

Active Body Healthy Mind:

Transforming Wellbeing in Redbridge

- ▶ A three-year partnership between Vision Redbridge Culture & Leisure (Vision RCL) and the Redbridge Institute of Adult Education (RIAE)
- ▶ Promoting health and wellbeing through physical activity.
- ▶ Engaging, inclusive activities aimed at improving overall lifestyle.
- ▶ Empowering the local community to lead healthier more balanced lives.



SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON



Project Overview & Background

Commissioned in 2022 by Redbridge Institute of Adult Education

Public Health Challenges within Redbridge

There are significant health inequalities in Redbridge, with two-thirds of adults in Redbridge overweight or obese and one in three children in Redbridge affected. These issues are closely linked to poverty, which disproportionately affects the local community, mental health levels and limits access to wellbeing services.

Core Objectives

- Empower participants to learn new skills, build confidence, and progress along their personal wellbeing journey through physical activity
- Increase community cohesion through inclusive, engaging activities
- Reduce health inequalities across Redbridge by offering free, accessible physical activity sessions to adults

Project Overview & Background

Commissioned in 2022 by Redbridge Institute of Adult Education

Scope of the project

- Offer physical activity taster sessions/workshops to adults
- All sessions to include element of physical activity
- Adults only (19+)
- No cost – each session will be free to attend
- Vision aims to build exit route for regular engagement
- £42,500 budget

Key Performance Indicators

- Unique participants
- % of attendees from the poorest wards of Redbridge
- % to be older people (50+)
- % to have some form of physical, sensory or learning disability/difficulty

Potential Challenges

- Cultural and social barriers
- Brand new project = lack of awareness or information
- Creating a robust pathway for onward participant journey
- Creating a community-specific timetable
- Unique participants

Active Body Healthy Mind

Year 1 – where to start?

Marketing & Branding establish a recognisable identity for the programme that resonates with our target audience and project intention, create the booking form alongside social media

Community Service Mapping identify existing services to find partnership opportunities and signposting options

Community Group Engagement approach local organisations to contribute activities or ideas to our timetable

Exercise Management Collaboration work closely with our group exercise manager to develop appropriate physical activities

Additional Strategies to create a delivery timetable using public health campaigns and input from professionals



The poster features a circular inset image of an older man with a cane and a main image of a woman in a blue tank top stretching. The text is in a mix of white and teal colors on a dark teal background.

☐ Are you feeling low and would benefit from some 'me' time?

☐ Do you need support to be more active?

☐ Are you looking to improve your wellbeing?

☐ Would you like to try something new or re-try an activity?

**Active Body
Healthy Mind**

If you have answered 'Yes!' to any of the above, come and get involved. From September 2023 – July 2024, you can find a full programme of activities in various locations across Redbridge.

■ Booking required ■ Age 19+
■ Taster sessions ■ FREE

➔ **To view the programme timetable and to find out more about this project**

Visit: www.visionrcl.org.uk/activebodyhealthymind
Email: active.redbridge@visionrcl.org.uk

 Vision
Redbridge Culture & Leisure

SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

 RIAE
Redbridge
Institute
of Adult Education

visionrcl.org.uk
@ActiveRedbridge
/ActiveRedbridge



Programme Delivery & Activities – Year 1

At the completion of its first year in August 2023, the project had delivered **61** sessions across Redbridge, featuring a range of activities:

- **Pilates, Zumba, yoga classes plus culturally relevant sessions like Bhangra and Bollywood Dance Fitness**
- **High-energy options including box fit, bootcamp and circuits**
- **Larger scale events like 'Dance Fitness Fest' bringing together 135 attendees engaging in non-stop Zumba**
- **25 activity sessions throughout Mental Health Awareness Week**

Sessions were held in various accessible locations throughout the community e.g. Leisure Centres and libraries, parks, open spaces, education Centres, community hubs.



Targets & Achievements

500 unique participants **506 achieved ✓**

12% of participants from poorest wards **12% achieved ✓**

15% to be older people (50+) **46% achieved ✓**

15% with physical, sensory or learning disability **15% achieved ✓**

**Payment
by results
project**



Overcoming Implementation Challenges



Community-Specific Timetable

Vision RCL started with familiar formats but quickly expanded based on community feedback and RIAE insights. This led to a diverse timetable including cultural activities like Bollywood Dance Fitness and Bhangra—going beyond traditional fitness to offer new skills and inclusive experiences tailored to community preferences.



