

# Glossop Transcript

## Introduction

**Eve:** Welcome to series two of the GM Moving Podcast where we share with you stories of how people and partners across Greater Manchester are creating the conditions for active lives for all. I'm Eve, Strategic Director at Greater Sport, leading, supporting, and connecting GM Moving, Greater Manchester's movement for move. Supported by investment from Sport England. Greater Manchester partners have been taking a whole system place-based approach to embed physical activity into everything. To enable sustained behaviour change for happier, healthier, more connected communities and active lives for all. In each episode we share stories of what this looks like in action in each of the ten boroughs of Greater Manchester.

Today I'm back in Manchester Central Library this time with Helen, a Local Pilot lead in Glossop. And I'm rejoined by Nicole, one of my colleagues at Greater Sport who supports the Local Pilot network. Glossop's Local Pilot is working with people in Whitfield and has a particular focus on young people and families, people out of work, or at risk of becoming workless and people aged forty to sixty with long-term health conditions.

So let's hear from Helen and Nicole to find out how they've been supporting people to move more in Glossop and to have fun in the process. I start off by asking Helen to share a bit of her own personal story and why moving matters to her.

## Conversation

**Helen:** As a child I was turned off sport completely by PE teachers being small, being a little bit overweight, last to be picked for teams, all that sort of thing. So really came outta school hating anything to do with sport. Parents desperately trying to get me into sport and activity because I was gaining weight when I went through puberty. Still stayed small which was always a conflict. Wanted to eat competitively against my brother, who's six foot four, I'm five foot two. Imagine he's going up and I'm going out.

But when I got to university, I changed. I realised actually if I want to carry on eating and drinking, I can't continue on in the way I was doing so. I was already with my partner at that point, and we were out on a drinking session with some friends and we were discussing all this sort of thing and that we'd found out that the local martial arts group had started doing a lady's defence course. So we had a bet with the guys that we would go and do three weeks of kickboxing training at this martial arts centre, and if we did they'd streak around the streets. So ten years later on I got my black belt and they've still not streaked.

**Eve:** Wow. Amazing story.

**Helen:** So that kicked me off to my journey of realising that sport doesn't have to be team sport.

**Nicole:** Yeah.

**Helen:** And the wellbeing that I got from... I had a job down in Nottingham, so I'm still living in Glossop, working in Nottingham. Quite stressful roles. Spending a lot of time on the roads and in cars, getting frustrated on the M1 and all that sort of stuff. Been ringing my husband up at Junction 28 at 10 o'clock at night going 'I've only moved five hundred yards in two hours!' But I'd go straight to the gym and by the time I'd done that I was back in the room, back in the space and back in the place that I need to be.

So my love of activity has just grown and grown and grown and realising my mental health really was helped by that as well as my physical being. I've been able to eat far more than I used to be able to eat and I do enjoy my food.

**Nicole:** You do a lot for the local community and you're quite well known as well. So you've got quite a lot of women into running haven't you, with your running groups and being very modest with your physical activity. You're running all the time.

**Helen:** Yes. I run every day. So I started some school gate runs seven years ago when my children were at school. We've had ladies get to marathon distance, but most of them like to get up to about 10K and then settle

there and regularly run 10Ks. And it's all about the social side of it as well. We are out tomorrow and we're going for a walk. We're gonna go over The Nab and up Kings Rocks and we'll sit on top weather provided and have a glass of fizz before we walk on.

So the running came from I realised when I was doing my brown belt that I was not fit enough for my black belt. So I started running as a way of increasing my stamina. And then when I had the children the kickboxing training didn't fit in with my lifestyle while having a young child, whereas you can go outside, you can run whatever you like. So it fitted with the family. And to be honest, it's become my main form of exercise now and I just love being outdoors and I love the fact that we live in Glossop. We're fortunate everybody I think lives within half a mile of open countryside. So off I go in the morning, first thing in the morning, it gets me energised and ready for work.

