

Oldham

Introduction

Eve: Welcome to series two of the GM Moving Podcast where we share with you how we are enabling people to get moving. I'm Eve, Strategic Director at Greater Sport, leading, supporting, and connecting GM Moving, Greater Manchester's movement for movement. Supported by investment from Sport England Greater Manchester partners have been taking a whole system place based approach to embed physical activity into everything 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. I'm back today in Manchester Central library for today's episode, and I'm speaking to Claire Marshall from Oldham. And I'm delighted to be rejoined by Richard, one of my colleagues at Greater Sport who provides Exec Leadership for the Local Pilot network and place based work.

Oldham is estimated to be home to over 200,000 people. The latest Active Lives data published by Sport England suggests over 66% of the adult population of Oldham are now moving for at least thirty minutes a week. The latest data for children and young people however suggests that up to 49% of children and young people are not achieving the recommended thirty minutes of physical activity a day. Activity rates in Oldham were badly hit by the Covid pandemic with a prolonged local lockdown.

Rates of inactivity rose particularly sharply amongst Black, South Asian, and other minority ethnic groups. The latest data however suggests good signs of recovery. So let's join Claire and Richard for this episode's conversation to hear how local leads are working in partnership with local people and developing a culture of listening and feedback.

Conversation

Eve: So we're gonna get stuck in so over to you really Claire, but first of all a bit personal really in terms of why moving matters to you?

Claire: I have always enjoyed sport from a young age. I did everything. I did every club possible, whether that was playing Badminton on a Friday night with

a bunch of oldies, swimming, walking, running, I just had lots of energy as a child, and I absolutely loved it. And it's something throughout my youth, even as a teenager when there were other distractions and some of your friends tailed off that I really loved, especially team sports. There's something for everybody. For me, it was always about something you could do with other people. I got a lot of social interaction through physical activity, so that was my enjoyment. It was a time that you could spend with your friends doing something you enjoyed.

So that's something throughout my life I've done in my personal life, but also taking it into a career I guess because it's something I believe that I can speak to other people about in quite a passionate way. So that's my story and as I've gotten older it's evolved. The things that I'm involved in have changed. Nothing very serious, but even if it's just going to the park with your kids and picking up a tennis racket, I love being able to do that.

And I think the fact that I was able to do that as a child means as you get older, if you've got a certain level of skill that you can connect with a ball. It's still nice being able to do that. So that's why I'm so passionate about young people, even from a young age being able to master basic skills in something because you can carry it on as you get old like me however that looks.

Eve: And you've got your own kids haven't you?

Claire: Yes

Eve: How old are they?

Claire: So I've got a fourteen year old, an eleven year old. Oh, no he was twelve today. It's his birthday today.

Eve: Aww Happy Birthday.

Claire: And a seven year old. So we've got lots of footballers, they all like football in our house. And I suppose football was one of the things, I had two brothers and a dad, and we're all massive Liverpool fans. So I was brought up with that and probably got more into it as I got older because of my boys, and my partner's also a PE teacher, so we're quite a sporty household, but I wouldn't think we're too competitive, sometimes you get that ultra competitive. We do it because we enjoy it.

So our week consists of running around taking them to fixtures and training. But I love that, and it's something that because I got joy from it that I wanted to make sure that my kids had those opportunities as well. So that's my personal story.

Eve: So you've been involved in more competitive sports haven't you Richard?

Richard: Yeah. I've competed at a decent level and competitive sports probably where I get my kicks. So even that's against someone as it was last night when I played badly at golf and had a tantrum.

Eve: Do you throw your clubs?

Richard: Do I throw my clubs? I throw everything but the clubs cause the clubs are really expensive. So a couple of plastic bottles went last night and a couple of golf balls cause they're not quite as expensive. Or competing against myself so time trials, or gym, or something like that. I'm a hypercompetitive person. A board game would be flipped and I would be walking out.

Claire: I've never finished a game of Monopoly in my life.

Richard: No, not unless I cheated in which case it's fine.

Eve: It's okay. I just win so it's fine. Oh, we're all learning something about each other anyway. Great.

So in terms of your role then can you tell us a little bit about your role in Oldham, and what that looks like?

Claire: So my role in Oldham, so obviously I coordinate the Local Pilot work. My job title is a Sport Development Officer, but that job title has probably been in place for the last fifteen years, and it's not relevant. It's something that needs to be looked at. And when people ask me what I do, they don't really understand it, and my way to describe it is everyday looks totally different.

