



Beat the Street  
Swindon 2019  
Six-month report



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## Executive summary

Beat the Street Swindon is being delivered by Intelligent Health and is funded by The National Lottery on behalf of Sport England, and Swindon Borough Council.

Beat the Street Swindon set out to improve health and wellbeing amongst its residents by encouraging physical activity and active travel. Between September and November 2019, 25,979 people, 12% of the population we targeted, walked, cycled, jogged and scooted over 252,000 miles.

Six months later, we set out to measure the long-term impact Beat the Street has had on physical activity levels of participants. At registration, participants were asked a series of questions about their physical activity behaviours and mental health and wellbeing. The survey was optional and data was gathered on around 10,398 people. The Beat the Street Swindon end of game report produced by Intelligent Health summarises the health profile and activity status of those

who took part and the behaviour changes they made after the six weeks.

This report summarises how Beat the Street has continued to support people to be active through the sustain phase of the programme and the findings of the six month survey sent out to participants.

### Headline findings

- 90% of participants felt they had continued to be active following Beat the Street
- There was an 8% increase in the proportion of adults reporting 150+ minutes of activity per week (N=72)
- 73% of adults who were inactive when they registered were active six months later (8 out of 11 adults).
- There was a 19% decrease in the proportion of children undertaking less than an average of 30 minutes of activity

per day (Based on n=2217 before and 20 after)

- There was a 37% increase in the proportion of children undertaking an average of 60 minutes of activity per day (Based on n=2217 before and 20 after)
- Family activities are what respondents said they would like to do more of in sustain

In March 2020, whilst this data was being collected, the global outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic hit the UK, affecting the daily lives of all its residents. Given the unprecedented disruption this has caused and the restrictions imposed by Government, the findings of this report need to be considered within this wider context. This may have also impacted on the number of people who responded to the six month survey.

## Sustain engagement

The priorities for the sustain phase were to help participants maintain their physical activity levels through promoting and providing opportunities for everyday activity.

### Raise awareness of local cycling provision

Promoted the new 2020 cycle map with a press release, photo shoot and led ride. Due to the weather the ride did not take place, however off the back of this, it was agreed to offer a regular free ride from the athletics track using the Swindon Borough Council bikes so people can still come on a led ride even if they don't own a bike.

Two bike roadshows were delivered in partnership with Swindon Borough Council's Sustainable Transport Team. One was held at Orbital shopping centre during Feb half term one at Outlet village where 27 bikes were security marked. There was a mobile mechanic doing safety checks. There were queues of young people waiting for checks, many had faulty brakes and gears and were

repaired for free. This also created opportunities to have conversations with them about bike safety, lights and helmets.

### Support the Active Swindon Challenge

79 participants took part in the Active Swindon Challenge, taking 3367 trips. This was promoted through social media channels and at the cycle events.

BTS also donated the £50 spot prize to the winner, who chose food vouchers to support the family during Covid-19 lockdown.

### Raise awareness of local walking provision

Have continued to promote the Swindon History Walking Trail and was advertised in the Swindon half term what to do newsletter.

Held an urban orienteering event in February at Link Centre in West Swindon in partnership with North Wilts Orienteering. Over 40 families attended and two Beat Boxes were installed on the route to attract Beat the

Street participants. We used the event to trial MapRun, a new app for runners and walkers developed by a Gloucester Beat the Street player.

The second event with North Wilts Orienteering Club has been delayed due to Covid-19.

### Action – Support neighbourhoods

Seven Fields parkrun was set up off the back of Beat the Street 2018. After a year of planning the soft launch took place on the 16th November with 154 runners in

### Sevenfields parkrun launch 16<sup>th</sup> November 2019



attendance. Since then, over 100 regular runners have been coming along each week.

Seven Fields was identified as it is an area of deprivation and a target area for physical activity in Swindon.

Run	Date	Number parkrunners	Number Volunteers
1	16/11/2019	154	30
2	23/11/2019	144	28
3	30/11/2019	100	21
4	07/12/2019	107	28
5	21/12/2019	55	24
6	28/12/2019	106	21
7	04/01/2020	141	28
8	11/01/2020	132	27
9	18/01/2020	160	45
10	25/01/2020	110	22
11	01/02/2020	128	27
12	08/02/2020	97	25
13	15/02/2020	113	22
14	22/02/2020	115	27
15	29/02/2020	120	25
16	07/03/2020	127	28
17	14/03/2020	86	24

Additional funding for the parkrun was secured through the Sport England satellite clubs. The funding will be used to improve equipment and marketing, focusing on

engagement of the local population. The Race Director has also been nominated for Pride of Swindon Award. Parkrun has been continuously promoted through Beat the Street newsletters and social media.

