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Conference 2025

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Women & Girls Moving - The Art of Possible

Claire Marshall, GM Moving
&

Justine Blomeley, Merseyside Sport

With Contributions from Kate Peers, This Girl Can

Workshop Aims and Objectives

- Provide a brief overview of the latest physical activity data around women and girls
- To inform workshop attendees about what we are doing as 2 city regions to help tackle gendered inequalities around physical activity, movement and sport
- To explore and discuss how a collective approach around a shared action plan could support greater change

Setting the Scene

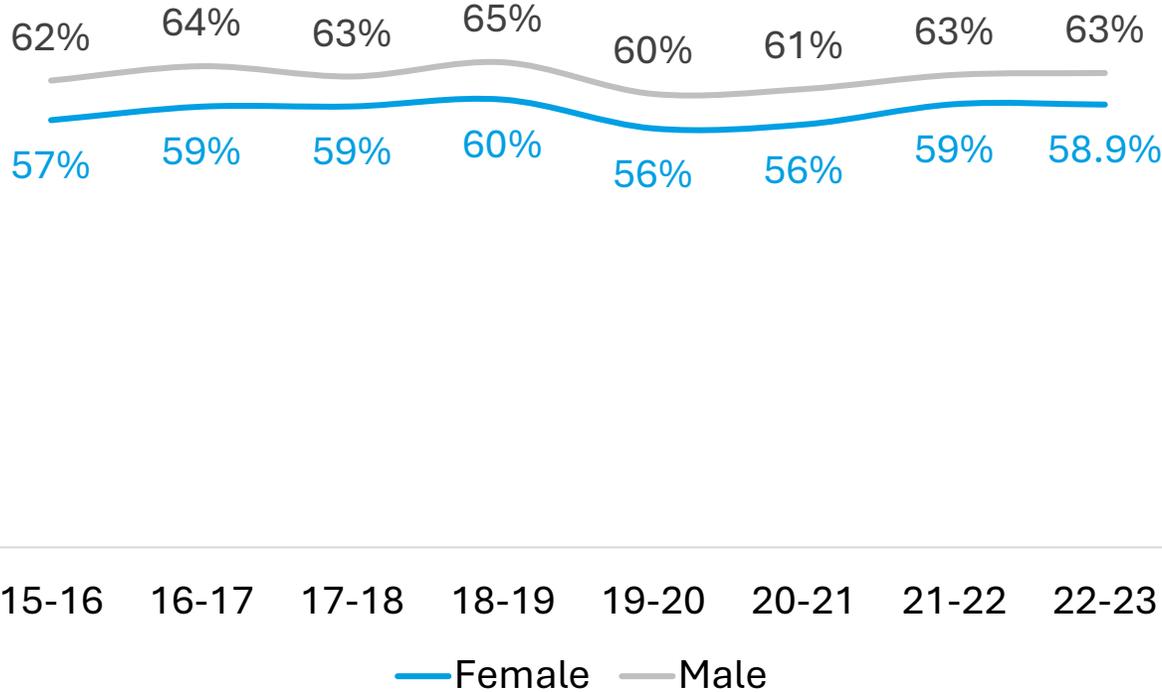
- Moving matters to all women and girls
- Women and girls face additional barriers to an active life
- Everyone has a role to play to close the gender activity gap

