



Tackling Inequalities Fund Sussex

Initial Report into phases 1 and 2. Published by Active Sussex December 2020.



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Summary

In response to the unequal effects of Covid-19 and lockdown on physical activity rates, Sport England launched the Tackling Inequalities Fund. Active Sussex distributed the fund locally.

Active Sussex sought to identify partners who would be most effective in supporting people from each priority group to be active.

This has been smoothest in those partners engaging disabled people in physical activity as there is a well-established charitable sector able to react immediately.

It has been most challenging to identify partners who can support people in deprived areas and from lower socioeconomic groups to be active. As this report outlines, there are encouraging signs that most providers focusing on this have had some success.

The process has led to some new partnerships, not least in Crawley where Active Sussex had a new focus on engaging Black and South Asian people. This aligned with a focus on Crawley as the area worst hit by the economic effects of the pandemic.

The findings of this initial report will inform support for projects that are currently in progress and priorities for any future funding aimed at tackling inequalities in physical activity in Sussex.

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Inequalities in activity

Sport England's approach

From March 2020, Sport England commissioned Savanta ComRes to conduct weekly surveys of residents in England to track physical activity rates during lockdown¹ and found that the inequalities in activity levels present before the pandemic were also present during lockdown. The Tackling Inequalities Fund was created to try and help to reduce the negative impact on activity levels in these under-represented groups, with a specific focus on the following groups.

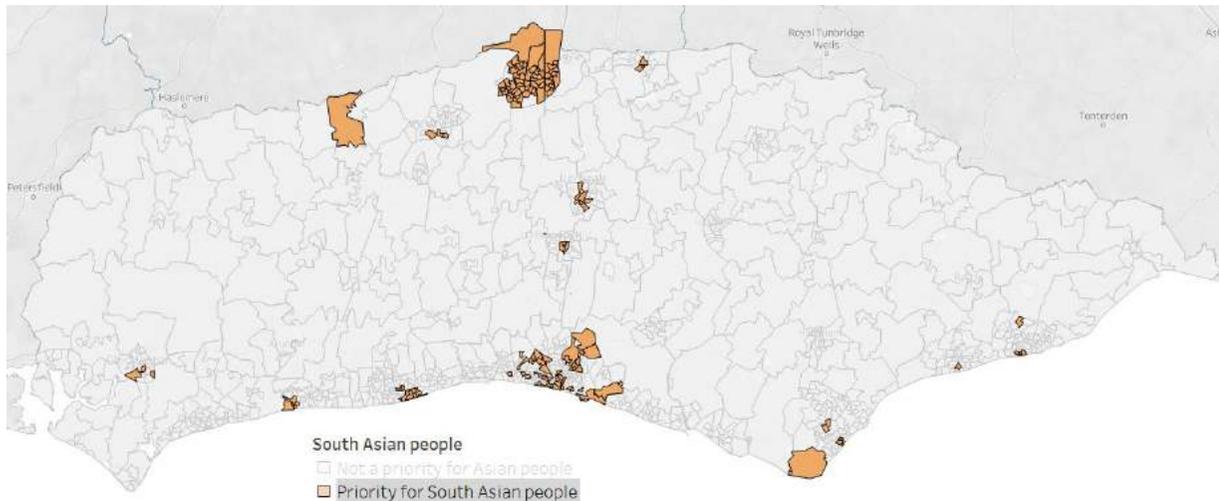
Priority groups	Inactive rate ²						
Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities	Asian (exc. Chinese)	Black	Other ethnic minorities	Chinese	White Other	White British	Mixed
	33%	30%	26%	25%	24%	23%	20%
Lower socioeconomic groups and deprived areas	Socioeconomic group				Deprivation percentile		
	Lower	Middle	Other	Higher	10% most	10-20%	10% least
	33%	24%	19%	16%	34%	29%	19%
Disabled people and people with long-term health conditions	Number of impairments				Selected impairments		
	3	2	1	0	Hearing	Mobility	Learning
	48%	37%	30%	21%	53%	50%	43%

¹ https://www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/demographic-knowledge/coronavirus?section=research#return_to_play

² Active Lives Survey Nov 2018 - Nov 2019: <https://activelives.sportengland.org/Result?queryId=259>

Black and South Asian people

Active Sussex prioritised the two broad ethnic groups with the highest inactivity rates and also the largest non-white populations in Sussex.



South Asian people

Neighbourhoods where more than 5% of the population are of South Asian ethnicity were prioritised. This included people of Asian-British, Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi ethnicity. 139 of the 999 neighbourhoods in Sussex were prioritised for this group.

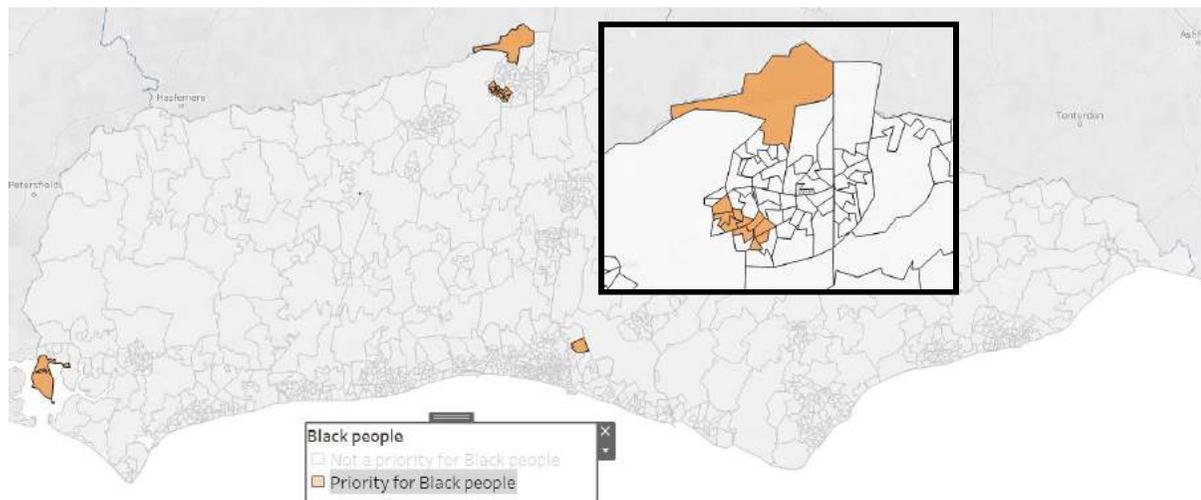
40 of the 50 neighbourhoods in Sussex in which the highest proportion of people are of South Asian ethnicity are in Crawley.