### Delivery of a couch to 5k in Toothill

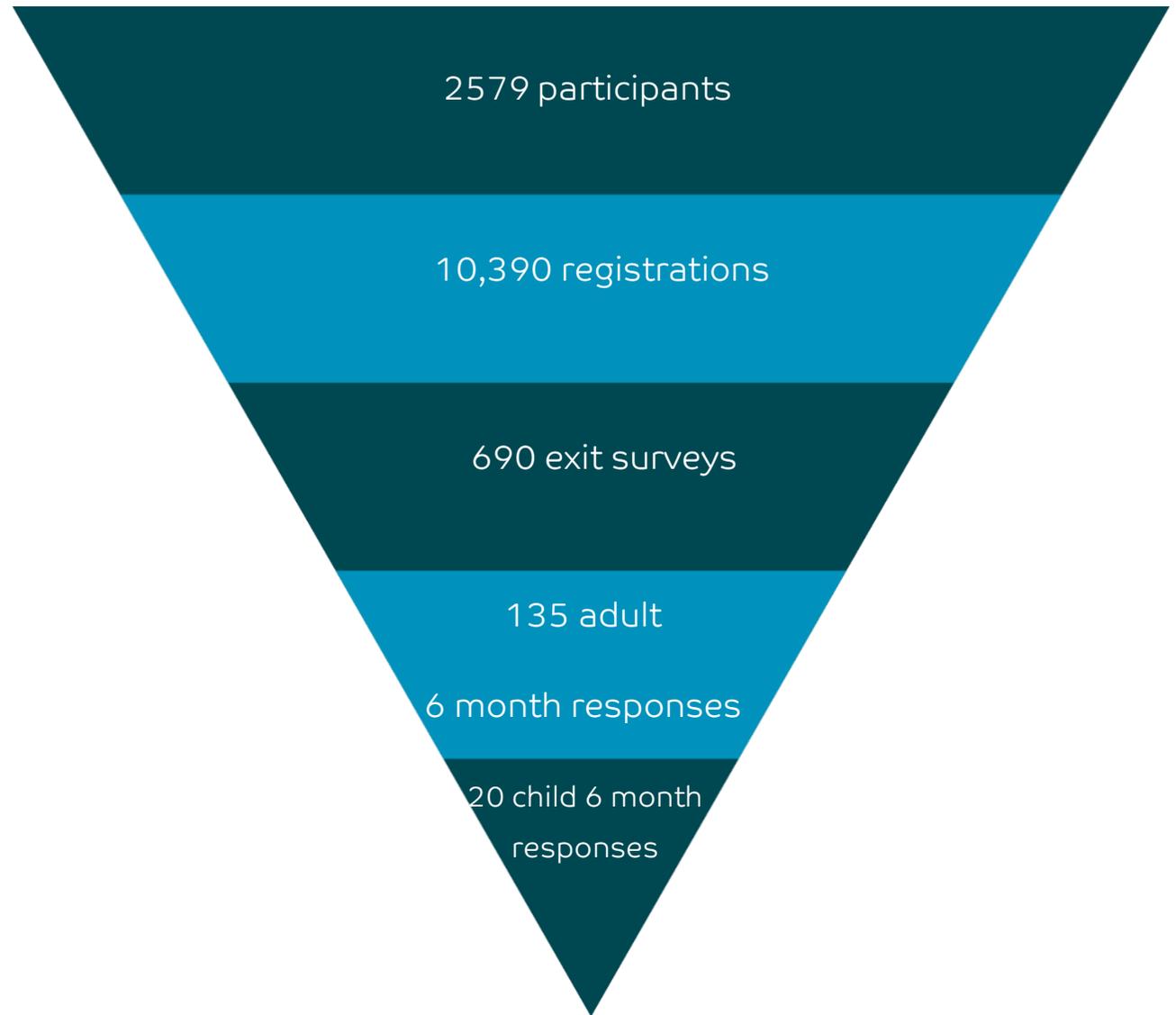
A Couch to 5k was initially going to be delivered in Seven Fields to support attendance at parkrun. However, it was decided to give the volunteers more time to settle in before delivering another initiative. This was therefore set up from the Age UK centre in Toothill. Around 18 attendees, all women attended for the first one and only 2 have dropped out so far. The group use the Community Centre to meet and have a drink and chat after the sessions. The group are now in conversation about creating an informal running group at the end of the programme. Links have also been made with Run England Mental Health Champion for Swindon to support the group.