Awareness & Outreach

The partnership utilised both organisations' community links and developed joint marketing campaigns using social media, flyers distributed to the community and professionals, community boards, and local services. Outreach included hosting events in local hubs, providing in-person registration, and using links to reach those with limited access to traditional communication.



Cultural & Social Barriers

Vision RCL co-designed sessions with the community, identifying needs for women-only classes. By providing culturally sensitive options, including gender-specific sessions and diverse instructors, the programme ensured inclusivity and addressed cultural barriers that might otherwise prevent participation.

Additional Challenges:

Booking form, community group wariness, reporting and data sharing, different organisational priorities, converting a booking into an attendance

Creating Robust Participant Pathways

A key challenge was establishing clear pathways for participants' ongoing wellbeing journeys and healthier lifestyles beyond individual sessions. The project addressed this through:

- **Collecting opt-in information at booking about interest in other Vision RCL, RIAE and community services**
- **Providing tailored resource packs with details on local activity opportunities**
- **Gathering feedback, case studies and tracking client journeys, including uptake of Vision memberships or Adult Education courses**
- **Developing comprehensive signposting resources**

The signposting expanded beyond physical activity opportunities to include information on:

- **Citizens Advice services**
- **Smoking cessation/weight management programmes/alcohol reduction**
- **Financial advice resources**
- **Mental health support services**
- **Community projects within Vision/RIAE and wider community**



This comprehensive approach helped connect individuals with wider opportunities for learning, guidance, and wellbeing, creating sustainable pathways for continued engagement with health and wellbeing services across Redbridge.

The project was re-commissioned by the Redbridge Institute of Adult Education to continue delivery until July 2025, building on its initial success and expanding its reach within the community.

Aims heading into Year 2-3

Hiring a wellbeing co-ordinator to lead on design, implementation and evaluation of the project

Expanding timetable and broaden the range of activities available to meet diverse interests and needs

Strengthen and develop the mental health aspects of the programme and develop stronger links with the mental health support services within Redbridge. Links were made with Mind at Tower Hamlets and Redbridge Mental Health & Wellness Teams

Staff training to include mental health awareness and awareness of support services for signposting if required

Enhance organisational partnership to include streamlined marketing strategy between Vision RCL and RIAE and create robust data sharing process



Programme Timetable – Year 2-3 – what changed?

Within years 2-3, **123** sessions were delivered including:

- **Pilates, Zumba, box fit, bootcamp, wellbeing walks and yoga including chair-based yoga and activity** (mixed genders and women's/men's only)
- World Mental Health Day 2024 = **wellbeing workshop day** in partnership with Tower Hamlets Mind and Redbridge Public Health combining physical activity with resilience training and coping with stress tools)
- Mental Health Awareness Weeks = 25 events including **swim sessions, aqua Zumba, outdoor forest yoga & Pilates, cycling coaching, Reiki Meditation, paddle boarding** and **forest bathing**
- **Bollywood Dance Fitness** and **Bhangra** with special focus within South Asian Heritage Months
- **Reggae salsa** and **family story-time dance sessions** celebrating heritage as part of Black History Months
- **BMX coaching, Football Power-league** and **boxing** for Men's Mental Health Month
- **International Yoga Day** 2024 where over 200 attendees gathered outdoors in Valentines Park and were led in various types of yoga



Overcoming Project Challenges



Converting bookings into attendance

Vision RCL increased attendance from bookings by implementing a structured reminder system. They sent automated confirmation emails immediately after booking, followed by a friendly reminder 24 hours before the session and a final prompt 1–2 hours prior. These reminders included key session details and motivational messaging to encourage participation. By also offering simple options to cancel or reschedule, Vision RCL reduced no-shows and made it easier for participants to stay engaged.



Marketing Outreach

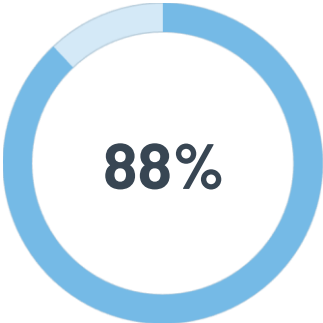
Vision RCL expanded its marketing outreach by launching its own dedicated social media page to connect directly with the community and promote activities more effectively. To boost visibility and engagement, they introduced a campaign offering raffle entries and prize incentives to individuals who shared the page or tagged friends. This approach not only increased online reach but also encouraged word-of-mouth promotion, helping to grow a more active and engaged audience.