Black people

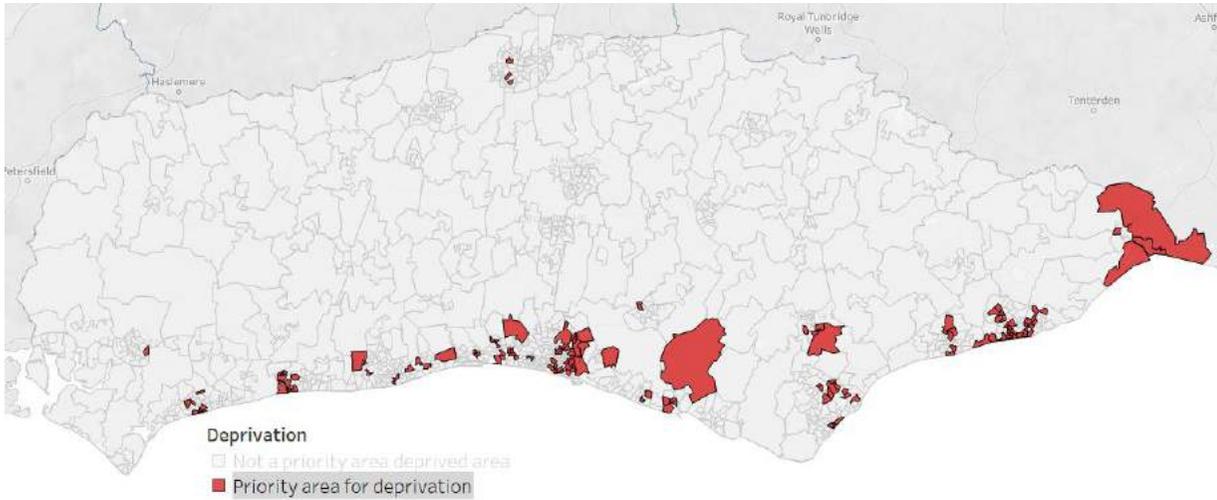
Neighbourhoods where more than 5% of the population are of Black ethnicity were prioritised which comprised 11 neighbourhoods in Crawley, one in Brighton and one in Chichester.

This included Black-British, Black Caribbean, and Black African people.

12 out of 13 of these neighbourhoods were also prioritised for South Asian people.



Deprivation and lower socioeconomic groups

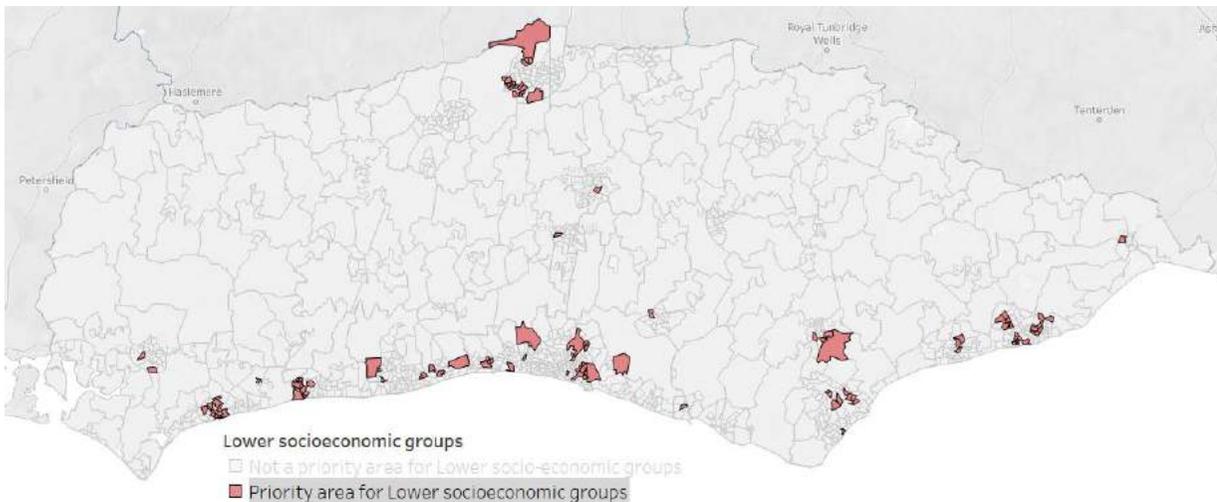


People in deprived areas

Reaching people living in areas within the 25% most deprived³ in England were priorities for this fund in Sussex.

122 of the 999 neighbourhoods in Sussex fall into this threshold. This tends to be clustered in the towns along the coastal strip.

Applicants were asked to specify delivery postcodes to determine whether they would reach people in these areas.



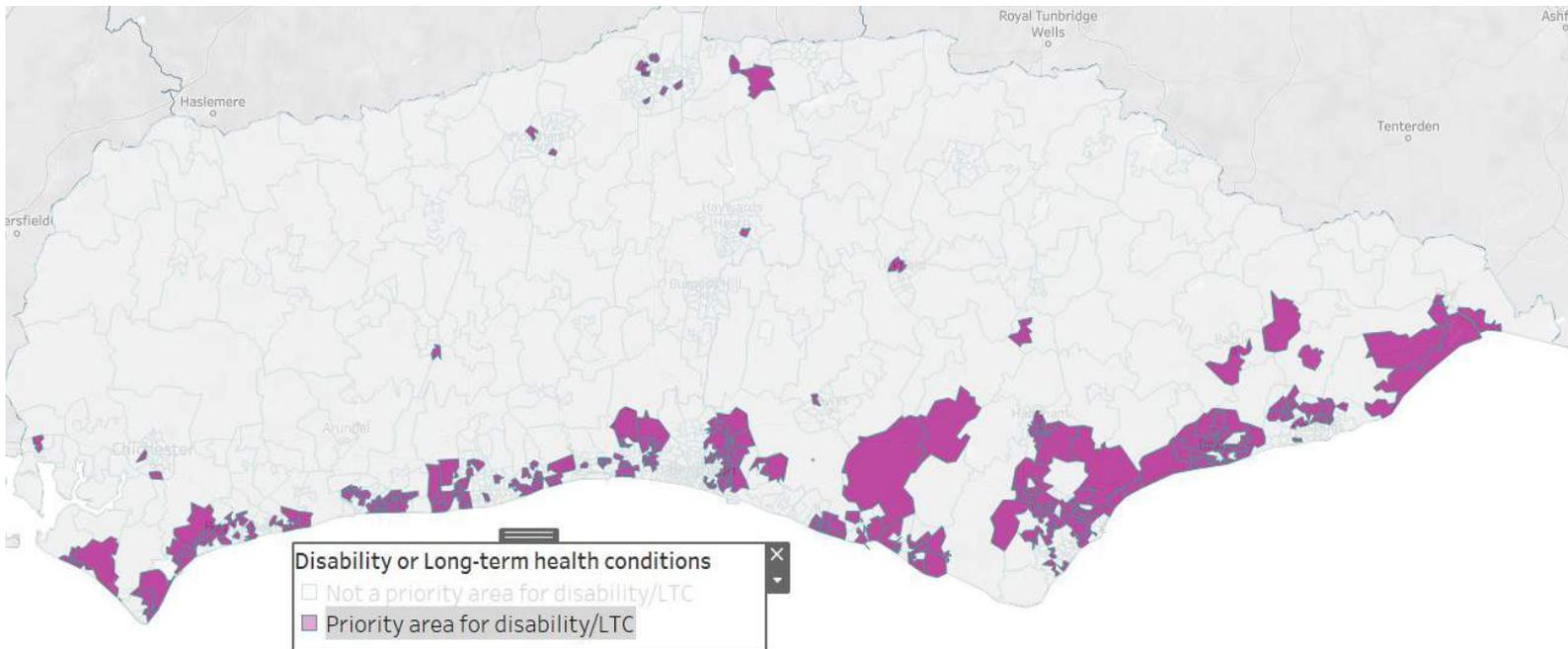
Lower socioeconomic groups (LSEG)