### Support the setup of parkyoga in Swindon and promote to local communities

Parkyoga is a similar concept to parkrun, held on Sunday mornings in a local park. The venue, funding and instructor have all be secured, however the development of this is on hold until lockdown ceases and gatherings are allowed again.

## Who provided feedback?

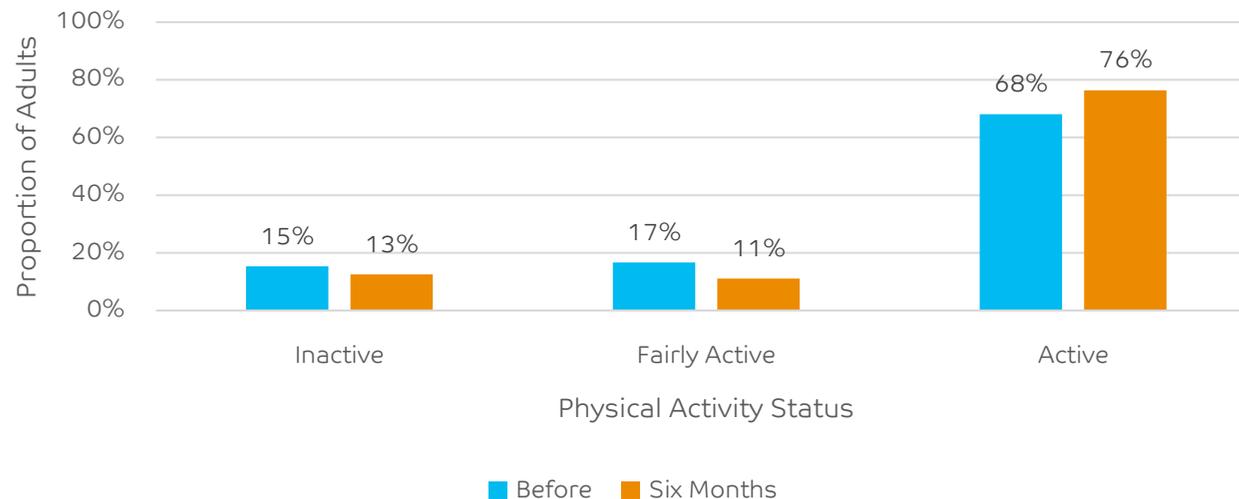
In total, 6,870 of registered people opted in to being contacted after registration. Of these people, 155 provided follow-up feedback (a response rate of 2.2%) through an exit survey six months following the game-phase. A mix of different ages provided feedback, although most respondents were aged between 30 and 49, and around 67% of respondents were female.



## Increasing adult physical activity

The proportion of adults reporting being inactive (0-29minutes of activity per week) decreased from 15% before Beat the Street to 13% six months after (Based on n=72 adults who provided data at both registration and follow-up). In comparison, the proportion reporting being active (150+ minutes of at least moderate intensity activity per week) increased from 68% before the game period to 76% six months post-game (Based on n=72 adults who provided data at both registration and follow-up) (Figure 1). 11 of the adults who provided data at both pre- and six months were inactive pre-game. Of these, 8 (73%) were achieving 150+ minutes per week post-game.

**Figure 1: Overall changes in physical activity for adults before and six months after Beat the Street**



Six months following Beat the Street, participants were asked **“please tell us about any changes from Beat the Street that continued after the game ended?”**

### Individual Responses

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“Time spent walking increased and this has been maintained.” - Male, aged 60-69

“I still continued to walk, but just changed the routes to something more scenic than the streets.”– Female, aged 60-69

“Before the outbreak of Corona was very active walking dog a couple of times a day and walking to work most days.”– Female, aged 30-39

“I realised that I don’t have to go out in the car to find somewhere to walk.” Female, aged 30-30

“Still going out for lunchtime walks - but really looking forward to better weather to walk more often and for longer.” Female, aged 40-49