So yesterday I met a lady from one of our community partner organisations in Alexandra Park. So she is a community worker for Fatima Women's Association. We had a walking meeting talking about all things walking, culturally things that are difficult for them. Cause we're talking about cycling, which you'll be interested in Eve, about getting more ladies from the community on bikes, trying to challenge some of those stigmas.

Another day, I'll be having a conversation with partners around a football facility, every day is varied. In terms of that I've been called a Sport Development Officer. Now we see ourselves as just being those real advocates of moving, whatever that looks like. So it may be supporting a community group. It may be working alongside a stakeholder about how we can join them up. To me it's still a development role. It's just evolved where we just don't talk about sport as much anymore. It's the whole discussion around movement and movement for good, I guess is where I enjoy the role because it's that advocacy role which I think is really important.

Richard: She said, she's a Sports Development Coordinator. I think she's a bit more than the coordinator of the Local Pilot, a bit more than that much more of a lead figure head, convenor, facilitator, supporter of the work, and of the organisations and of the people in that place.

Eve: And what are your main goals in the role then? What are you seeking to achieve?

Claire: For me again it is that advocacy role. It's to work with people now who don't traditionally get physical activity or see it as being part of their day and having conversations with them when they start to say things and you go 'something's clicked there'. And that could just be like you said, it could be something really small that they say about something that they've started to build in that they do or conversations that they've had with people.

Whether we can say that's through the work I do, but I think it's that wider ripple effect, especially around their mental health people are starting to say I know that if I do something I start to feel better and I think that's really nice that we're starting to have that, because I think for a while I felt that people still will go back to physical activity or physical activity is not for the people we work with. It's not our day job. I think more and more we're starting to see and feel that change in people to go well actually it could just be about a really short conversation or something that they change in how they work with somebody.

For example more people having walking meetings. I mean how great is that we've been stuck indoors through Covid, and I think they're probably a bit more productive if I'm totally honest.

Eve: So can you tell going back to the Local Pilot and the role the Local Pilots played in that and the approach, what difference has that made?

Claire: I think again it's about pulling people together. So we've had a place based approach, pulling people together who again have not necessarily had physical activities as the day job and the approach that we've taken whereby really, really involving local people in those conversations really giving the power back to them. And it's the approach that Oldham has wanted to take around this as a co-production and place based working. But I think the difference being that the Local Pilot have always been a bit ahead of that. So it's the learning that we're starting to see about the approach we've taken with the community groups, really taking on board what they've told us that people come in and talk to us. And then so what we don't see or we don't hear from them, and we've really worked with them to go, 'this is what you've told us, what can we do to help you do something about it now?' And I think that's been a learning curve for them, cause they've been so used to either people not doing anything about it or having things done for them.

That's been a challenge in itself to go no hold on. It's not for us to come and do all this for you. We're really starting to learn something and understand something from that, and we're starting to see that. So we've got another project, Active Through Football. And I think the reason we got that funding was because we were able to reference our learning and understanding from the Local Pilot. And we wanted to almost have a similar type of model doing something a bit different, but using a similar type of approach and model in a different place. So again the medium was football as a form of physical activity, but how we actually were engaging and really involving local people in that approach.

Richard: So the Local Pilot has always come with investment. There's an investment into each locality across Greater Manchester. And very early on Oldham were keen to emphasise a cashless investment. So the initial idea of a cashless investment has been the ethos behind all the work in Oldham all the way through. And that's what's driven a lot of the conversation. So it's starting with what we've got. And therefore we're gonna come in and deliver all this good activity it started with, what do you wanna do? Why do you wanna do it? Where do you wanna do it? How do you wanna do it? How are we gonna do it?

And then there is a conversation further on down the line that goes, well we can help start some of that, but there has to be a buy in and equal buy in from the community and from the other wider organisations, whether that be a community organisation or other departments within Oldham Council to enable that to spin off and start. So whilst they knew there was funding available to be utilised. We don't necessarily want to have to rely on that because we know from our experiences that investment leads to activity which isn't sustainable

because as Claire's rightly said people expect someone to come in and do for them.