Most people in LSEG were covered in the areas of deprivation, but to ensure that those who do not live in those areas were not missed, the 10% of neighbourhoods with the highest proportion of people in LSEG were also prioritised. This brought a further 30 neighbourhoods into the priority list.

People in LSEG can also be targeted without a geographical focus. For example food bank users, job seekers, refugees, homeless people or other cohorts of people with low incomes.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

Disability and long-term conditions



Because disabled people, and people with long-term health conditions are present in every neighbourhood, this aspect of the funding was less targeted geographically, and relied more on the presence of providers working with people in these groups.

Disability and Long-term health conditions (LTHC)

Combined, these two priority groups are overrepresented along most of the coastal strip, as well as some pockets inland⁴. This is because impairments increase with age, as well as deprivation. Many areas in Sussex have very old populations.

Areas were categorised as a priority if they had a higher proportion of households with at least one person with one or more impairment than the national average (37%). 252 of the 999 neighbourhoods in Sussex were prioritised.

⁴ The neighbourhood-level data available on disability and long-term health conditions does not distinguish between the two priority groups. It includes people who have one or more impairment which limits their day-to-day activities

Grants by priority group

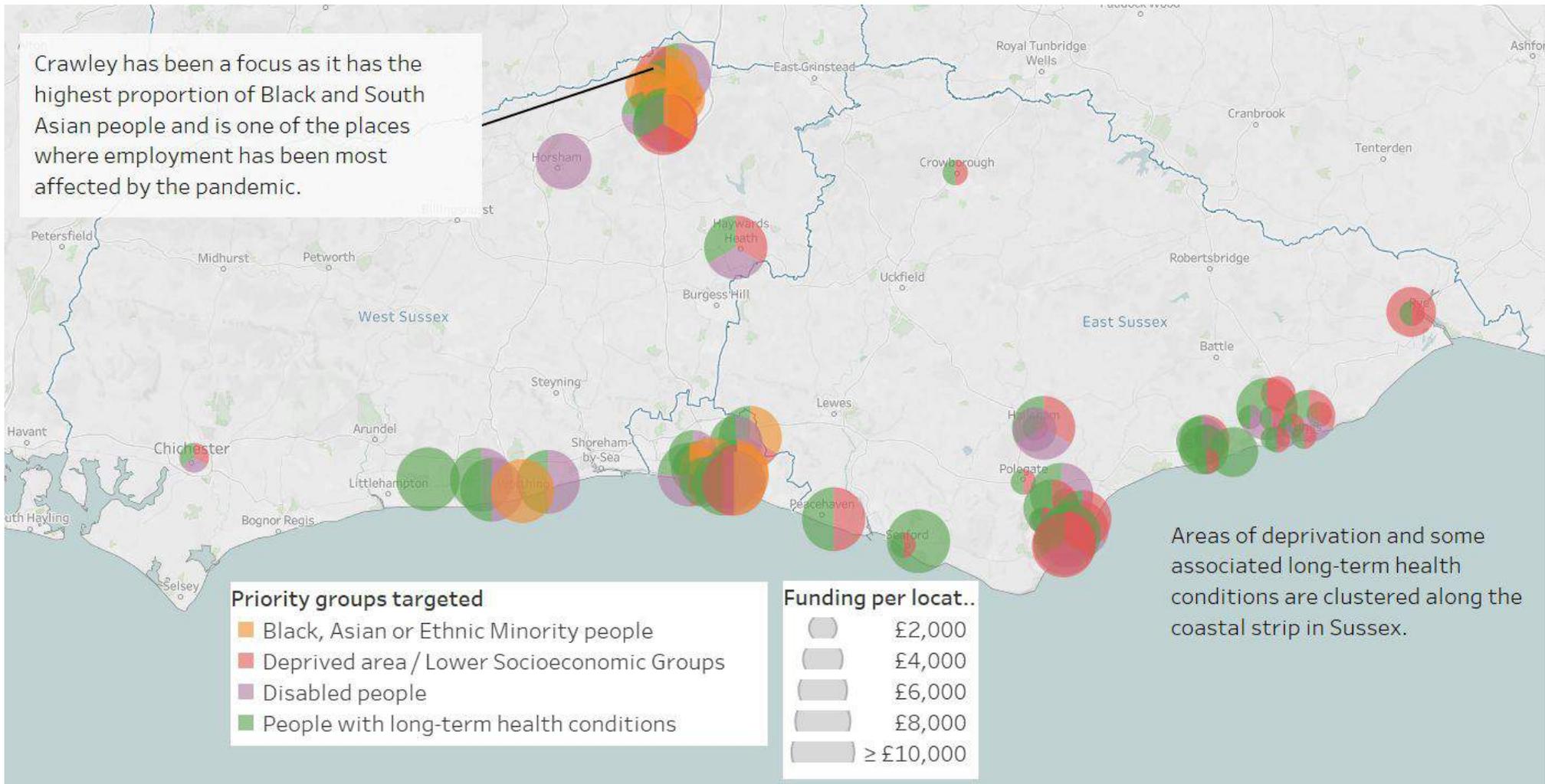
Active Sussex aimed for the funds used to target each of the priority groups to bear some relationship to the size of that group's population in Sussex. The number of Black and South Asian residents in many areas of Sussex is very low, so the aim in phase 1 was for at least £20,000 to be allocated to projects where these are the priority groups. For the other three groups the aim in phase 1 was for at least £30,000 to be allocated. The additional £110,000 provided for phase 2 doubled these targets. By value, people with long-term health conditions have been the most supported group, although there have been more grants to projects focusing on disabled people and people in deprived areas.