“I walk to work more as it’s quicker than I realised and if I can find a way to afford it, I would love to join a gym fitness class.”- Female, aged 19-29

“During beat the street I made an effort to run/walk in different areas so that I could get different boxes and I have continued to do this to mix up my running and walking routines following the game!”– Female, aged 19-29

“I now commute almost every day on my bike and have started going to the gym for strength exercises once a week” – Male, aged 19-29

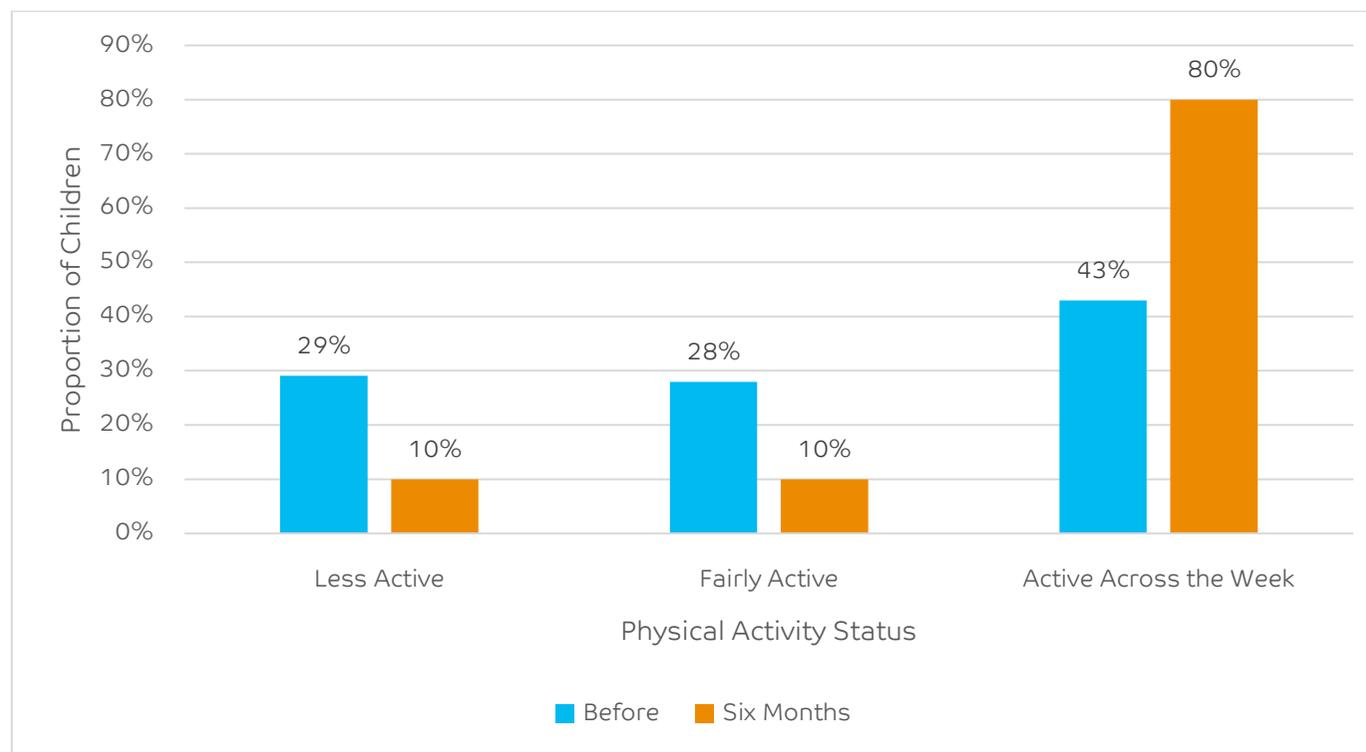
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## Increasing child physical activity

There was limited matched data available for children, six months following the programme. Of the 4 children who could be linked pre-game and six months later, before Beat the Street, 2 were less active (undertaking an average of less than 30 minutes per day) and 2 were fairly active (undertaking an average of 30-59 minutes a day). All 4 children were active across the week (undertaking an average of 60 minutes or more per day) six months following the game.