So the model has always been, and it's one which seems to have evolved and grown, not just in Oldham but across places and localities in GM and wider. Around actually the investment is there to turn the cogs over conversation, but the emphasis is on the community to build in sustainability. The emphasis is working alongside, and with the community to understand, really understand the challenges, the barriers, and then collectively come up with an intervention and or solution, which is sustainable because the community have bought into it. And it's just been good to see that evolve over the last two, three, four years.

Claire: I can remember being in meetings and we were a good few months into the Pilot. And a community member said how much money is there actually? So it wasn't something that they'd even talked about at the beginning; they just knew that there was the Local Pilot and it was around physical activity, and that was really refreshing. Cause I thought well I've been to quite a few meetings and yeah nobody has asked.

And then the challenge is when they find out how much money they immediately go almost back to oh facilities and hold on a second, you can build a facility, but if you've not got the changing mindsets and behaviours people are not necessarily going to go to that. Those were difficult conversations. I think you'll probably remember some of those Richard. Which we've managed to I think, overcome with the community and that challenge will always be there because people will always want more in their place.

Eve: That difference between starting what really matters, or starting with this is what the money is, and the pot of money that often gets in the way and you then see don't you, people going on a mission to spend the money. It happens so often. As opposed to going on a mission to try and achieve the things that really matter.

Claire: So just to give you an example of where we've really listened to what the community have said, really taken on board that 'you talk to us and things don't happen'. So we had really good engagement from the community early on. We went into Covid. We were quite conscious that we didn't want to over...we kept in touch with the community, but a lot of the community members we were talking to were also involved in Community Champions. They had been involved in the Covid response, they've been on different committees and they were saying to us it's brilliant that you want to involve us in this but people want to involve us in lots of other things as well, and we just don't have the time to

think about it. So we initiated let's have those conversations then under one banner.

So let's talk about what is important to you in your place under one banner of which physical activity may or may not be important. That's something that we're going to have to take a bit of a punt on and see where it goes. Luckily for us it did come out as being something which was important to people when we got them in that room. And we've started to formulate a plan with them, which started off being called One Glodwick it was being supported by Action Together and the district team, which is a council team. And that has now evolved where the community have said we want to have ownership of that plan ourselves, and we want to lead on it. And then actually saying we will become an organisation ourselves of an umbrella organisation where we're not competing against each other, which is something that again was always a challenge in that community. And we decide who would be best placed to tackle that particular issue or to take on a particular project, but we'll do it under one banner. So that again is where the Local Pilot has stimulated that. If the Local Pilot wasn't in place would that have happened? No, I don't think it would've done. It gave us the time and the ability under that test and learn to go. Let's try out this approach.

Eve: For people that don't know Glodwick. How can you paint a picture of this place?

Claire: It's very densely populated on the edge of it there is a beautiful green space called Alexandra Park. There is access to bridleways and cycleways, but there's a lot of terraced housing. Predominantly people from South Asian background, looking at it from a deficit, which is what's happened within that community. Some of the poorest health stats, some of the high poverty rates, low education and so on and so on. You could paint quite a bad picture and I think Oldham does get a bad press. So that Central Oldham everything's doom and gloom, however, from a strength based approach thinking about that place.

There are so many people in that place who want to show Glodwick in a different way that are really passionate about making a change for all the people that live there for their children. So people that work and live in that place, people who are trusted, who know the community really well. And when they talk about it, they talk about it in a really passionate way, and they want their children and young people to have a different outlook on life. They want things to be better. There's a lot of people who have got real skill sets in that community. And I think it should be a community that should be celebrated for

what they have achieved rather than people looking at it in a negative mindset. Which is why when we started out on this journey we had two places, we had Glodwick and Failsworth and glad it just morphed that we had more focus on Glodwick because there was so much energy to want to change that place. That we've gone with that energy.

And it's not without its challenges, because it's say you've got one community group that might not necessarily get along with that community group. But I think even through this approach they're more willing to work with each other in a different way by pulling together the different women's groups.

We had a session, we got them all together. And even in that small space that they didn't necessarily know what the other one did, where they were based, and that was quite nice cause they were able to think about how they could join up and support each other. And actually a lot of the things that they're talking about are similar issues. It's just that they've been linked to one community group or one Mosque over another one. So that's been a really positive experience that I think through the Pilot we've helped bring about.

Eve: And any particular moments of joy?

