goal related to implementing TaAF.		<b>Inner Setting</b> Networks & Communications	
<b>Involve population and family members:</b> engage or include the population and families in the implementation effort.		<b>Process Engaging</b>	
<b>Intervene with patients/consumers to enhance uptake &amp; adherence:</b> develop strategies with population to encourage and problem solve around adherence.		<b>Process Engaging</b>	
<b>Capture and share local knowledge:</b> capture local knowledge from implementation sites on how implementers are making TaAF work in their setting and then share it with other sites.		<b>Intervention Characteristics</b> Adaptability	



## Appendix 2 - Instructions for Quantitative Measurements

Gender:

Date of birth:

The first 5 characters of your postcode:

### Anthropometric Measures

Height [Measurement technique adapted from a validated wall measure, which for this context is typically more accurate than self-reporting alone (Gordon et al., 2013).]

You will need:

a non-stretchable tape measure

a flat and empty wall

an object with a right-angle such as a book or DVD case

self-adhesive note (post-it)

a pencil

Please remove shoes and socks prior to measuring height.

Stand upright on a hard-uncarpeted floor against a wall.

Place self-adhesive paper at approximate head height (so as to avoid marking the wall).

Using the right-angle object, place the long edge level against the wall so no gap is between the object and the wall.

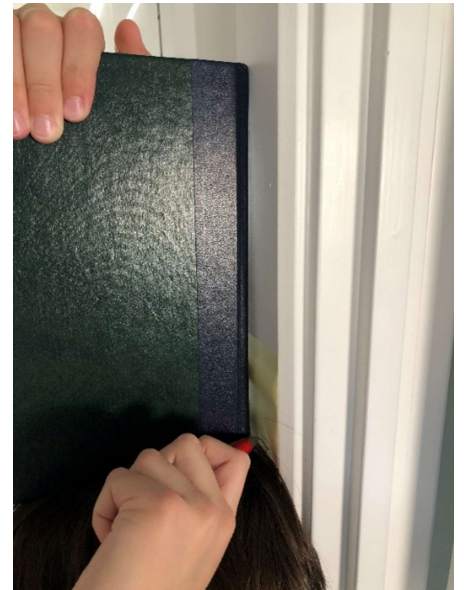
Lower it to rest gently on the top of your head, breath in and out deeply.

Mark the bottom of the object on the post-it note with a pencil.

Measure the distance from the floor to the mark on the post-it note. Write down your height to the nearest 0.5 cm.

Repeat if you think you can do it better the second time.

If you are not able to measure your height directly, please provide an estimate of your height.



### Weight

You will need:

Bathroom scales

Please weigh yourself first thing in the morning before eating breakfast.

Place the scales on a hard level surface, rather than on carpet.

Stand on the scales, wearing underwear only or minimal lightweight clothing (shorts and a light t-shirt) with socks and shoes removed.

Write down your weight to the nearest 0.1kg.

Repeat if you think you can do it better the second time.

If you are not able to measure your weight directly please provide an estimate of your weight.

The Ashwell ® chart below provides an index of health risk for obesity (Ashwell, 1995).

Waist Circumference [The use of waist circumference will allow waist to height ratio to be used, which is a better predictor of body fat% and distribution than BMI (Swainson et al., 2017).]

You will need:

A non-stretchable tape measure

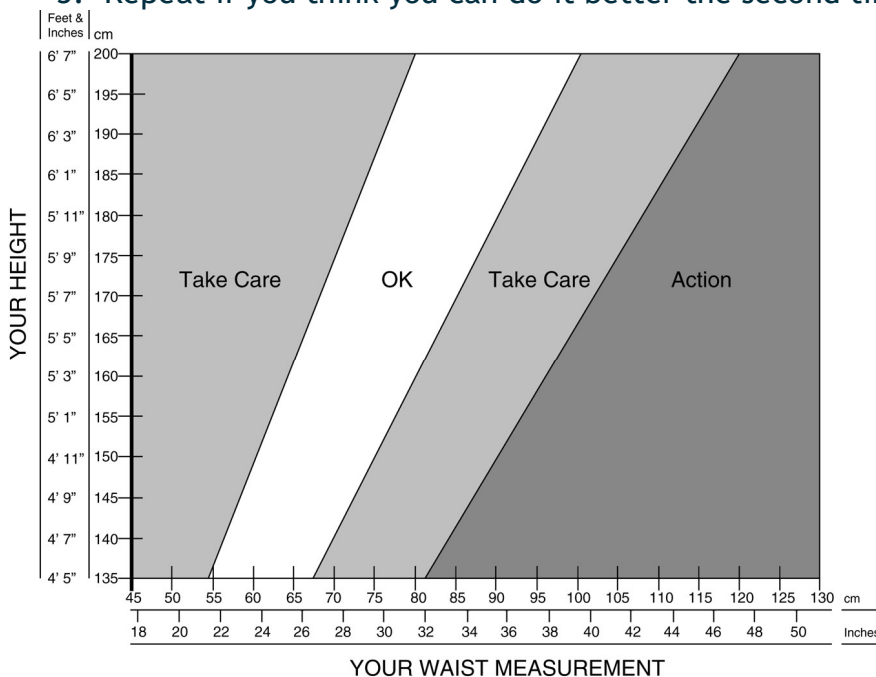
Water based ink pen

In order to get an accurate circumference please measure on bare skin.