Looking at the unmatched data, the proportion of children reporting being 'less active' decreased from 29% before the program to 10% six months after. Whereas the proportion reporting being active across the week increased from 43% before the game period to 80% six months after (Based on n=2217 before and 20 after). (Figure 2)

Figure 2: Overall changes in physical activity for children before and six months after Beat the Street (Based on n=2217 before and 20 six months after)



13 children provided qualitative insight post-game. These data indicated that children had gained a lot from taking part, it had made them more physically active.

### Individual Responses

“I have joined a netball club at school to keep me more fit.” – Girl, aged 12 to 18

“Started walking and just going out more.” – Girl, aged 6 to 11

“I walk around a wider range of areas after seeing places I hadn't been to before beat the street.” - Girl, aged 12 to 18

“I have continued to keep myself fit with sports.” – Boy, aged 6 to 11

### Improving children's attitudes towards physical activity

There were improvements in children's attitudes towards physical activity immediately following the game period. With

the number of children agreeing with following statements increasing after the game.

“I enjoy taking part in exercise and sport”

Increased from 91% to 95%

“I find exercise and sport easy”

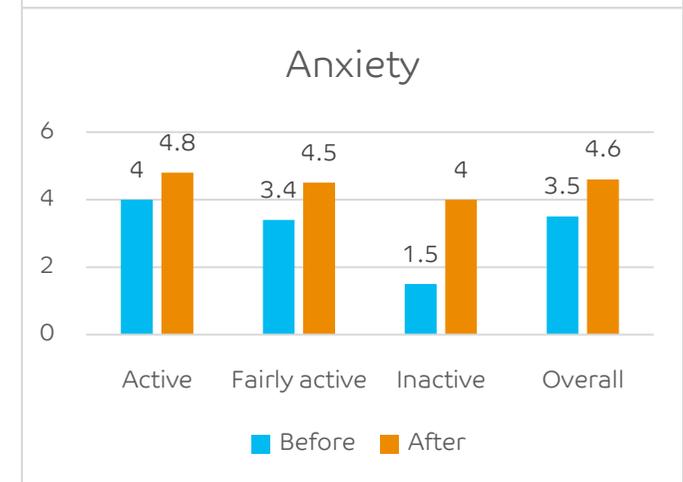
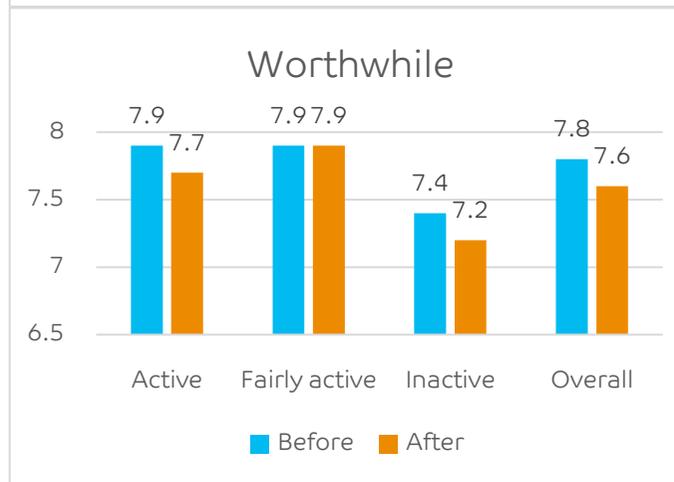
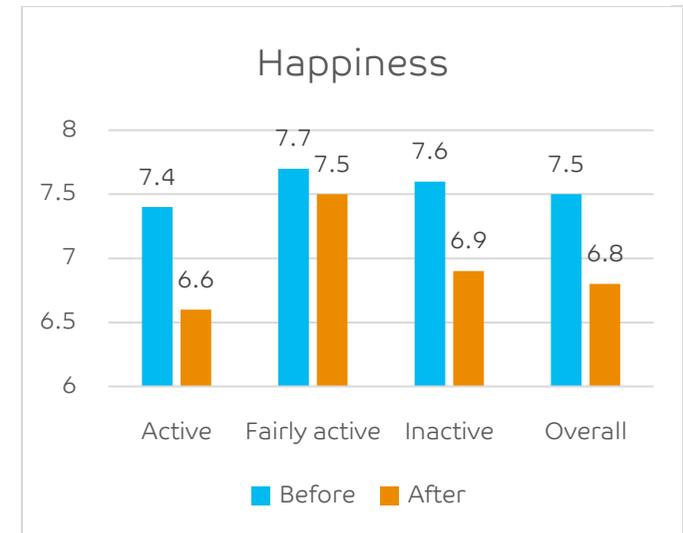
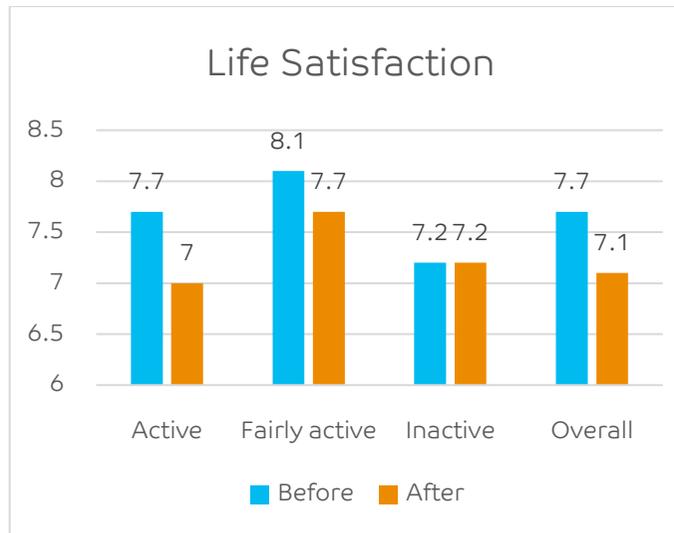
Increased from 93% to 100%.