I quite often turn up on Zoom calls looking a bit like... having purple hair I sometimes have purple streaks running down my face. I'm thinking 'I hope they cannot see that on camera!'

**Eve:** So you've gone from really hating sport and physical activity that really being stripped out of your life from your experience at school. Through to being someone that now is a black belt, which I wasn't warned about before you walked into the room.

**Nicole:** Cause I didn't know and if I'd known that, I mean I'd have been a lot nicer to you. Let's just put it that way.

**Eve:** There you go.

So again, that humility you don't actually share all these things, and then yeah, daily running now and encouraging others. Fantastic.

I guess to anyone listening who's going 'Glossop?' And they're still wrestling in their head, going Glossop, Greater Manchester. Is Glossop part of Greater Manchester? Can you just explain?

**Helen:** Yeah, so Glossop is part of Glossop and Tameside Hospital, so the NHS trust, so this is because this whole project's more about preventative healthcare. Obviously it's to do the hospital, so that's why we're linked up. But Glossop is so close to Tameside anyway. We were just saying earlier that my son is on his way to college in Tameside, yet a large percent of the population of Glossop work within the Greater Manchester area, they're more likely to work in Greater Manchester than they are in Derbyshire.

So our links are really strong with Greater Manchester. And it is from my point of view unfortunately that we are not part of Greater Manchester. I wouldn't have some of the problems I have in the work.

**Eve:** It can make it a bit tricky sometimes can't it when those structures are different?

Eve: I wanted people to understand if it's not there looking at a map going, wait a minute....!

Sneakily just thought we'd invite you in. Yeah.

So tell us a little bit about your role now in Glossop. What does that look like? What do you do?

**Helen:** I carry on trying to inspire people to move and it might not necessarily be running because obviously that's quite high end intensity, but I encourage people to walk around the parks. So we have things like Story Walks going on in the parks where you can scan a QR code and it's a lovely narrator actress from Glossop that's narrated the stories.

So she'll talk you around the park so they're quite low level and can stop and sit down and explore different parts of the park that you wouldn't view. You know most people with toddlers they go to the play area and that's as far as they get. They don't actually realise that like Manor Park's a huge park with fantastic facilities. So we start off at that low level. And then within the walking side of things, we've got a group that's working around the Ethels at the moment if you know what they are.

**Eve:** So what are they?

**Helen:** The peaks over nine hundred foot in the Peak District. There's ninety five of them in the Peak District so you can mark them off basically. You can get an app called the Ethel App and you can mark off when you've done them. So yes we've got a walking group that are doing that which obviously is quite high level walking.

But we've got social groups, we've got ladies only groups, we've got men only groups. The lady ones are more for people that probably just struggle with social isolation and that sort of thing. So working with the social prescribers they refer the ladies into the ladies' walking group. They work with the local Leisure Centre. So at the moment sounds like they're doing it for women don't it, but at the moment we working with the local Leisure Centre on menopause. We started off with a Facebook page called Chat through the Change, and we invited lots... cus I'm fifty, so I was inviting all my friends, but also they're friends and it grew into quite a network of people. And there's 800 people in that group now.

We had some evening Zoom calls where they could do some question answers with experts. So we had a GP there talking about HRT. We had a sleep expert come on, we had an exercise therapist come on. Somebody about sex and relationships, all them sort of things that affect women going through menopause. And then from that it led on to actually we need to do stuff face to face and we need to do more than just give them the theory. Let's give them the actual practical side of things.

So we've linked up with Lex Leisure and a lady called Becky here who's been trained in menopause as a PT, and she's now on her third programme of sessions for Women in Menopause. So Fitness through Menopause I think they're called. It's an eight week programme, but at the end of it then they can continue on to do more exercises. It's all resistance training and that sort of thing to safeguard your future.