Active proportions have historically been lower for women compared to men

with an inequality gap of approximately 4 percentage points



Activity rates have not recovered to pre pandemic highs



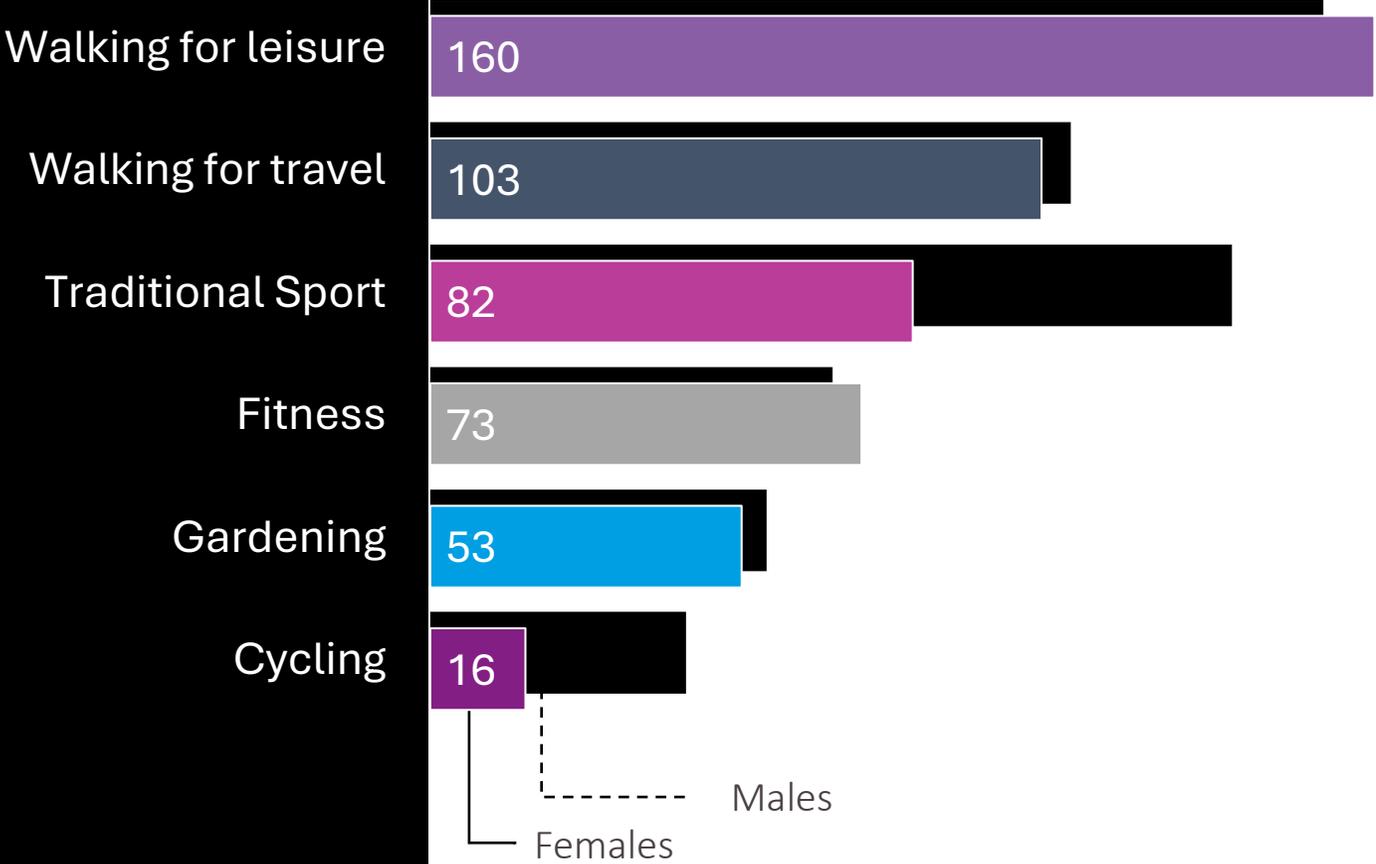
Source: Sport England Active Lives Survey 2015-16 to 2022-23 (16+)
Measure: Physical activity levels (excluding gardening)