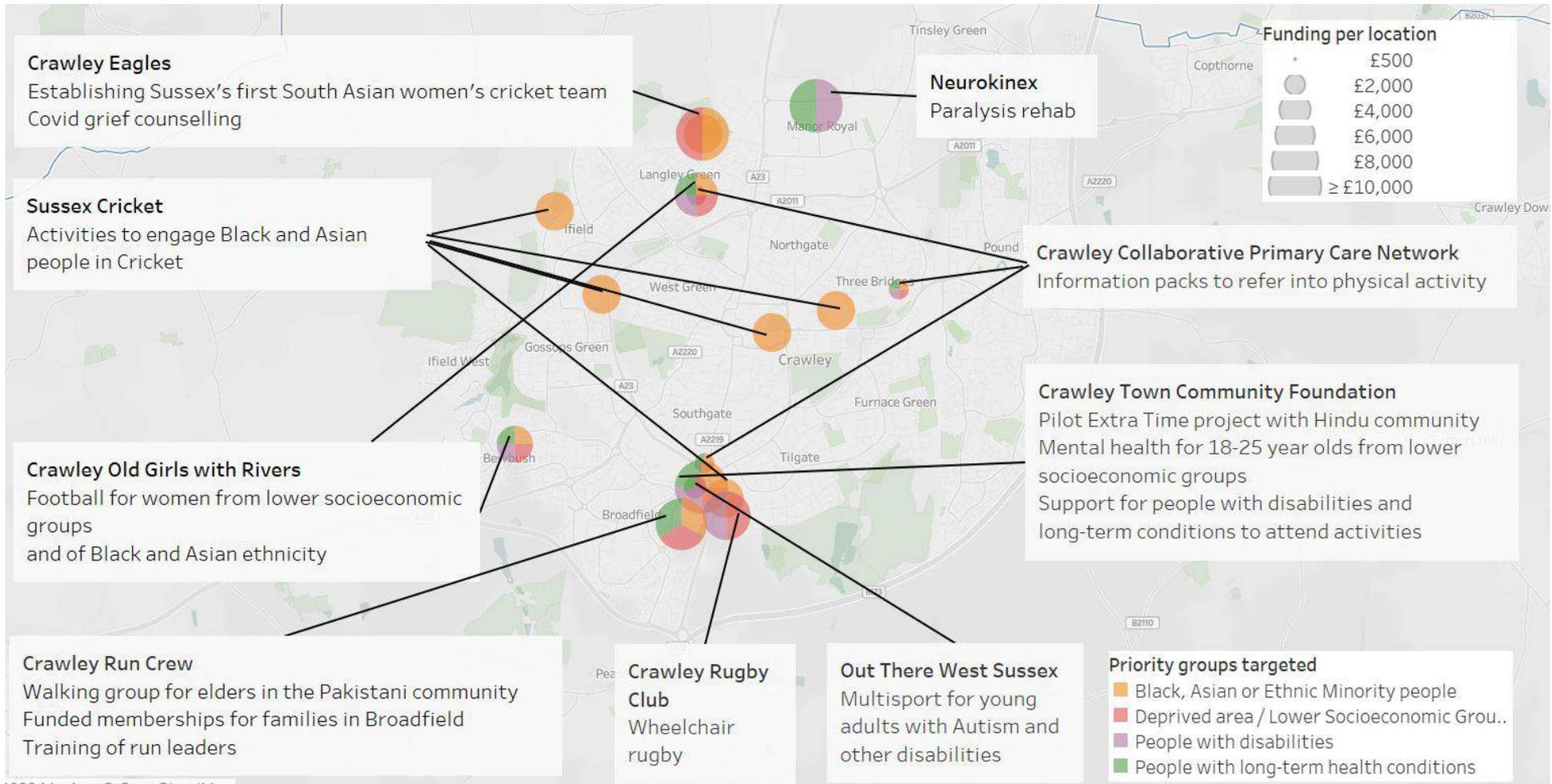
*Crude calculation by dividing the total grant by the number of priority groups targeted by that project.

Grants by area

Crawley has been a focus as it has the highest proportion of Black and South Asian people and is one of the places where employment has been most affected by the pandemic.



Focus on Crawley



The work which took place to identify appropriate projects in Crawley has spurred the creation of an Active Crawley network in which key local partners are meeting periodically to address inequalities in activity levels in the town.

Black and South Asian people

The three providers who had stated that recruiting Black or South Asian people was a priority, and that have returned surveys to date, have been successful in recruiting from those priority areas, and in recruiting participants from those ethnicities. **It is notable that those providers not targeting specific ethnicities do not tend to recruit many non-white British participants, which indicates that activities must be proactive and deliberate if they are to engage Black and South Asian people.**

Provider name	Stated priority group in application	From a priority area		From the priority group	
		% participants from priority area	Number of participants from priority area for Black and South Asian people	% of participants from Black, South Asian, and other ethnic minority groups	
Crawley Eagles Cricket Club	Yes	100%	16	94%	
The Trust for Developing Communities (TDC)	Yes	63%	10	50%	
Brighton Yoga Foundation	Yes	39%	9	39%	
Hastings Hellbent Netball Club		4%	1	9%	
Out There West Sussex		36%	12	9%	
VYD CIC		38%	21	7%	
Sweet Circus CIC		17%	4	4%	
Active Worthing		6%	3	2%	
Impact Initiatives		70%	31	2%	
Cancer United		3%	1	0%	
Defiant Sports		6%	2	0%	
The Neurokinex Charitable Trust		25%	2	0%	
Holding Space		0%	0	0%	

Providers who were not targeting this priority group are included for comparison to assess the extent to which each priority group is engaged when they are not specifically targeted.

A woman with a large afro hairstyle is performing a yoga pose outdoors on a pink mat. She is sitting in a cross-legged position, leaning back on her hands, with her right arm extended vertically upwards. She is wearing a purple patterned tank top and black leggings. The background is a lush green field with trees and a clear blue sky.

Brighton Yoga Foundation have recruited two people of colour as yoga teachers and organised education on racial justice to a wider cohort of local yoga instructors. However it has been challenging to retain the people of colour recruited to participate, particularly during the transition to online instruction during the second lockdown.



Who is being reached?

“I became a yoga guide because I never found anywhere with staff or students that looked like me. There's a variety of reasons why that is - financial barriers, appropriation, restrictive studio culture, body image and so much more. Also my heritage has ties with the practice and I want to honour its roots through how I teach.”

Indie, one of two yoga teachers of colour recruited by Brighton Yoga Foundation.



Crawley Eagles have successfully established a Womens Cricket Team, mainly recruiting young women of South Asian ethnicity. The team have competed in, and won, tournaments. Two Asian women will train as level one cricket coaches to help sustain and grow participation in their local community.