To find the point where you will measure your waist locate the highest point of the bony section of your hip, using the pen draw a line at this point on both your right and left sides.

Now locate the lowest rib on each side and using the pen draw another line.

1. Measure the distance between these two lines and mark the point halfway between the two.
2. Wrap the tape around your waist, lining it up with the middle line on each side, record the circumference to the closest 0.1cm.
3. Repeat if you think you can do it better the second time.



Source: Ashwell 1996-2005

Waist circumference-to-height ratio value above 0.5 indicates increased Coronary Heart Disease deaths and all-cause mortality risk. For the UK, values above 0.6 indicate substantially increased risk (Ashwell, 2005). If you do obtain such values, it is recommended that you visit

your GP to verify the findings (or advise a participant to do so if you are measuring clients).

### Functional health assessment tests

Test Battery Outline [a fuller set of instructions, if required, is available at [bit.ly/2YWAAvd](http://bit.ly/2YWAAvd)] We are using the Short Physical Performance Battery (SPPB) which has been developed particularly for use in an older population (Guralnik et al., 1994). The overall scoring system has been validated as a risk factor for all-cause mortality (Pavasini et al., 2016) as well as a risk factor for hospital admission and disability (Guralnik et al., 1995).

The battery consists of three individual tests, a balance test, a walking speed test and a sit-to-stand test. Instructions on how to execute each test appear below. Norms, where available, for each test as well as for the overall SPPB scores, are presented after each test and at the end for the SPPB.

#### Balance Test

There are 3 parts to this test, each lasting up to 10 seconds each. If you are concerned about your balance, complete this test near a wall or with a stable chair that you can easily reach. You can complete the test wearing comfortable shoes or without shoes, as long as you do it the same way every time (i.e. with or without shoes).


You will need



- A flat hard bit of ground free of trip or slip hazards.
- Stopwatch (smartphone or stopwatch).

If assistance is required, use a handrail or furniture whilst you get into position. Once you are ready and in position, let go of any support and start the stopwatch.

The test is finished if you have to move your feet or reach out for support. However, you may bend your knees and use your arms to maintain balance without moving your feet. Stop after 10 seconds have elapsed.

If successful, move onto the next test in order. Repeat if you think you can do it better the second time. If unsuccessful at any of them, go to the walking speed test.

<p><i>Test 1: feet side-by-side</i></p>	<p>Place your feet side-by-side, so as to have them touching one another</p>	
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<p><i>Test 2: Semi-Tandem</i></p>	<p>You must now place your feet parallel and heel-to-toe.</p>	
<p><i>Test 3: Tandem</i></p>	<p>Feet placement is now heel-to-toe in a straight line</p>	

**Scoring**

<b>Test 1: feet side-by-side</b>		
Successful		1 point
Unsuccessful (if attempted but not completed, record how long was completed):		0 points
Unsuccessful (not attempted)		0 points
<b>Test 2: Semi-Tandem</b>		
Successful		1 point
Unsuccessful (if attempted but not completed, record how long was completed):		0 points
Unsuccessful (not attempted)		0 points
<b>Test 3: Tandem</b>		
Successful		1 point
Unsuccessful (if attempted but not completed, record how long was completed):		0 points
Unsuccessful (not attempted)		0 points

**4m Walking speed test**

You will need

- A tape measure to measure 4m on the floor
- A clear space, more than 4m long - e.g. the hall of your home
- Two 30cm pieces of tape, e.g. masking tape
- A stopwatch or a video camera (e.g. from a phone)

Before starting, measure 4m on the floor and place the pieces of tape to mark each end of the distance. The end line should have sufficient space afterwards for you to be able to walk past the line.

If you require any walking aids, use them but make a note.

Stand at one line (it does not matter which one) with both feet touching it but not extending beyond it. Start walking at a comfortable, normal walking speed. Imagine how you would normally walk in a relaxed mood or to go to the shops. Aim to keep walking until you are past the finish line before stopping.

Start the stopwatch the instant you cross the starting line and stop it the instant you cross the finish line. Write down the time.

If you can't time yourself as you are completing the test, set up the video camera on the side of the walk but so that the start and finish lines are both visible and start recording. Playback the video and start the stopwatch as soon as the first foot moves and stop when the entirety of the first of your feet crosses the finish line.

Repeat if you think you can do it better the second time.

### Scoring

If time is less than 4.82 sec	4 points
If time is 4.82 to 6.20 sec	3 points
If time is 6.21 to 8.70 sec	2 points
If time is more than 8.70 sec	1 point

The table below contains 4m walking speed normative values from Bohannon and Wang (2019). Data is presented as mean (SD). Walking speed is calculated by dividing the distance (4m) by the time taken.