Claire: I think for me it's just little nuggets of conversations that people in that community start to tell you. So I remember last year I had a conversation with somebody from one of the community groups and it was during Ramadan. And she said 'So Claire, do know what some of the girls are doing before they break fast?' You'll love this. She says 'they go and knock on each other's doors. And they say, come on we're going for a walk before they break fast'. And she was amazed at that. And I went, 'wow that is fantastic.' I absolutely love that because so often we hear everything just stops during Ramadan. But these ladies have gone on a journey whereby they really know how important one that social interaction, and also having that walk. And even though they were fasting, they've not had water for so many hours. They had four hours of darkness cause it was in the middle of summer. They were still going out for a walk. I loved that. I absolutely loved that.

Eve: It's shifting your attention to well what was the point that that woman came and told you, what does that tell you? And it tells you there's a new relationship there. There's a trusted relationship, her pride, her ownership over what she's doing and all those indicators that something is gonna be far more sustained. And those ripple effects are gonna be there as opposed to just an intervention that drops in and then it's likely to stop and end there.

Claire: And the lady I was with yesterday we were talking about cycling and she was talking about cycling in the park and she says, I got so many odd looks they're seeing an Asian lady with a hijab on. She says, 'I don't care and I want to make more ladies feel like me and go it's okay. I want to help make that change.' These are the people that we need to support to make them feel like, yeah you can do this and we're gonna help you do that if you need to help to take other people on that journey.

Eve: They're the real change makers.

Claire: Absolutely.

Eve: So there's a few things there. There's starting off with what matters to you. You convening and connecting people within that place, and identifying and spotting it sounds like some of those key catalysts within the community who are gonna get others and motivate them and get them moving.

Richard: The one thing probably which wasn't mentioned was the community investment fund, which the partnership with Action Together has been really strong and the ability to invest directly into community groups. Again based on what they want, trying to streamline application processes, trying to streamline the governance processes around that. We're not talking like large sums of money here. We're talking about small amounts of investment which make huge changes in a place which is facilitated a lot of the different activities and groups, but again it's the small investment that lead to sustainable activity. Oldham is one of the first to go down that route. And now you see across GM nearly every locality has a community investment fund of some description, and it's all been born off the fact that we previously have made the forms very complicated, the language very difficult. In fact, the language probably isn't the first language in which many of these groups are working or using that we have made it more personable in terms of it's actually not about what's on the written paper, but having the conversation with someone to the point that it's influenced nationally some of the Together fund or tackling inequality fund. And it's all been born out of small parts of Oldham, Trafford, Greater Manchester, the other Local Pilots doing things differently and influencing it at a national level.

Claire: Yeah we don't even call it a grant fund now it's an ideas form. So we will work with that community group or whoever to help support them to put that idea together. And again that's through listening to people. So either we don't have the time or they would send us something in and we would have to go all against our existing criteria and rescore that wouldn't get through. But

we know that they've got a good idea and we know that there's the will to deliver on it. So we evolved that.

So again, it was listening to what people were saying and the processes we were going through, how do we make this easier? So we had the idea of a sponsor. So there will be a named sponsor that the person that's worked with that group or community to help them develop that idea, giving them some advice along the way. If we feel that there may be other funding that might be able to be tapped into for that. I had one the other day, it was a youth group and they put in for a PS5 and I was let's just say they're not conducive to physical activity. So I've had to provide some challenge on that to go. That's fine but if a youth group really wants that...

Eve: Oh PlayStation 5 I'm with you now!

Claire: They look to a different part of money, but that's fine. We can work with them to explain why, but that's probably the only time I've had to do it., I'm quite pleased at how we have evolved to make it easier.

Eve: So you're changing processes, changing the way investment flows. Yeah. Changing communication. All sounds great. You got it sorted.

Claire: Definitely not.

Eve: So go on then what are some of the outstanding key challenges?

Claire: I suppose a challenge that I have felt in more recent times is that we're doing this really great work, but then it's been the, so what, so where do we go and who would we tell about this really great work. Who do we go to now? And how do we get this recognised? So that has probably been a challenge and a frustration. However, I do think that some things are starting to change, and sometimes it's reflecting because you don't feel like things are moving or changing, and sometimes that's your old way of thinking that you don't necessarily see something physical.