We've been doing lots of youth groups. So my work's been focused on place based. So looking at the three different areas of Glossop. So Whitfield, Gamesley and, Hadfield and we were doing summer activities in them three places and during them activities parents would come and talk to me and they was basically saying antisocial behaviours on the rise, but the reason it's on the rise is cause there's nothing for the kids to do. So

they know the answer, they know that the kids need occupying, and they know there's a reason why antisocial behaviour is there. It's not just a case of kids being badly behaved, but there's nobody really willing to stick their necks out and do it.

In Gamesley I was fortunate enough to have a couple of really brilliant women that volunteers, proper community champions that were like we wanna do this. So I said well you want to do it, then I'm here to support that.

So we did, it took a while but we're now six months in and we've got two sessions going a week. We have a Wednesday which is between the ages eleven to seventeen and a Monday, which is seven to eleven year olds, and we have over a hundred children coming through the doors each week. They see it as a safe place to come. They can be active if they wanna be active in various ways. We always have somebody there that do sporting activity with them. They go outside, so they have a kick about out there as well. But they can just come and chill out if they want and be with their mates and it's a safe space and not get moved on by people. They're not getting shouted out for making too much noise. Because that model seems to be really successful in Gamesley. We've just three weeks ago started running Whitfield as well, so that's been really positive. The age group, we've only got one time slot there unfortunately, so we've had to merge the two age groups. So that's gonna be interesting how the dynamics work in that one, cause seven year olds to fifteen, sixteen year olds.

**Eve:** It's quite a big jump.

**Helen:** A mixed bag. Yeah. Although they do keep themselves separate, there's plenty of space, there's plenty of different rooms for them to go in. So it's not like you're cramming them in and saying get on with each.

**Eve:** Sounds brilliant Helen. I've got a real picture now of all these different places and people just being active in different ways and having a lot of fun in the process really which definitely shines out.

So can you talk about what it is about being part of the Local Pilot? How has that made any difference in terms of ways of working and what you're doing?

**Helen:** It has made a massive difference to be honest. So High Peak Borough Council have adopted quite a lot of the Greater Manchester way of thinking. We have High Peak Borough Council just about to launch their Move More strategy. So it shows that the way of thinking has gone across. Active Derbyshire talking in the same manner as well.

**Eve:** And you need to try and bottle that. People go yeah, learning about what is it? What's the essence of this? How is it? How would you describe it to somebody?

**Helen:** It's that collaboration, isn't it? That everybody's a leader. When you're round the table, in the past, one person spoke and everybody else listened, whereas it's taken a while.

We've been doing this for how long now? Two and a half years. Think Glossop's been proactive in it. And it probably took the first twelve months really for us to get our heads around that. The, 'Who's leading this meeting?' And it's like no, nobody's leading the meeting. We've all got an equal say and equal value around the table, whether you're a community member, or your a strategic leader, or you're a a cabinet member or whoever you are within the partners.

And it is making a difference now, because you are seeing the different ideas coming through and listening to the real life stories at the bottom, which they wouldn't have seen before. How that actually changes in strategy does trickle down to the man on the street and it's feeding it back up there as well.

**Nicole:** And you can see that in the commitment...so you've got Scott new in post, he's the Move More Children and Young People Officer. And that's been funded in collaboration with...

**Helen:** ...Active Derbyshire. Derbyshire County Public Health, High Peak Borough Council, and High Peak school sports partnerships. So that's a real collaboration to bring one person into post.

**Nicole:** And you've demonstrated that this way of working is viable and is successful in terms of speaking to the local community and really taking that learning on board. Seeing the way that you work and have extrapolated that out to Scott who's gonna be working on that children and young people remit now. It's really impressive.

**Eve:** So you've shared some of the joys I've got the menopause, food to young people, food to all parts of the community, be supported to be active and support each to be active and creating safe spaces for that to happen.

Any other particular kind of highs or joys that you want to point to before we move onto the challenges?

**Nicole:** The previous thing that I'd witnessed is at the start. So I've been involved right from the start in Glossop and a big issue was that you had people who didn't understand the complexities of living in Glossop and what that means with when you've got High Peak Borough Council and Derbyshire County Council, and also you've got CCG from Tameside, and all the different complexities around that.

