

## **Learning Disability Partnership Board consultation feedback on access to sport and physical activities in the City**

Amaze/PaCC contacted parent carers to ask about the sport and physical activities their young people do now and hope to do as adults with learning disabilities. Parents and young people clearly value sport and physical activity.

We emailed 222 parent carers of young people with learning disabilities in the age range 16-25, and posted the same questions on the Extratime facebook page. We received 5 responses from parent carers of young people between age 15 and 23. These showed an active uptake of sport/physical activities. We also used data from the Compass database and responses of young people to this year's Compass Card survey to provide more general information on access to sports and physical activities. This suggested access is not good across the wider population.

### **Compass Brighton and Hove data**

Of the 576 young people aged 17-25 on the disability register, 37 have used leisure and sport clubs in the year previous to their last Compass update, and 87 haven't, but need to. It is striking that very few young people with disabilities access sport clubs. The high number who do not access sport clubs, but need to, suggests problems around either accessibility or awareness of what is available.

### **Compass card survey.**

Amaze is currently surveying Compass card holders and a couple of questions are relevant to this consultation. 6 responses from young people in the age range 17-25 had been received at the time of writing this report.

All agreed that being able to go out and enjoy themselves is important or very important. However all except for 1 felt that they are able to go out and enjoy themselves only sometimes or never. Only 1 said that they are able to go out all the time.

When asked what stops them from going out, 4 said that it costs too much and 3 don't have enough time. 2 said that doing new things makes them anxious and another 2 don't have people they can do things with.

4 of the respondents said swimming was their favourite Compass card offer.

### **Individual responses**

5 parent carers of young people between the age of 15 and 23 responded to the survey for this consultation. Below are the questions we asked, and a summary of the responses.

1. How do you find out about sports and physical activities in the City for your son or daughter?

All had heard of activities via Amaze (Compass), and a number used word of mouth, school or care provider to access information.

*Compass and personal research but he has such severe physical disabilities I know there will not be much to find out about in reality.*

2. What sport or physical activities do they do currently?

All do swimming, specifying The Triangle in many cases. A young person with severe physical disabilities has very limited access to activities, whereas others partake in a broad range:

*Swimming. Using his walker. Physio activities.  
Trampolining at Peacehaven weekly, Spiral mixed sports weekly, Beatbox disco in Worthing, swimming using Compass Card at Triangle  
Swimming with carers at Triangle, triking  
Swimming; judo; skateboarding (skate park and Brighton Youth Centre); PE at school, playing in park, cycling.  
Tennis lessons at Virgin Leisure; Badminton Lessons at Virgin Leisure; The Wave Project (Surfing); Football Club Holiday Camp (Albion in the Community); Extratime holiday club- various activities; swimming; gym (weights / machines); sea swim/ kayaking; cycling to school/ for pleasure; roller blading along the seafront; skiing; surfing; horse riding*

3. Are these specific disability-friendly activities or “mainstream”?

The young people take part in a mixture of disability specific and mainstream activities.

4. If your son or daughter is under 18 now, will they be able to keep doing this activity when they are adults? Or if they are older, are there things they used to do which they can't now they are older?

Positively, two respondents did not feel their young people would lose access to activities as they grow older. However, barriers to carrying out activities were identified, including: age range of clubs, getting bigger, increasingly challenging behaviour, lack of equipment and lack of friends to go with.

*Hydrotherapy pool will no longer be available once he leaves the Link College. Used to have more options for swimming but lost these once he grew older and bigger. Used to use St Lukes pool as warmer but don't have suitable hoist for him.*

*It becomes more difficult to encourage him to do activities as he gets older, particularly without a peer group to go with.*

5. If your son or daughter is already 18 or older tell us what you think about the places they go to or the activities they do. Are they accessible? Are the facilities good? Is there a good choice of activities? What about cost or transport?

A theme that emerged under this question is that, although many activities were very positive, there were often shortfalls. For example, in application process, equipment not working, time of day or cost.

*The tennis at Virgin Leisure is accessible with good facilities. It is not an activity that is fully inclusive and expensive but the coach is lovely and my daughter loves it.*

*The Wave Project is fantastic, I heard about this through Amaze. It's a bit of a palaver to get onto it but well worth the application process.*

*Extratime holiday club is fully inclusive and they offer a good choice of activities during the year. The information about what is going to be offered doesn't come until several weeks after the booking deadline so you can't pick a day based on an activity.*

*We use the Triangle (with Compass offer) but the hoist is not always in working order and the changing bed is in the group changing room so this can be unavailable because a party is using this area.*

It is also worth noting that most of the respondents favoured swimming at the Triangle over local pools.

6. Are there sports or physical activities you would like your son or daughter to be able to do but can't? Now? And what about in the future?

Specifically, horse-riding and a hydrotherapy pool were cited by this sample of parent carers. More generally, one respondent felt there was a lack of opportunity for young people to progress in sport:

*The projects are often wonderful and caring and are all about participating. But where is the ambition in the courses for those that show aptitude and passion?*

7. Anything else you want to tell us? For example about barriers to your son or daughter doing sport or physical activities. Or good sport opportunities

you want to see continue.

*We have looked for and tried other things but there is nothing out there for adults with his degree of physical disability.*

*Physical activity is really important for my daughter. She needs out of doors and physical things as she is always on the go. Needs variety to keep her engaged.*

*Compass card activities were often positive which he was sometimes able to attend unsupervised, but most of these have now gone, eg trampolining, Fun Fit.*

*Barriers include the need for an engaged and supportive adult to enable him to enjoy and avoid behavioural issues, particularly when starting out on an activity. A buddy system at the skatepark would enable him to attend unsupervised.*

### **Recommendations.**

- To look at sources of information for adults with LDs over 25. Most families with a young person up to age 25 seem to rely on the Compass as a source of information about sport and physical activity opportunities and discounts
- To consider how to maintain positive physical activity available when school or college-age into adulthood
- To look at access for adults to swimming (which is the most popular activity), including availability of hydrotherapy pools in the area for use by disabled adults