And for me, it's been a learning curve and taking that time to reflect and go actually the conversation that you had with somebody about how people's mindsets are starting to change, how they view things differently. So I think that that's been a personal challenge for me to go. Okay, just because we've not seen lots of funded tennis sessions in Alexandra Park, for example, that doesn't mean that we're not starting to make a difference. A challenge is always that things

sometimes I feel are too slow. And again, it's having to take the time to be brave in the approach that we've taken in terms of working with real people in a real place. Rather than it being some council led initiative that it is gonna take time because these are people that've got other bits of the day job. And sometimes there's red tape that stops you from doing that.

Eve: What kind of red tape?

Claire: Well one of the ways we got round our red tape with the community investment fund was by going to Action Together. So what we knew was that in order to get money out to groups quickly we had too much red tape at the council. For example, all the process and the governance you have to go through to have a supplier for example that's an example of red tape, but how we got round it was by using Action Together.

So for example, a community group asking about, we had one around some land, they identified a patch of land, and nobody seems to know why this piece of land can't be built on, so that's who owns it? It was up for sale. There was somebody who had proposed to build some synthetic pitches on it. It was a private investor that was stopped and frustration from the community because they go it's the council that are stopping everything. And then sometimes that's just a red tape that we can't always get over. We will try our best to find out why, but I think that's where that can be frustrating because as soon as you say you work for the council people just go, 'oh god well it's never gonna happen then'. That's one example, but I think how we get around that is by being as transparent and honest with community members as you can.

Richard: The Local Pilot frees people because it doesn't have any real performance measures wrapped around it. So it frees thinking, it frees up people to be different, do different and be innovative. But that in itself brings its own challenge because traditionally when you had delivered five, ten, fifteen tennis sessions, that's a measure you can see, you can count. That freedom brings its own challenge. So we're not only having to think about the measure. We're having to think about the understanding of those individuals involved in the work and those who are looking in on the work to understand how it works. Why aren't you measuring? And if you're not measuring what are you doing? The what are you doing question comes up quite a lot. And then alongside that there's the narrative, so how do you tell the story of the work? Who wants to hear it and how do they want to hear it?

So all those are all the things which haven't just been sat in Oldham, but have been sat centrally and in all the other localities. And we're still working our way

through that in terms of the measurement and the evaluation and the learning in terms of reflection. I mean, if you said to someone I'm gonna spend some time reflecting, they'd probably look at you in a very odd type of way and say aren't you just too busy to do that? Well actually no cause reflection is a really important part of what we do now and understanding why things are or are not working the way we want them to work or understanding what changes or impacts we've seen this week. Like those small minutia, someone coming to speak to you about going out before fast and breaking fast and doing the walk. That's a huge change, but people won't necessarily see that as a change cause it's not a hundred people walking down the street. So those are things where we recognise that we support collectively to say, no that's right, keep on that path. You're doing the right things. You're going the right way. Don't fall back into that mindset of we need to see a hundred tennis sessions, because those a hundred tennis sessions probably engage a hundred people who are doing other things as well, and potentially not engaging those who will sit on the outside and look in and go, it's not for me.

Eve: So it's come up over and over again in all the podcasts and in conversations around this. What are the indicators of progress and both to be able to tell others and indicate the value of the work. But particularly as people working in this space everyone wants to go home at the end of the day don't you, and you give a lot to it and have a sense of achievement and pride.

So how have you personally as a leader in this space found a way to navigate that so that you can hold onto a sense of yeah I'm making a difference here without having those numbers and those counts that traditionally we've held onto?

Claire: I think one of those for me is when you go into some of the spaces in the community and you see people using those spaces for different forms of physical activity. So whether that be families playing, whether it be people walking, whether it being a tennis court being used. That change in mindset around this is okay to do this. This is something that people are building into their lives. I think that for me is a real thing. That's how I would if you determine what success could look like. So whether that's in a workspace, so people being more active, a senior leader advocating that it's okay to have like you said, walking meetings, wearing your trainers. I mean those are massive things aren't they? But it's not just about that. People advocating it's people telling you about it feeling proud about making those changes. I think that for me is a real indicator of change, particularly in those communities that we're working in where we know there are barriers, we know there are challenges, but

actually for some of those people that is a big step change for them because it's something that it's just so alien to them.