59% of women are active



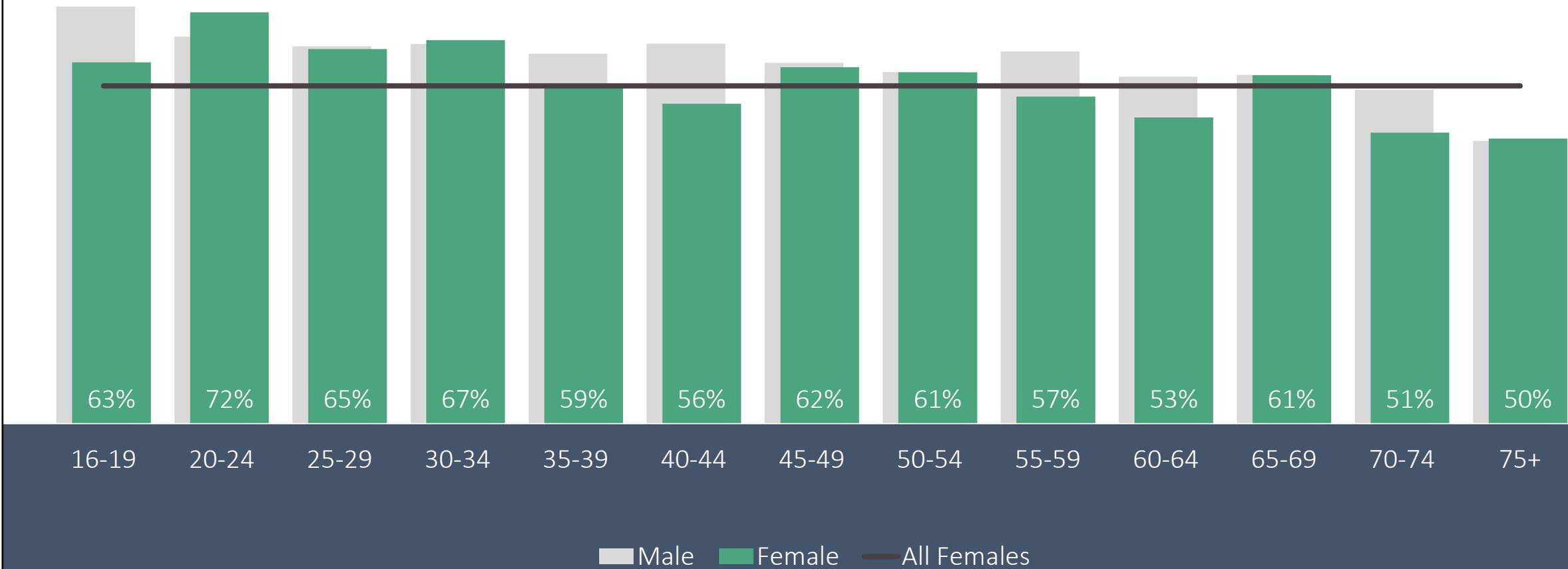
Women get most of their active minutes through walking

Average weekly active minutes (females aged 16+)

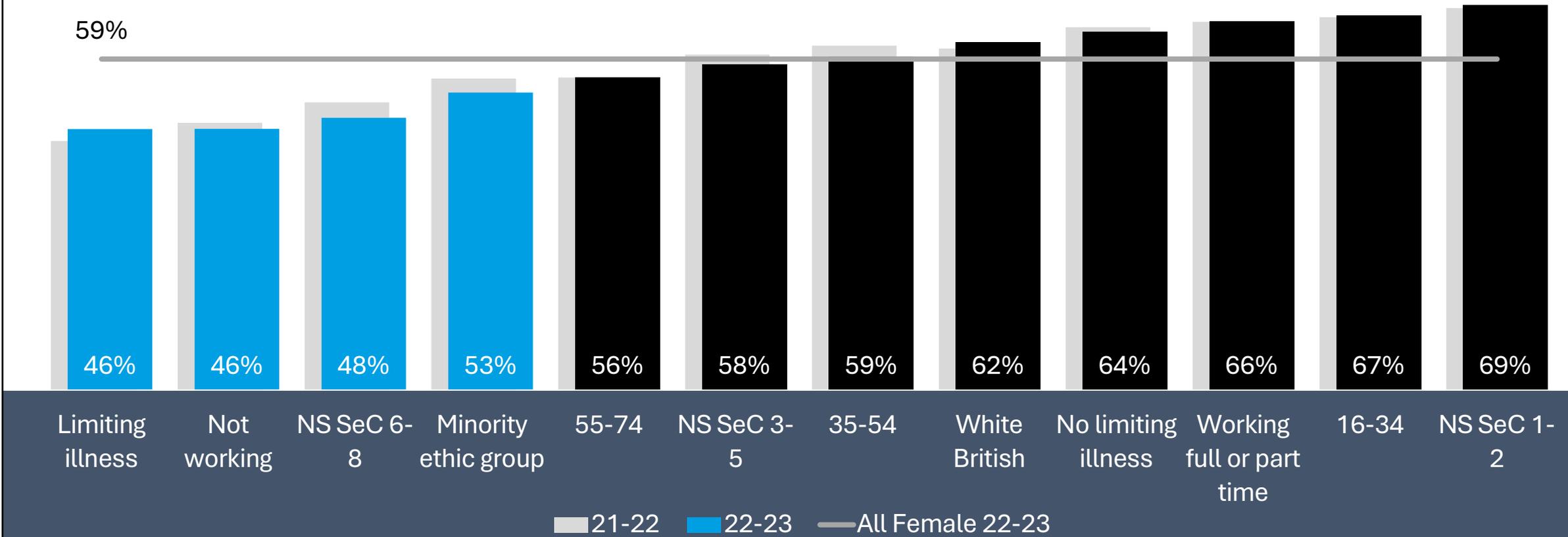


Source: Sport England Active Lives Survey 2021-23 (aged 25-44)
Measure: Minutes of physical activity per week by activity