You have people who perhaps were living in Derby or other places in Derbyshire making decisions about Glossop, and they didn't understand how it is a very unique place.

So I think your work has been able to give a voice to residents and also the different assets and champions within Glossop. And a really good example of that is what's happened at Banksford with the pump track there that's recently been installed and it's brought the collaborative approach of the Move More Glossop steering group and the different agencies that are involved has allowed that additional investment in. But you've had your own spin on it and you've been able to influence the way that British Cycling went about that and it was really important because previously you might have had it dumped anywhere and it might not have been used



because it's not what the community wanted or where it was needed. And through the insight gathering that you did and things like that really begin to influence that. So I'd say that's a real win for the work in Glossop.

**Helen:** It's allowed people's ideas, what would've been ideas that would never have left the ground to actually blossom and go, do you know what there's somebody there who will support me and we can do this. The evolution of the hangout club, which is the youth club on Gamesley they've now got a bingo club. From the volunteers that met at the hangout club and some of the volunteers also have gone on to do the life skills sessions at the bureau, and are on the Back to Work program as well.

So when you start off on a project that you think is targeted at that level of community or age group or cohort people, but then actually it spirals out and you get these wins that you thought I didn't think that would happen. It didn't even occur to me that that would happen, but it has happened and it's an added bonus.

**Eve:** So one thing's become a catalyst for another and for another, and these ripples keep spreading. But it's fascinating to think of what it looks like to take a place based approach within a place that has so many complex overlapping structures as Nicole points out.

**Nicole:** Complex is putting it lightly.

**Eve:** We talk a lot about having to shift governance and processes and make sure that some of those structures are around geographical borders or around formal structures and systems. How often they can get in the way. I mean people must look at us and go, oh my goodness, we thought we had it tough!

So how have you managed to navigate that? Has there been any key learning in taking this place based approach? And as Nicole says, giving a voice to local people who all live there as opposed to feeling as though it's things that are imposed that you've learned through the last couple of years.

**Helen:** I think one of the keys is relationship building and persistence. I don't go away very easily. Relationships though are definitely the key. Getting the people that you are speaking to to try and understand what you're trying to achieve and why you're trying to achieve that.

Also understanding that their capacity and their limitations within their own job as well, because it's all right to keep pecking that one person, but if they actually have got a massive workload and they're not quite the right person to be able to shift what you want them to shift, then obviously you're both gonna end getting frustrated, aren't you?

So it is complex. It's very complex in Glossop, but having those key people with key relationships is definitely the way to make it happen and cause of this collaboration of when we go into meetings now, we do try and be much more everybody's a leader, that this voice is coming from places that wouldn't have normally spoken, and actually then those that can make it happen realise, well actually it is needed. It's not just me shouting about that. There's all these people behind me ready to support me. And we've got the evidence of need as well from below, and that's a big part of it. And it's okay going with an idea, but you haven't got the evidence of need within the system then it's not gonna happen either is it? I can't say I've got an answer for Glossop cause I don't think we'll ever get a true pathway across the complex.

**Nicole:** No, but I think something there's definitely something around trust, and I've seen over the last few years those different partnerships between DCC, High Peak Borough Council, Active Derbyshire, The Bureau, I've seen in that space the way it's evolved, and particularly now during Covid and the recovery from that. I think there's a definite understanding that we are all on the same page and we are trying to make things better for the people of Glossop and it completely makes sense to work together and share that resource.

**Eve:** So you mentioned The Bureau. Can you tell us what is The Bureau?

**Helen:** The Bureau is the local volunteer charity. Their known as the Volunteer Bureau. So they host my role. They work across the High Peak with the other CVS teams as well. So there's quite a network of volunteers.

**Nicole:** What's been really good as well, and something that you've brought and Kaz has brought as well is a flexibility in approach. I think the way that you approach the work that you've done with some schools and things like that is you are willing to work around them. You're not coming in and saying, This is what you've gotta do.