Connecting up the system

Relationships have been developed with existing and new partners who were unknown to Active Sussex prior to the pandemic.

A working group has been created with key partners in Crawley to focus on the wider work that tackles inequalities in what is a focus area for Active Sussex.

This group includes Crawley Borough Council, Crawley Wellbeing, Crawley Community Action and the partners funded through the Tackling Inequalities Fund including Crawley Care Collaborative Primary Care Network.

From the initial meetings, there is now a commitment to working more collaboratively in order to better link the work happening across the borough which will help to identify further gaps in provision.



Deprived areas and lower socioeconomic groups

It is encouraging that most providers targeting people in deprived areas or in lower socioeconomic groups were successful in doing so. Two questions were asked to participants on the economic impact of the pandemic on their lives. By this measure, several of the providers have engaged participants who have experienced some measure of economic hardship due to Covid-19. It will be useful to monitor this as more monitoring surveys are submitted, particularly to compare Crawley with other towns in Sussex.

Hastings Hellbent Netball Club have recruited 25 new members but most of these members are not from deprived areas of the town. Following discussion with Active Sussex staff, the club will refocus recruitment efforts by recruiting mums through schools in target areas.

Provider name	From a priority area				Indicators of financial hardship		
	Stated priority group in application	% of participants from deprived areas	Number of participants from deprived areas	% of participants from areas with high proportion of LSEG	Number of participants from areas with high proportion of LSEG	% participants with reduced income due to Covid	% participants who have been made redundant
The Trust for Developing Communities (TDC)	Yes	88%	14	63%	10	25%	0%
VYD CIC	Yes	44%	24	36%	20	21%	2%
Defiant Sports	Yes	26%	5	11%	2	8%	0%
Sweet Circus CIC	Yes	25%	6	25%	6	39%	6%
Holding Space		25%	2	18%	2	38%	0%
Out There West Sussex	Yes	15%	5	18%	6	6%	0%
Crawley Eagles Cricket Club	Yes	13%	2	26%	4	13%	0%
Impact Initiatives		11%	5	2%	1	11%	2%
Brighton Yoga Foundation		9%	2	0%	0	29%	10%
Hastings Hellbent Netball Club	Yes	4%	1	4%	1	17%	0%
Cancer United		3%	1	3%	1	12%	0%
Active Worthing		0%	0	0%	0	6%	2%
The Neurokinex Charitable Trust		0%	0	0%	0	33%	10%

“I used to play contact sports but had to stop as a carrier of muscular dystrophy. Epileptic seizures prevent me from swimming alone. I hate the gym...”

“I was recovering from Covid and pneumonia and was looking for something to get fitter and make friends. I like weird, unusual stuff. I found Sweet Circus online. They dropped the juggling kit off to me the next day. The sessions were chatty and really welcoming. I’ve made great new friends.”

Michelle, participant in Sweet Circus

Michelle has found it harder to be active over recent years due to conditions including asthma and seizures. After suffering from Covid-19 and pneumonia in April 2020, Michelle found the online juggling classes offered by Sweet Circus. The classes have helped in her physical and mental recovery and she loves the diversity of people taking part.



Disability and long-term conditions

Most providers have engaged some disabled people, or people with long-term health conditions and some have almost exclusively engaged people with disabilities and long-term conditions. As described above, disabilities and long-term conditions affect people everywhere, so it is not surprising that some providers have not recruited from priority geographic areas. Those providers that have recruited from these areas are those that have a focus on lower socioeconomic groups and deprivation, namely TDC and VYD, but also Holding Space who have engaged participants with health conditions in priority neighbourhoods in Eastbourne.

The majority of Cancer United participants stated that they do not have a condition that limits their daily activities. This may be in part to the support they receive from Cancer United to become and remain physically active. The majority are shielding.

Provider	Disability a priority in application	Long-term conditions (LTCs) a priority in application	From a priority area		In the priority group	
			% of participants from priority areas for disabilities and LTCs	Number of participants from priority areas for disabilities and LTCs	% of participants with a disability or long-term condition	% shielding from Covid-19
The Neurokinex Charitable Trust	Yes	Yes	0%	0	91%	48%
Active Worthing		Yes	35%	16	90%	72%
Defiant Sports	Yes	Yes	29%	10	76%	42%
Holding Space		Yes	82%	9	63%	0%
Impact Initiatives	Yes	Yes	7%	3	54%	30%
Out There West Sussex	Yes	Yes	10%	4	46%	13%
Sweet Circus CIC			29%	7	33%	11%
Brighton Yoga Foundation			39%	9	33%	10%
The Trust for Developing Communities (TDC)			88%	14	31%	8%
Cancer United		Yes	13%	4	28%	54%
VYD CIC		Yes	51%	38	22%	21%
Hastings Hellbent Netball Club			30%	7	8%	6%
Crawley Eagles Cricket Club			0%	0	0%	0%

Bridging the digital divide

Who is being reached?

Impact Initiatives have been extremely successful at engaging people both on and offline since the pandemic began through The Hop 50+, a cafe and centre in Hove.

An activity pack is posted each week to people who are unable to use Zoom. 120 packs per week are now sent out. Participants are supported by a dedicated person to help them log onto Zoom.

When social distancing guidelines were relaxed in Summer 2020, the most isolated people have been invited into the centre, and participate with those online.

The social side

Numbers are growing for The Hop 50+ online sessions, 35 weeks into the pandemic. One of the key features that keeps people coming back is the emphasis on fun and socialising.

Poems, puzzles and non-competitive quizzes are run each week and people move from these into the physical activity sessions.

Classes don't start for the first 10 minutes during which new participants are welcomed, and everyone has time to chat.

Participants get to choose a music track which has a special meaning for them to be played during the session.



“It saved my life.”

Victoria has a number of health conditions, the latest of which is osteoarthritis. Her consultant told her she would never get better, but since joining The Hop 50+ online sessions, Victoria is now able to reach cupboards and go up and down stairs which were a struggle before.

“It's great to get away from always talking about our illnesses. We've developed some real friendships. Despite being from different backgrounds, we're all equal. It gives you great strength. It's heartwarming.”