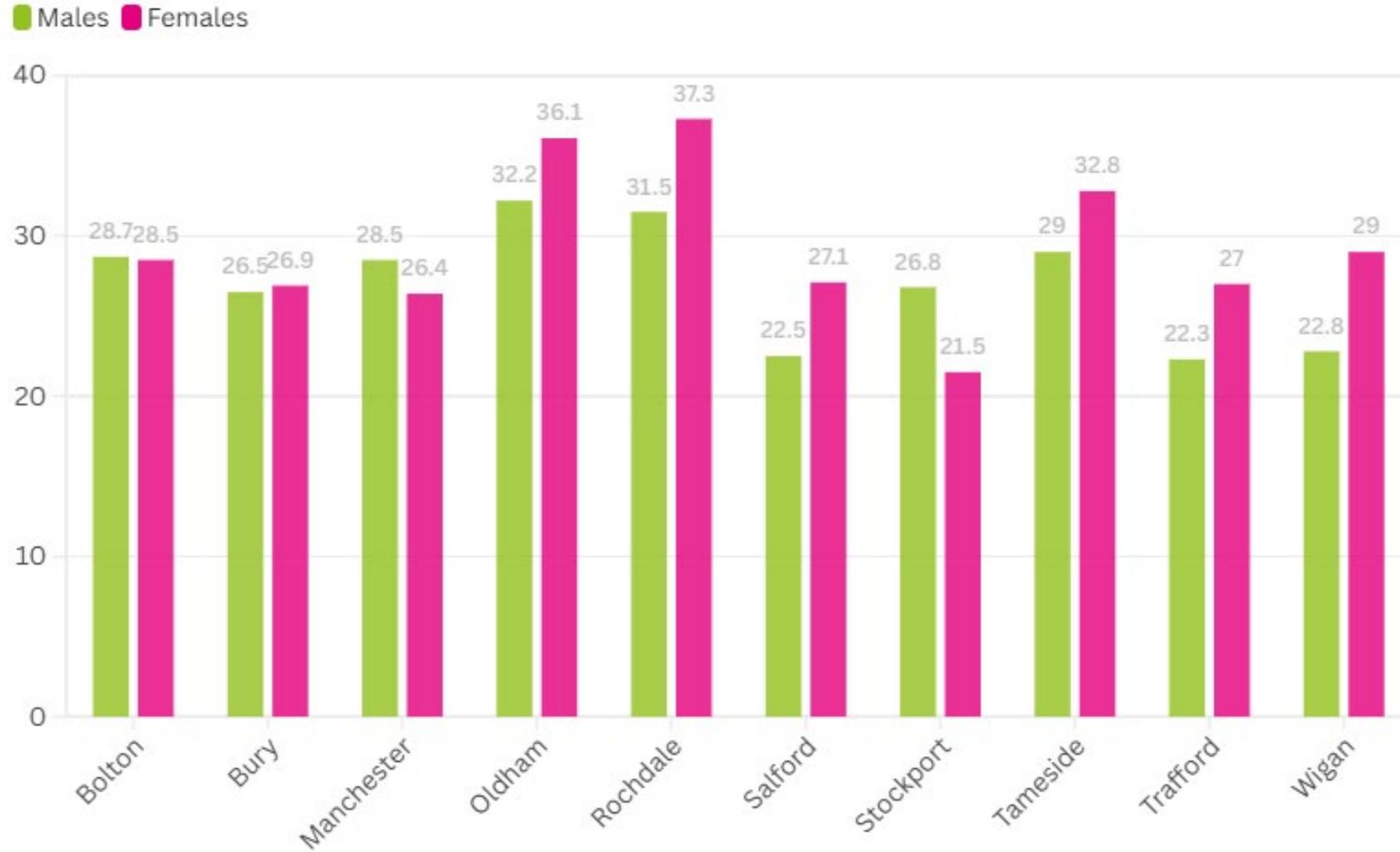
Activity by age (life course)



Active proportions are lowest for women with a limiting illness or disability, outside the workforce, in NS SeC 6-8 or from minority ethnic groups