**Helen:** Thank you.

**Eve:** You also refer to Kaz, who's Kaz?

**Nicole:** Oh yeah, sorry. Well she'll be fuming if she doesn't get a good shout out. Now she'll be listening to this. She'll be like, Right, you've not mentioned me yet.

**Helen:** Kaz Little. She now works for High Peak Borough Council parks and leisure community engagement team for Glossop and Hope Valley. Six months she's been with us now. She made quite an impact. Speeded the work up in areas where I couldn't get into High Peak Borough Council to a certain person because she's actually within the system. She can knock on the right doors and say listen to Helen!

**Eve:** I just wondered then you talked I guess of some of the challenges for particular age groups, for example that still exists. Do you have a sense of how many people that live in Glossop actually do access those green spaces?

**Helen:** Pre-Covid, probably very few to be perfectly honest. The first lockdown where the government was going, go out and do your hour a day exercise and you're quite welcome to do that. We saw a massive spike in walking to the point where trails that I would've ran along and not seen anybody for miles. Suddenly it was more like the M1 passing families with dogs and generations of people as well. But then it went down again once the lockdowns disappeared.

But we do have these three very deprived areas in Glossop, and then the people living in their areas know they don't access the green spaces despite the fact it's a stones throw away. You speak to them about it, they'll go, you know what I've never even thought about doing it? The

unknown, the fear of getting lost. The level of fitness that they probably couldn't even walk the half mile to actually get to the green space. Lack of equipment, more the fear really of I've never done it and I don't know what to expect. It's a funny one cause if you've never been, if you've never been out for a walk for enjoyment, cause their walk is, I've gotta walk to the shops because they don't drive. So they still move around within their space, but they don't go outside of that space because a lot of 'em don't drive public transport's that's really important.

It's like Gamesley is on the top of a hill. So if you walk, you can walk down the hill, but you're not gonna walk back up it with your shopping, so you're then gonna get in a taxi or whatever cause the buses are terrible.

They see walking as a means of getting from A to B. It's not a leisure thing. And as mentioned before from the hangout club some of the volunteers, they've got a bingo club going, but they've also got a walk and talk group going as well where they meet up outside the local chippy. Not the best place.

**Nicole:** It's a great chippy though. It is good.

**Helen:** It's the best, One of the best chips in Glossop.

Eve: Yes. Shout out the chippy,

**Helen:** It's called The Chippy.

**Nicole:** Give them an advert.

**Helen:** But they meet outside the chippy and they go for a walk and they're slowly growing that walk. So there is slight changes in their habits. And it is taking just one or two people within that community to say, why don't you come for a walk and we'll have a chat. I wanna lose a bit of weight. Do you wanna come with me? Cause they've not got access to gyms. Cause like I say, by the time they've got to the gym, they've done the exercise cause there isn't any gyms up there, I've been working with a lot of the local leisure centres and they're looking at doing more place based work in the areas as well.

One of the barriers we do have is that Derbyshire County Council own the community centres within Glossop and they have a tendency not to really like people going in the buildings very often. We had massive problems over Covid, obviously the Covid restrictions, but even when Covid restrictions were being reduced everywhere else they were still keeping very tight on the community centre. Now they'll open back with no Covid restrictions, there's still issues around capacity for caretakers and that sort of thing. So community groups have a tendency to struggle to find indoor spaces.

So that is one of the problems that comes with this tier system within the council. Cause with High Peak Borough Council any of their land or buildings, we have no problems getting into. And that's because they're closer to Glossop and understand the dynamics.

There's no other buildings to go into. That's the problem. There is the odd church hall here and there, but then you've got all the restrictions that occur. You can't go and do basketball church hall cause they don't want you knocking over the pews and the chairs and things. So these are the issues that we are still battling with.

There's some sticking points that are frustrating when it comes to that side of things. And it does affect the community, because if you are a volunteer you've got to battle to get into the building. You're spending enough time volunteering in the group. That's just an extra layer isn't it that you've got to do when. Like risk assessments and everything that they're expecting.