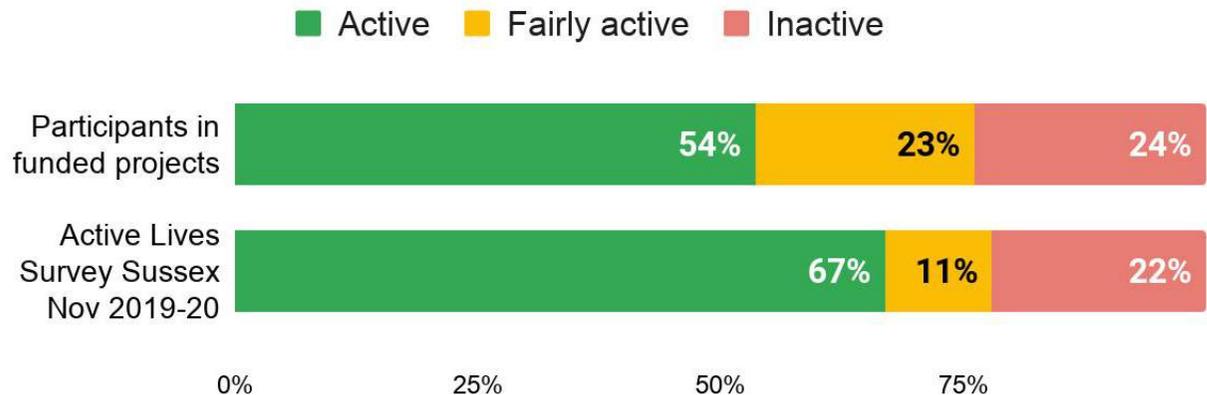
Victoria attends sessions such as strength and balance, Step to the Beat, and Chair Boogie throughout the week.

Physical activity behaviour...

Previous activity level

Participants in funded projects tended to be less active than the average Sussex resident.

This is an important sign that providers are successfully recruiting people who need support to be active. Recruiting people who are 'Inactive' can be extremely challenging, so 1 in 4 should be viewed as a success.



I was/am able to be as physically active as I wish

Legend: Strongly Agree (Dark Green), Agree (Light Green), Neither agree nor disagree (Yellow), Disagree (Pink), Strongly disagree (Red)



...and attitudes

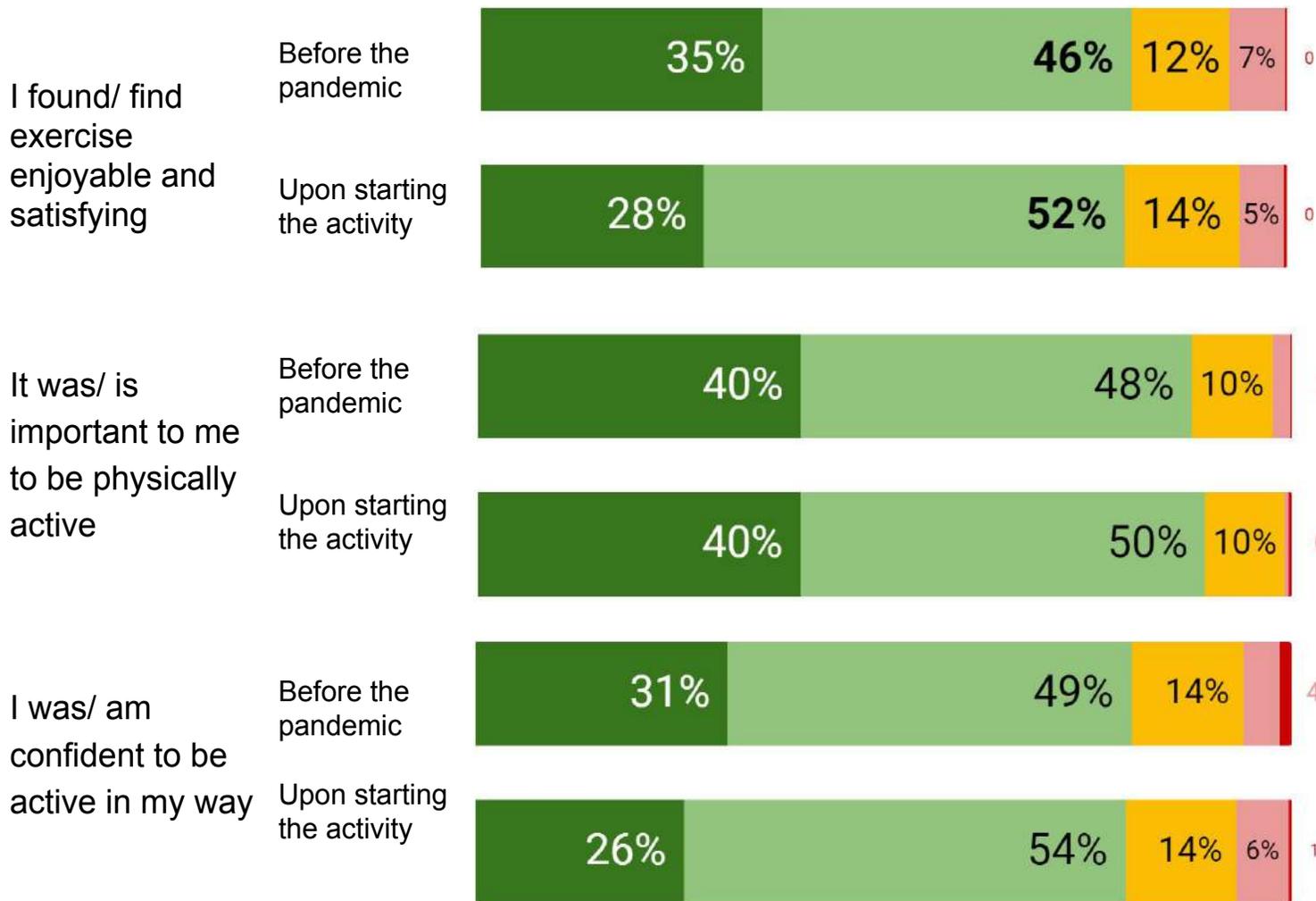
Participants were asked to state their level of agreement with statements based on the COM-B behaviour change model, to provide comparison with some of the research questions asked by Sport England and Savanta ComRes⁵.

It is encouraging that participants felt a higher level of ability to be active when starting the activity than the first lockdown, but capability has not quite recovered to its pre-pandemic levels.

⁵ Sport England Covid-19 Insight briefing: <https://indd.adobe.com/view/793b48d5-bbcd-4de3-a50f-11d241a506b3>

Physical activity attitudes

■ Strongly Agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree



There has been a slight reduction in how strongly participants enjoy physical activity since before the pandemic.

Most participants agree physical activity is very important both before the pandemic and upon starting their activity.

As recorded in Active Sussex's workforce audience insight reports, confidence levels continue to be lower than importance.

Building confidence should be the priority in communications rather than stressing the importance of being active.

Covid-19 impacts

Increased loneliness was the most common impact of Covid-19 experienced by participants. The social side of many of the funded activities should help to relieve this to some extent.

It will be instructive to revisit these measures once participants have returned the second monitoring survey for most projects to see if anxiety is reducing.