Richard: The conversation has changed in this Local Pilot steering group. So it's shifted from one which felt at the very beginning quite transactional. So it is the council who were leading it, and almost everyone was looking at the council as having the power and therefore the council will tell us what to do and we'll sit back and passively accept that. To one which is now much more of a natural conversation now. There's the partners around them, the stakeholders around the table are more engaged in trying to understand themselves what a potential solution/ intervention could be to a challenge.

Let's take for example the last conversation we were in was around the Green Gyms and why some of the Green Gyms in the parks weren't being used. Now additionally that would've fallen the council to go well we know why. And it's because we aren't advertising them properly and they aren't trainers there. So get someone out there and do that. Well actually this time Claire took a bit of a back step on that and just went they're not being used let's discuss. And now collectively they've come up with trying to create some maps of where those parks are, trying to do some advocacy in terms of getting OCL to have some trainers up there who are gonna support groups of people to get those Green Gyms active. If people can see people using them they might be more inclined to use themselves to having some information QR code posters up there so they can then use technology to begin to think about how do we use this so that wasn't a council decision. It wasn't a council solution. It was a collective solution which then should lead to again getting back to that cashless investment and that sustainability. The community is taking more ownership of that space and of that park and of that opportunity to be more active. So that's probably been the biggest shift that I've seen in the three, four years.

And the other one is just momentum, clearly Covid we haven't mentioned yet, but Covid did get in the way. It did slow a lot of the work down, because of the communities that were engaged and that they were predominantly those communities who were probably having the biggest impact in terms of the pandemic, in terms of the information they were getting the trust they had in the system to know what to do and where to go. But now what we're beginning to see I think is those communities coming back into a conversation around well how do we become active? We know activity is a rehab from Covid. We know that that's important to us. We know our mental health has been challenged through this period. How do we use physical activity? And they want to have the conversation. So they're approaching Claire and the team and others as opposed to Claire and the team going into the community and going right then

come and speak to us. They're going, no we want to speak to you. We want you in our place now to have these conversations and develop the work.

Claire: So the cycling that's a classic one. We were due to do some learn to ride indoor cycling just before Covid hit, and it all had to be put on hold. And one of the ladies phoned me saying 'when are we gonna get this cycling up and running again? We've got ladies desperate to do it.' And going right okay. That's just an example where they'll come to you and say yeah we've got this desire to do something and that's where you want to help them to go right. I'll try and facilitate that but I'm not doing it for you. So even things like if you're insistent on having it as a closed session we're gonna have to pay for it. No, that's fine. That's absolutely fine. I say well even if you did it as a digital skill session where the ladies can come together and you can work with them to book each other on the course. Whereas in the past I think the inclination would've been just to do it for them. We'll sort everything out for the ladies where they're going. Nope, that's fine. So that in itself was quite nice because I think that's a shift where again they're used to either doing everything for their user, or their clients, or their members.

Eve: It's quite a big shift really in where power is and where people perceive they have power cause we often give it up by thinking we don't have any and it all sits with somebody else. And again often that's a whole load of misconceptions in that somehow the council owns all the property or all the land and holds all the money. And obviously that's not true. It's distributed, there's a whole load of other partners, and leaders, and complexities in all of that but supporting people sounds like to really have a sense of their power and ownership, and helping that to then facilitate change in the things that they really care about. Fantastic. So what are the key things that you'd really like to see change?

Claire: That across the board, so whether that is somebody talking to a family member, talking to somebody within a service. So a job support service, somebody going to a GP. That everybody feels comfortable to talk about physical activity and moving more, and that people know enough about our system that that person goes away from whether that's a GP, or a job club or whatever to know that it's okay to do something and where they could do it. I think that's a really key thing is that we don't want it to be somebody else's business. So we don't want somebody to go, oh it's something to do with physical activity I'll send you through to Claire. We want it to be everybody else's business to go, 'it's just important we get our population to move more'. So people feel comfortable. I think that's one thing that is across the board whoever is out there. So like we said that we have all these advocates for

physical activity that we get to the point that we almost don't need to do that because people will be moving more, but we're not at that point yet. So we still need it to be verified. And sometimes it needs to be verified by people with perceived power, professionals, and sometimes it needs to be verified by family members. So everybody has different people that they go to. But I want everybody to feel comfortable to talk about physical activity and to change that mindset that oh, I'm not a sporty person because this is not what this is about.