# Adult mental health and wellbeing

Participants were asked 4 questions on their mental health and wellbeing using the Office for National Statistics survey. Participants were asked to rate their feelings of life satisfaction, worthwhile, happiness and anxiety on a scale of 0-10 where 10 is high.

Matched data was available for 70 adult participants. The findings show that feelings of worthwhile, life satisfaction and happiness had decreased, and feelings of anxiety had increased, particularly among the inactive group. This could be a direct result of the coronavirus pandemic which was escalating during the collection of this data.

This data has been used to increase the number of social media posts that support mental health strategies and self care.

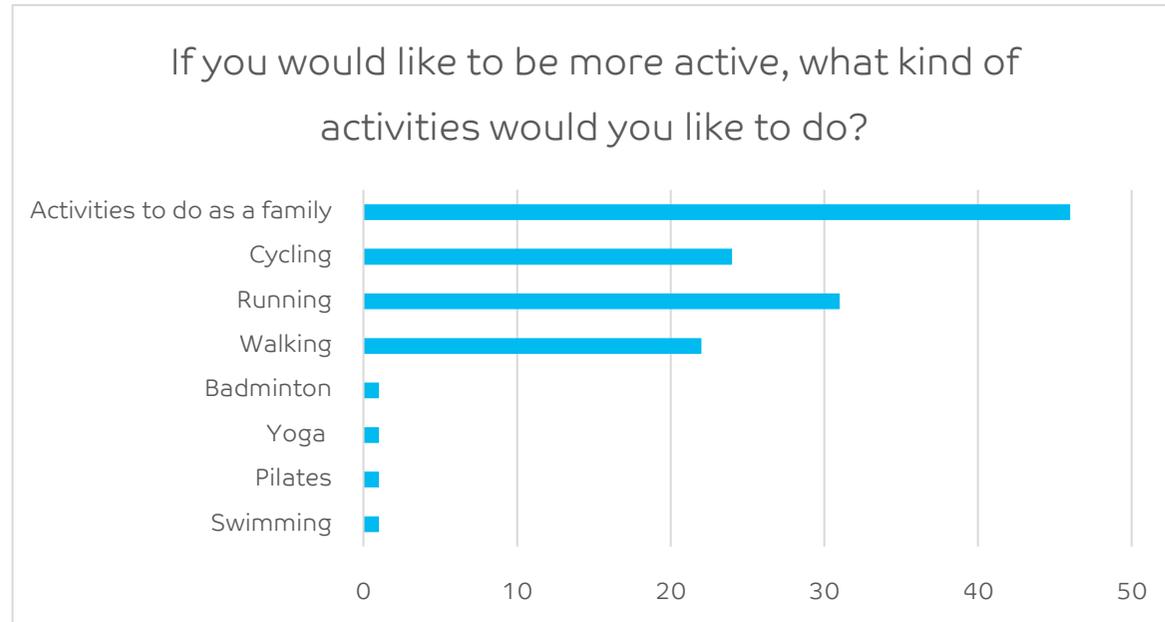


# Participant Insight

Participants were also asked a number of questions around their motivations for taking part in physical activity and what local initiatives they would like to see. 94 people responded to the question **“What would help you to continue to be active or to become more active?”**