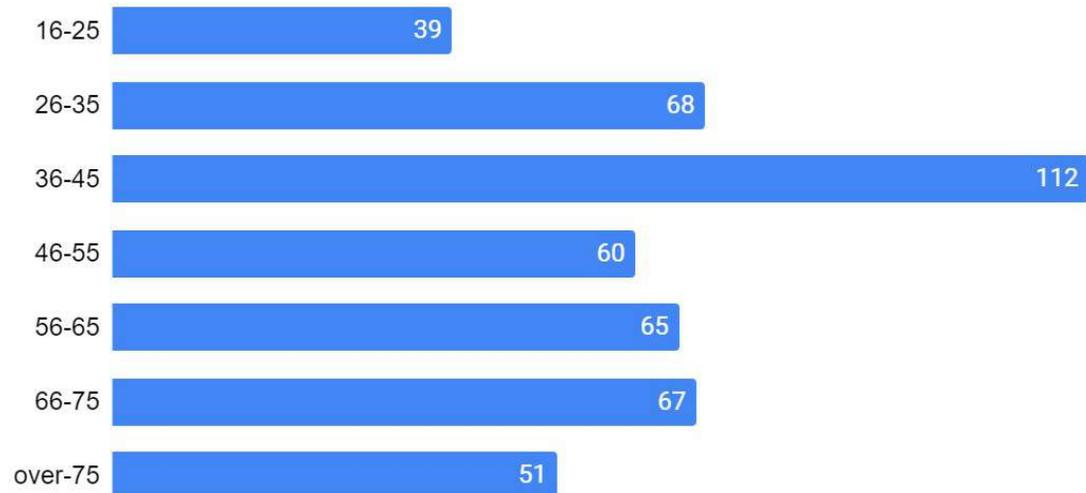
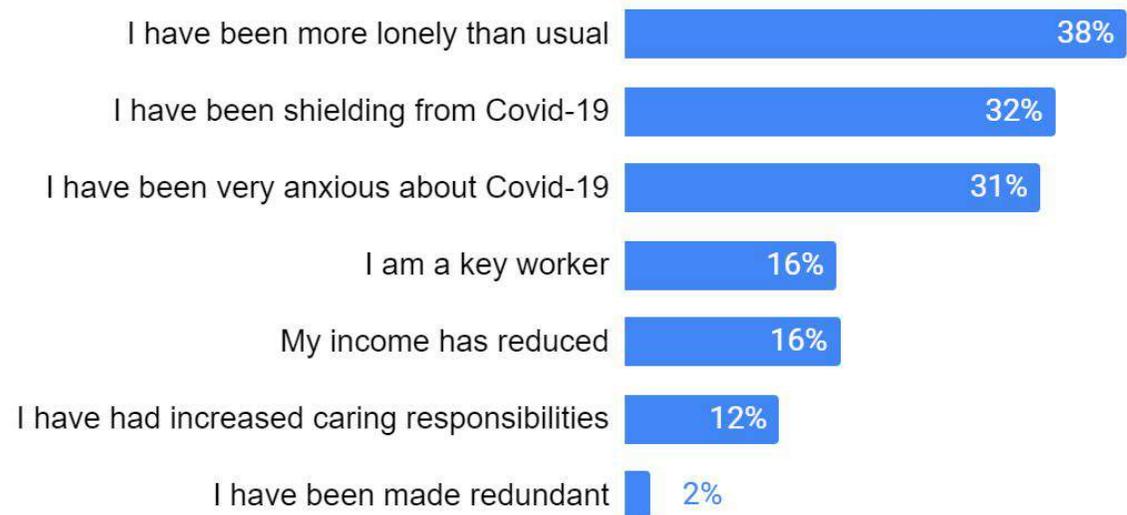
We may see an increase in redundancies as furlough ends and the economic impacts of the pandemic deepen.

Age of participants

Recruitment was fairly evenly spread among each age bracket, with those aged 36-45 over-represented.

It is encouraging to see that older people were recruited to be active, given their typically lower activity rates, and the additional risk of serious illness they faced from Covid-19.

% of participants experiencing additional Covid-19 impacts



System impacts

New partnerships

There has been an **opportunity to introduce physical activity to organisations without a traditional physical activity** or sport offer, helping to reach new inactive audiences. This includes charities that support disabled people through advocacy work, healthcare providers that support people with long-term health conditions, and voluntary sector organisations targeting lower socioeconomic groups in areas of deprivation without a physical activity offer.

Having never previously worked with Impact Initiatives, they have now used the funding to adapt their physical activity sessions at their older people's service in Hove, following the impact of Covid-19 on adults living with long-term health conditions and those at risk of falls. This has brought new members into the service and linked in with the social activities that are already offered. They have also adapted quickly to offer the physical activity in sessions which are simultaneously delivered in a face-to-face and online setting.

Influencing the social prescribing agenda

The Tackling Inequalities Fund has created opportunities in other areas of work for Active Sussex including new relationships with Primary Care Networks in focus areas; Bexhill and Crawley. This has offered an opening for discussions on how Active Sussex can influence social prescribing through an increased physical activity offer.

Leveraging additional funding

Additional support through other sources of funding provided through Active Sussex including Satellite Club programme funding and workforce development funding to support activity for groups tackling inequalities. VYD have successfully applied for Satellite Club funding to target activity at children and young people with a focus on increasing provision for lower socioeconomic groups. There has also been support for partners to access other Sport England grants including the Return to Play fund, and local funding pots.