And that's still a challenge cause we're still on that moving away from it just being about going to gyms or playing football. And like I say for physical activity to be normalised, to make it much easier in these spaces for people to be able to do that as well. I think that's a massive thing, and a lot of that's structural, but if we are having the conversation with people about moving more and at the same time those spaces feel more welcoming, hopefully they'll go hand in hand together.

Richard: I think there is a huge energy around Oldham at the moment from a senior leadership within the council, communities, through the community organisations, through the individuals. I think there's a real energy and drive and desire to be different and do different and think different. As Claire said earlier, traditionally Oldham in terms of their Active Lives data hasn't necessarily been at the highest level. And again it's been compounded by Covid, but I believe in what I'm hearing, what I'm seeing, what I'm feeling from that locality that will change quite quickly.

I think there's a real system approach to the challenge, not the challenge of physical activity but the challenge of health and wellbeing. And I think Claire and the team have a real opportunity to embed and work physical activity into those conversations more and more and more. It's not necessarily the team going to have the conversations, but the conversations coming to the team.

I think Oldham's a hotbed of innovation at the moment and thinking, and approach. And I just would love to see that continue. I think there's enough information, there's enough good stories, there's enough learning to be able to share that in a broader context and also taking some of the learning that we've seen in Glodwick and in Failsworth. And being able to show that and use that in other parts of Oldham, both in terms of locality, but also parts of the Oldham systems I'm thinking there about health in particular with GP's et cetera, social prescribing, and taking that learning of how to engage, ways to co - produce, ways to co-design, how to capture learning and reflect, but applying that in different spaces now and seeing what that means, what that leads to and where that takes the work.

Eve: Great. So it's gonna be everyone's business.

Claire: Yeah, I want it to be everybody's business. Yep.

Eve: Everyone's got a role to play and all those spaces feel welcoming and inclusive for everybody to get stuck in.

Claire: Going out and about I just want to see more people just moving around. That's the aspiration. However that looks, and I want to hear more conversations from other people about things that people have done. And like I said, it may only be small changes, but I love hearing people talking about where they've changed their behaviour because I'm so passionate about physical activity in any of its forms. And whether that be whatever it is, rock climbing or gardening or whatever it is. I just think there's something for everybody, there's something that they will find. So whether that's putting on some music and dancing in the kitchen, I just think because it gives me joy. I think anybody getting up and moving around can do the same. So when I just hear those little conversations that just gives me a lot of joy and that's what I want everybody to get some of those endorphins that I think I've I get from when I do any movement or physical activity.

Eve: Joyful.

Claire: Joyful, yeah. Woohoo.

Eve: Can't beat that really can you. A more joyful future.

Claire: And I think that's the thing. I know I was talking a bit happy clappy there, but I suppose what my point there is that we know that there are people in our communities who live in really difficult circumstances. And we quite often have conversations when you talk to somebody. These are people at crisis point. You can't go and talk to them about physical activity, but that's not what we're about. It is around something that they can do to support their mental wellbeing. If somebody can be supported to get out the front door, that's moving. Somebody that can be supported to meet a friend who wouldn't go out, somebody who's got health problems or perceived health problems. They can't do something and they can be supported to go to a physio session or it could be anything moving out the chair that is progress.

So I don't wanna make light of the fact that we are working with some people who we're never going to get them to the point of going to the gym, but if it can

make a difference by getting them to move more for their health and wellbeing. And they can start to go on a journey, we're not gonna get everybody on all those journeys. And I think what Covid did give us is like I say these networks of people and leaders in those communities who are the ones who will have those conversations with those people who they will listen to, who they respect, not always they don't know us. We may not have things in common with them, but if we can find that commonality in terms of the conversations and the language that we're using, that makes it relevant to that person. So the physical activity becomes a byproduct. Just to help that person out, even if it's for a really short period of time that would be a real step forward for Oldham I think.

Eve: Wonderful, well it's been a joy talking to you both. Honestly, it's been lovely, really enjoyed the conversation. So thank you. Thanks for all you are doing and, more of those conversations and people feeding back and involving you in great stuff. And I look forward to seeing where this energy and this drive in Oldham leads to.

Outro

Eve: We've heard how moving matters to everybody and how we can all play a role to design moving back into everyday life. Now we'd love to hear how you keep moving, and the ways you are supporting others to live an active life. You contact us on our socials. We are on Facebook and Twitter, just search Greater Sport, and don't forget the #GMMovingInAction.

Please do share the episode to 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.