Inactivity Rate by GM Borough, 2022-23



Source: Sport England, Active Lives Survey 2022-23

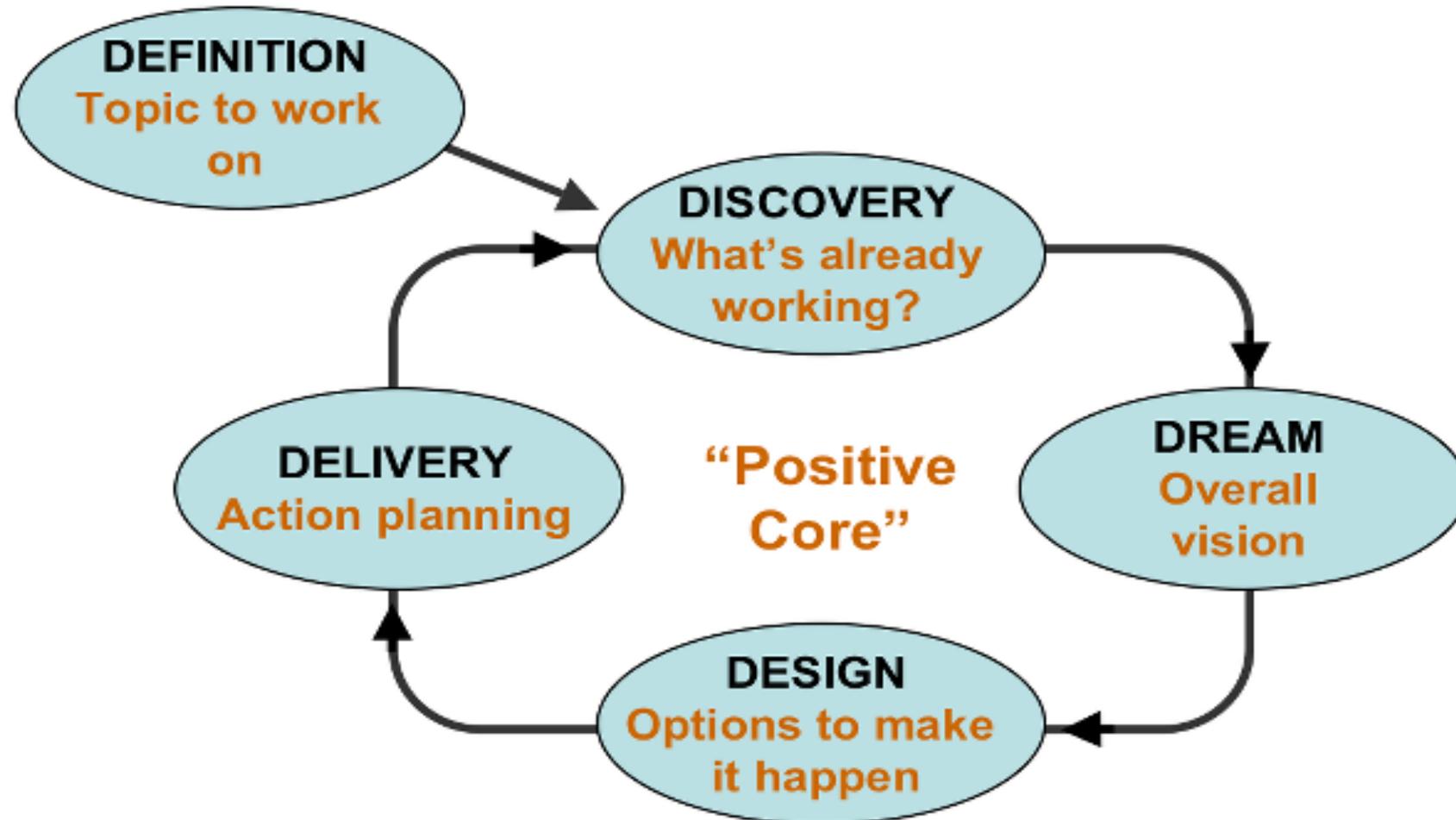
A City Region Approach to Women and Girls

What - Greater Manchester and Liverpool City Regions working together around a shared aspiration to support more women and girls to feel they can access and enjoy physical activity safely, when they want and how they want

Why – Alignment and collaboration around shared priorities will help create more collective leadership and create the conditions for change

How - Summary of what we have done so far and future plans

Appreciative Inquiry – What? So what? Now what?