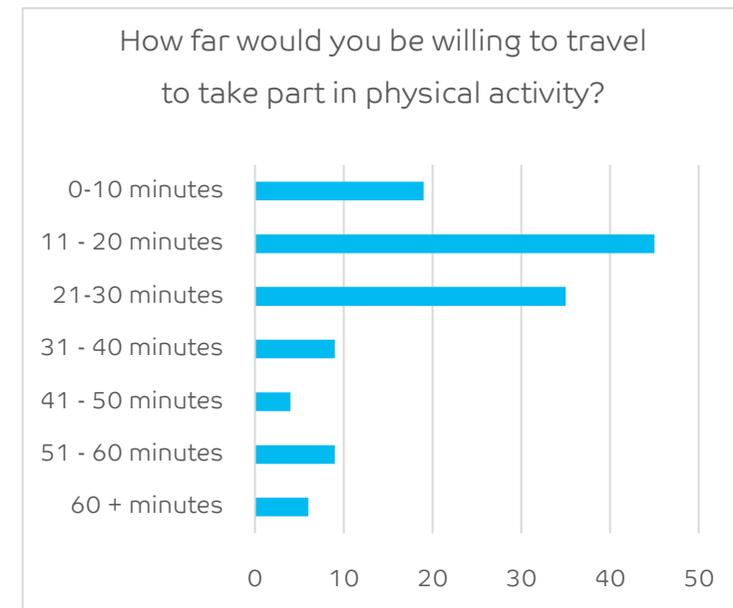
Responses varied, and included: restrictions due to coronavirus mentioned by 19 people, Beat the Street was referenced by 22 people, mention of a challenge or gamification was mentioned by 9 people, the weather was mentioned by 7 people and free/cheaper activities by 9 people.

Participants were also asked what kind of activities they would like to do and given the choices; Cycling, Running, Walking, Activities to do as a family and Other. The table to the right shows the responses including the ‘other’ responses. 71 people said they would like to hear about related opportunities.



To gauge understanding of how far people are willing to travel to take part in exercise, participants were asked **“How far would you be willing to travel to take part in physical activity?”**

Findings show that most people would be willing to travel up to 30 minutes.



## Conclusion

Beat the Street Swindon set out to engage 31,000 people from across Swindon in the six week game phase. The programme aimed to increase physical activity levels amongst children and adults. We also wanted to target women and people from low socio-economic backgrounds, who traditionally tend to be less active.

In total, 25,979 people took part, 84% of our original target, and collectively they travelled a distance of 252,127 miles. Six months later we asked participants again about their activity levels to assess long term impact on behaviour change. Responses to this survey were collated at the same time as the coronavirus pandemic hit the UK. Halfway through the collation of this data, the UK was put in lockdown, allowing people to go out for exercise just once a day in the form of walking, cycling or running. The response to the follow up survey was less than expected. It is important, therefore the findings from this survey are considered within this context.

There were positive increases in physical activity levels in adults and physical inactivity decreased. The proportion of adults achieving 150+ minutes a week of physical activity increased from 68% at registration to 76% six months later.

73% of inactive adults at the start of Beat the Street reported meeting the recommended guidelines for physical activity six months post game.

There were also positive changes for physical activity in children. This report shows that the number of children achieving the recommended 60 minutes a day of activity increased from 43% to 80%. The proportion of inactive children decreased from 29% to just 10% six months post game.

Alongside the quantitative changes, open ended responses were collected from players which further evidenced that people had remained active following Beat the Street.

Mental health and wellbeing findings from the six month survey showed a negative shift in people's wellbeing, particularly in feelings of anxiety. It is likely, although not conclusive, that this is down to the effects of the coronavirus pandemic and the feelings of uncertainty and stress that this has caused to many people.

In conclusion, even against a backdrop of the current global pandemic, the findings show that people are reporting being more physically active than at the start of the game in September 2019. Conversely, there has been a negative shift in mental health and wellbeing, including a big increase in anxiety. Similar findings for mental health can be seen across the Beat the Street games where data was collected during this period.

A twelve month survey will be sent round to participants in September 2020 to explore longer term behaviour change.