More than just funding

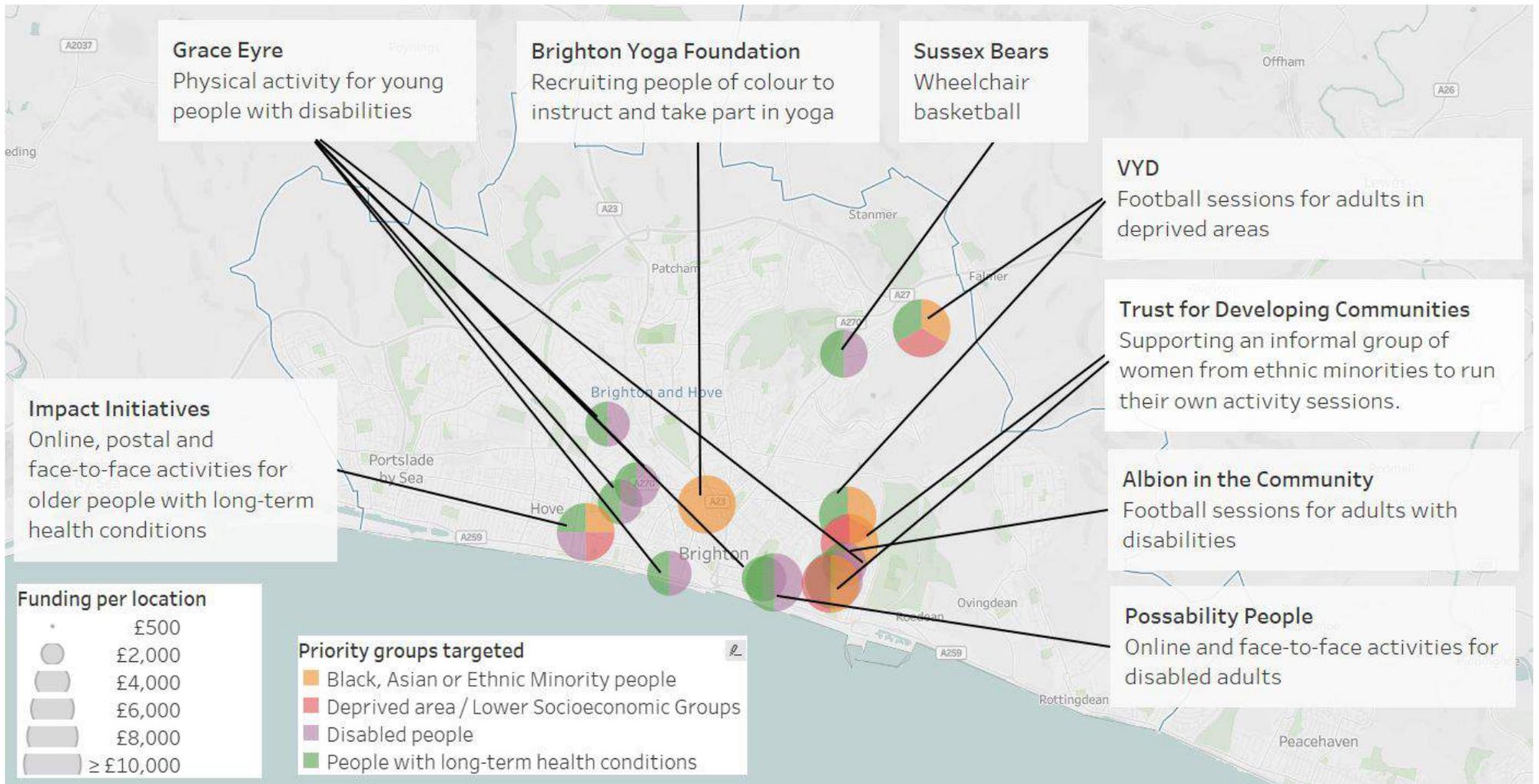
The project has offered more than just funding, including workforce training and the sharing of local insight on key demographics and levels of inactivity. Partners have been introduced to local networks and forums they were not previously aware of. For example Hailsham Active are now linked into the Sussex Disability Sports Network.

Several partners have worked on their **adult safeguarding** policies to bring them into line with the requirements outlined in the Active Sussex Minimum Standards Safeguarding Checklist.

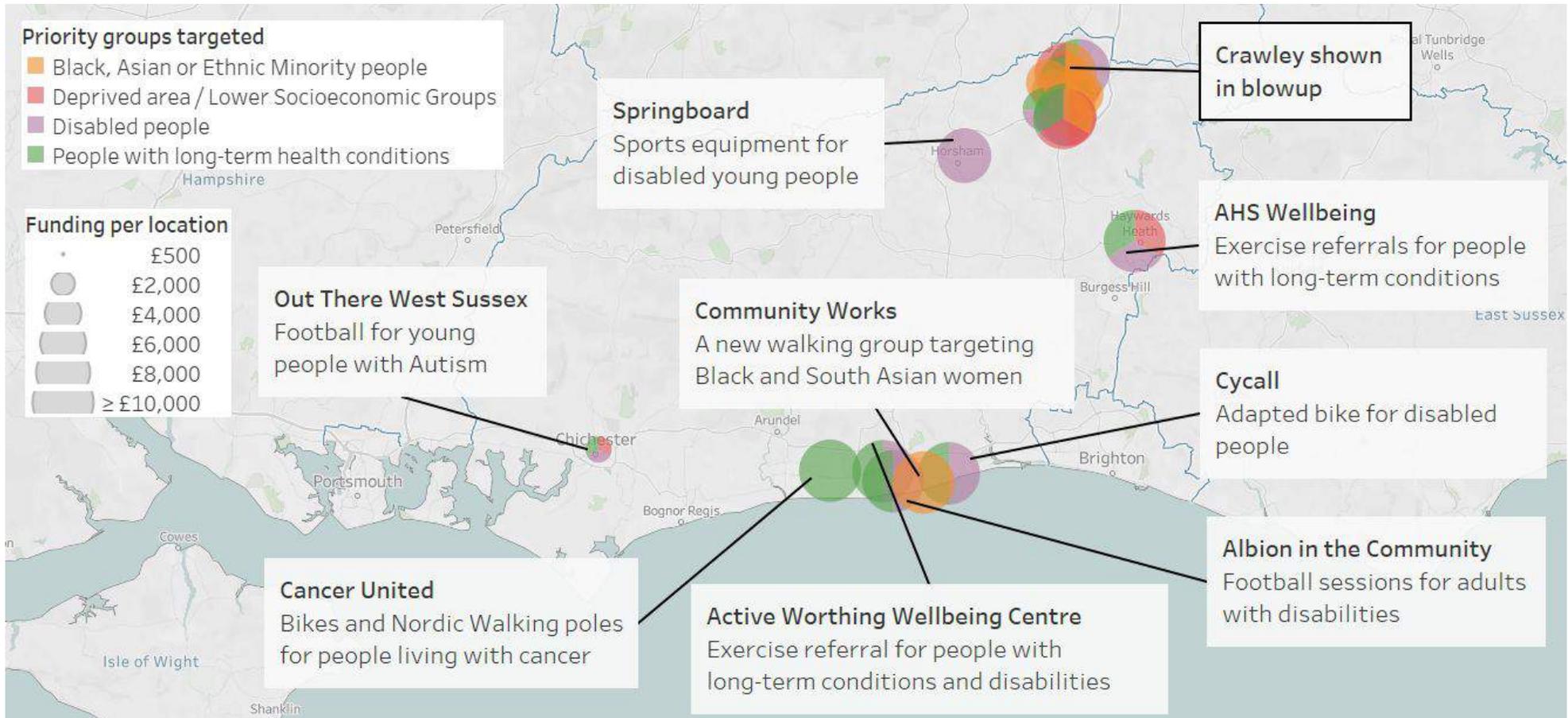
Improved way of working

The process has developed an improved way of working with local partners who feel greater confidence that their work is understood and supported by Active Sussex and Sport England. Partners have made reference to the perceived removal of red tape around this funding and feel that their concerns have been listened to and understood.

Appendix - Brighton and Hove



Appendix - West Sussex



Appendix - East Sussex