**Eve:** Energy gets drained.

**Helen:** Yes, it does.

**Eve:** So have you seen that this way of working and in terms of a place based approach to visit activity and what you're doing all the things you're talking about has that had an impact on wider work within the local area?

**Helen:** Yeah, it's getting replicated in other areas now. So we've got New Mills, another town of Glossop, the leisure centre there is very much looking at how they can be more place based and go to the people around

rather than expecting the people to come to them. Same in Fairfield in Buxton as well. So yeah, the learning is going out. You can't expect people to come to you.

There's so many barriers. People that live in these deprived areas, their lives are so complex to start off with if you then put well you've gotta get a mile to the local leisure centre to do your fitness. Whatever, even if it's a doctor's referral, so it's free when you get there, you've still got to get there. I mean with the doctor's referral we're currently in the process of moving them out of the leisure centres and actually taking them to the place based places, because that's where the referrals are coming from. They're coming from these deprived areas where people have got long term health conditions through lifestyle more than anything. So it's about obviously the education as well and that side of things. So yeah, the learning has gone across the High Peak and it's really good.

**Eve:** So what's next and what does the future look like?

**Helen:** What's next? Well transport is one of my key focuses actually.

**Eve:** You gonna solve it?

**Helen:** I wish I could flatten Glossop. That would help!

**Eve:** I've heard you can move mountains. I didn't know you could flatten them Helen!

**Helen:** Yeah. Active travel is one of my pet things in Glossop really. Because having children at high school age. They're in that in-between where they don't want Mum taking them here, there and everywhere and I don't like getting in the car anyway, so they've always had to walk with Mum. But to get to the high school, high schools in Hadfield, it's a fair old walk so we are looking at how we can get them to cycle to school. But the A57 that runs through the centre of Glossop, such a trunk road, heavy goods vehicles, I don't like cycling on it. Never mind sending my children on it. I find alternative routes.

Yeah. So we have identified an off road route that's currently a footpath by linking a few footpaths together and we have the national cycle route that goes through, skirts the edge of Glossop and using a bit of that and some bridle way and stuff. We have identified a route which soft strands have had a look at and they think it's the most feasible route as well.

So yeah, that is the project really obviously that requires quite a lot of infrastructure, which brings a lot of cost involved. So at the moment we're talking the soft measures that we can do. So encouraging people to use bikes where they can anyway, which is like the pump track. Getting the schools involved in all the different walk to school days, clean air days, cycle to school week, all these are different things to try and change the habits of the people so that we can prove the need and then we can look at how we can finance this off road route. That's gonna be the slow burn cause it's a long term thing isn't it but I'm optimistic.

**Eve:** Sounds like a great vision and it might be a slow burner, but it sounds like a better option than flattening mountains. I have to say.

**Helen:** I don't think I can flatten mountains or move rivers, so that's the hard bit.

**Nicole:** Yeah, I'm not sure how popular you would be if you started knocking people's houses down really.

**Eve:** Thank you. It's been an absolute pleasure to sit and listen and talk. And I want to come now and come and see all this stuff in Glossop. Thank you Helen for everything you are doing. Yeah, you really are a massive inspiration. So yeah, keep running.

**Helen:** Oh, I will do. It keeps me sane.

**Eve:** Take care.

## Outro

**Eve:** Thanks for listening. I hope you enjoyed that conversation just as much as I did. We've heard how moving matters to everyone and how we

can all play a role to design moving back into everyday life. We'd love to now hear how you keep moving and the ways you are supporting others to live an active life.

You can contact us on our socials we are on Facebook and Twitter just search Greater Sport. And don't forget the #GMMovinginAction. Please do share this episode with people and organisations who will find it useful and join the movement for movement. A big thank you to everyone who's investing in this work and playing their part to test, to learn and to make this happen.

This series is a MIC Media production.