Emerging themes from Appreciative Enquiry Task

- Safety and inclusivity in public and leisure spaces
- Shifts in cultural and social norms
- Accessible and equality of opportunities
- Data-driven change and accountability
- Seamless and enjoyable active journeys

What can help our joint commitment to help tackle gendered inequality?...

- Understanding the data, insight and research.
- Framing and messaging
- Alignment and commitment around shared priorities
- Lift up and share some of the great work going on around shared priorities

This Girl Can

- A national lottery funded campaign to help women from all backgrounds get active in ways which work for them
- Now in its 10th year
- Its campaigns are built on research, insight and collaborations
- New phase of its campaign is pushing for change to ensure all women feel they belong in the world of physical activity
- [Insight | This girl can](#)



OUR WOMEN

Women on lower incomes and who additionally are from:

- Asian Muslim communities
- Black communities
- Are aged 55 years or over
- Are pregnant and/or have a child under one year old

Taking an intersectional approach, the campaign will also need to meet the needs of disabled women and women with long-term health conditions, as well as being fully diverse and inclusive.

THIS GIRL CAN HAVE DONE A LOT OF RESEARCH TO:

1. Understand the scale and breadth of barriers that prevent our women from getting active
2. Unearth what will motivate our women despite these barriers
3. Understand what type of support and solutions our women need to get started and stay committed



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is a belonging problem

Many of our women feel indifferent or ambivalent towards belonging in the world of physical activity. Only 1 in 10 feel like they completely belong.

Barriers are layered

Cost and motivation are top barriers but the reality is far more complex - a layered intersection of physical, emotional and cultural barriers stop our women getting active.

Simple solutions work

Our women want practical help and guidance. Simple solutions like “seeing people like me in the class” and “gentle low impact class options” would make women feel more welcome.

Brighton and Helsinki Declaration

- Developed and endorsed by the IWG (International Working Group) on Women in Sport in 1994
- IWG is a global network of networks – bringing together organisations that advance opportunities for women and girls in and through sport.
- Advancing equality and equity, from grassroots through to elite.
- Work covers a number of areas including: making the case for change, connection & collaboration, innovate and influence policy.
- An international treaty to support the ongoing development of a more fair and equitable system of sport and physical activity, fully inclusive of women and girls
- Every 4 years it hosts a Global Summit on Women - Birmingham 9th-11th July 2026

The 10 Principles

- 1. Equity and Equality in Society and Sport**
- 2. Facilities**
- 3. School and Youth Sport**
- 4. Developing Participation**
- 5. High Performance Sport**
- 6. Leadership in Sport**
- 7. Education, Training and Development**
- 8. Sport Information and Research**
- 9. Resources**
- 10. Domestic and International Cooperation**

What Next?

- Aiming to sign up as 2 City regions to the declaration via our combined authorities
- Use the 10 principles to help guide us in developing a shared action plan to build up to the International Working Group (IWG) Women & Sport conference in July 2026
- Whole system leadership to change culture and shift barriers to active lives for women and girls
- Engage and inspire other Mayoral Combined Authorities

Task

From the 10 principles

- Which of these resonate most strongly for you/your organisation?

Agree as a collective which we want to focus on (max 5)

The 10 Principles

- 1. Equity and Equality in Society and Sport**
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On tables, discuss and capture:-

- What is already happening?
- What could you commit to doing over the next 12 months to support this principle?
- Is there anything that would help with this?

Feedback

- **What has resonated?**
- **What are people interested in exploring further?**
- **What and where could we facilitate some further discussions/opportunities?**

What can you do?

- Become part of a network of organisations working in, across or for the interests of Greater Manchester supporting our sign up as a city region to the Brighton and Helsinki Declaration
- Sign up to the IWG Women and Sport newsletter
- Help us to build up examples of what's happening in our city region on the resource hub
- Sign up to the conference in Birmingham in 2026
- Visit the TGC Campaign hub

- IWG Brighton and Helsinki Declaration
[Brighton Plus Helsinki Declaration | IWGIWG](#)
- This Girl Can [Insight | This girl can Belonging Starts with Inclusion toolkit | This girl can](#)
- Feel Good Your Way
[Greater Manchester Moving](#)
- Contact
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GM Moving conference 2025 - workshop feedback