Sex (age group [years])	Usual Gait Speed (m/s)	Maximum Gait Speed (m/s)
Men (18–29)	1.18 (0.20)	1.85 (0.31)
Men (30–39)	1.21 (0.21)	1.75 (0.30)
Men (40–49)	1.21 (0.24)	1.75 (0.44)
Men (50–59)	1.16 (0.20)	1.63 (0.30)



Men (60–69)	1.16 (0.22)	1.67 (0.37)
Men (70–79)	1.07 (0.24)	1.57 (0.42)
Men (80–85)	0.97 (0.20)	1.39 (0.33)
Women (18–29)	1.11 (0.20)	1.57 (0.29)
Women (30–39)	1.15 (0.20)	1.66 (0.35)
Women (40–49)	1.14 (0.23)	1.64 (0.35)
Women (50–59)	1.15 (0.22)	1.60 (0.29)
Women (60–69)	1.05 (0.22)	1.51 (0.43)
Women (70–79)	0.99 (0.22)	1.29 (0.28)
Women (80–85)	0.95 (0.24)	1.28 (0.24)

### Five repetitions sit-to-stand test

You will need

- Armless chair with only light padding, e.g. a dining chair
- A stopwatch or a video camera (e.g. from a phone)

Sit in the chair with your arms crossed across your chest and your feet flat on the floor. Only complete this test if you are safely able to walk and stand from a chair unassisted.

From a sitting position you must stand up completely before returning to a sitting position. Give yourself some practice to get familiar with the motion of standing up with your arms crossed.

After you have practised, rest. When you are ready, you must stand up from the chair five times as fast as you are safely able to, returning to full sitting position for the last one before the test is terminated. Write down the time from your first movement to rise until you have stopped moving at the end of your final sit.

IF you can't time yourself as you are completing the test, set up the video camera somewhere to the side of the chair (e.g. on a table) but so that the seating and upright positions are both visible and start recording. Playback the video and start the stopwatch as soon as the first movement to rise until you have stopped moving at your last return to the chair.

Repeat if you think you can do it better the second time.

### Scoring

If chair stand time is 11.19 sec or less	4 points
If chair stand time is 11.20 to 13.69 sec	3 points
If chair stand time is 13.70 to 16.69 sec	2 points

If chair stand time is 16.70 sec or more	1 point
If unable to complete 5 chair stands or completes stands in >60 sec	0 point

The table below contains 5 repetitions sit-to-stand normative values from Bohannon et al. (2010). Data is presented as mean (SD) for time and as range for Minimum time - maximum time.

Age (years)	Time (s)	Minimum time (s) – Maximum time (s)
14–19	6.5 (1.2)	4.7–9.7
20–29	6.0 (1.4)	3.9–11.2
30–39	6.1 (1.4)	4.1–10.4
40–49	7.6 (1.8)	5.6–13.2
50–59	7.7 (2.6)	4.2–12.1
60–69	7.8 (2.4)	4.7–15.1
70–79	9.3 (2.1)	5.5–13.3
80–85	10.8 (2.6)	5.8–17.6
14–85	7.5 (2.4)	3.9–17.6
50–85	8.7 (2.6)	4.2–17.6

**Scoring (SPPB)** - add all the individual test scores together (or obtain score from the spreadsheet)

The table below contains SPPB normative values from Bergland and Strand (2019). Data is presented as mean, SD, and the relevant percentile (5 [worst]-95 [best]). Indicatively, a) a 50 year old man scoring 11 points would be classed in the bottom 10% of 50 year old males, b) a 75 year old female scoring 12 points would be classed in the top 25% of 75 year old females. Further, an SPPB score of  $\leq 10$  indicates increased risk of mobility disability / mobility limitations.

Age (years)	Mean	SD	P5	P10	P25	P50	P75	P90	P95
<b>Men</b>									

40	11.99	1.00	11	12	12	12	12	12	12
45	11.91	1.00	11	11.7	12	12	12	12	12
50	11.84	1.00	11	11.4	12	12	12	12	12
55	11.78	1.00	10.9	11.1	12	12	12	12	12
60	11.74	1.00	10.6	11.0	12	12	12	12	12
65	11.70	1.00	10.1	11.0	12	12	12	12	12
70	11.49	1.00	9.3	10.5	11.5	11.9	12	12	12
75	11.01	1.00	8.0	9.3	10.5	11.6	12	12	12
80	10.41	1.00	6.6	7.7	9.3	11.2	12	12	12
85	9.80	1.00	5.1	6.2	8.0	10.8	12	12	12
<b>Women</b>									
40	11.88	1.24	11	12	12	12	12	12	12
45	11.86	1.24	11.0	11.8	12	12	12	12	12
50	11.83	1.24	11	11.6	12	12	12	12	12
55	11.78	1.24	10.8	11.2	11.9	12	12	12	12
60	11.65	1.24	10.3	10.8	11.6	12	12	12	12
65	11.43	1.24	9.4	10.2	11.1	12	12	12	12
70	11.02	1.24	8.3	9.2	10.4	11.7	12	12	12
75	10.43	1.24	6.9	8.0	9.6	11	12	12	12
80	9.75	1.24	5.4	6.6	8.7	10.2	12	12	12
85	9.06	1.24	3.9	5.3	7.8	9.3	12	12	12



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