One offs into long-term change

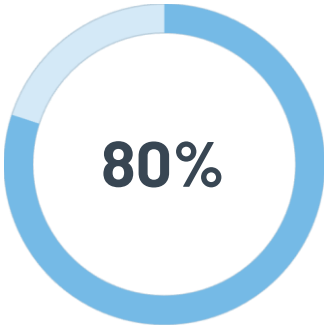
Vision RCL transformed one-off activity sessions by providing support through follow-up contact, making the activities enjoyable and socially engaging to boost participation. Progress was tracked through feedback and case studies and celebrated to reinforce motivation, while educational elements empowered individuals to understand the benefits of sustained activity and manage their own wellbeing. By linking the sessions to broader lifestyle improvements—such as better sleep, reduced stress, and improved health—Vision RCL aimed to embed these activities into participants' daily lives.

Participant Outcomes & Feedback



Session Quality

Percentage of attendees who rated the sessions as 'very good' or 'excellent'



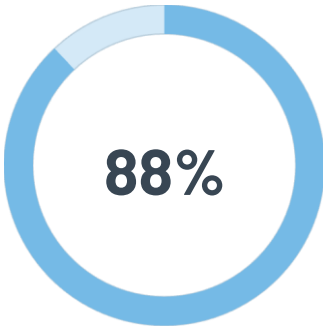
Learning Experience

Proportion who felt they learned something new during the session



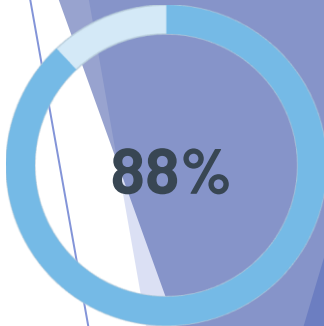
Confidence Improvement

All attendees reported improved confidence to access their community following the session



Long-term Change

Percentage who felt motivated to continue engaging in similar activities following the session



Recommendation Rate

Percentage who would recommend an Active Body Healthy Mind session to friends or family

"This session was amazing. I have even booked a paid session this week Saturday for another forest Pilates class. This was really beneficial for my mental and health. It was wonderful to do so in such an amazing park as well, such a beautiful time I left feeling rejuvenated and so blissful."

"I feel coming along to this activity has had a good impact on my mental health and I feel better and probably happier after coming along today."

"I saw that this was for Men's Mental Health Awareness Month so I brought a few of my friends too for a social activity. Time and family is a barrier, also financial as well and its good these sessions are free, this it benefited me physically and felt good. It was also good for my mental health and wellbeing."

"My Doctor recommended I do more exercise so I looked online for some activities. This class got my heart racing and felt good. It was my first time doing Zumba, I will definitely be doing it again."

"The courses were very short, so it is hard to have lasting impact. However, they helped calm down."

Outcomes for Vision RCL & Community Partners

2%

Membership Increase

Growth in Vision RCL Leisure Centre memberships driven by greater engagement through the project's activities

184

Sessions Delivered

Total number of sessions made available across the project, reaching diverse communities

3500+

Total Bookings

Bookings across all sessions, demonstrating strong community engagement and interest

The project yielded significant benefits for Vision RCL and community partners:

- Increased collaboration between Vision RCL service areas, enhancing partnership working and engagement in other projects
- Cross-promotion of services, with participants introduced to free sessions in other areas (e.g., trying a dance class for free and being signposted to other dance classes)
- Higher satisfaction from local social prescribers, as the project successfully reduced financial barriers to exercise
- Strengthened relationships with healthcare providers who could confidently refer patients to accessible activities
- Enhanced reputation as an inclusive community service provider committed to addressing health inequalities

Key Performance Indicators & Achievements

2022/2023 Targets & Achievements

500 unique participants	506 achieved ✓
12% of participants from poorest wards	12% achieved ✓
15% to be older people (50+)	46% achieved ✓
15% with physical, sensory or learning disability	15% achieved ✓

2023/2024 Targets & Achievements

400 unique participants	453 achieved ✓
12% of participants from poorest wards	6% achieved ✗
15% to be older people (50+)	46% achieved ✓
15% with physical, sensory or learning disability	15% achieved ✓

2024/2025 Targets & Achievements pending...

360 unique participants	320
12% of participants from poorest wards	
15% to be older people (50+)	
15% with physical, sensory or learning disability	

Holistic Impact on Community Wellbeing

Physical Health

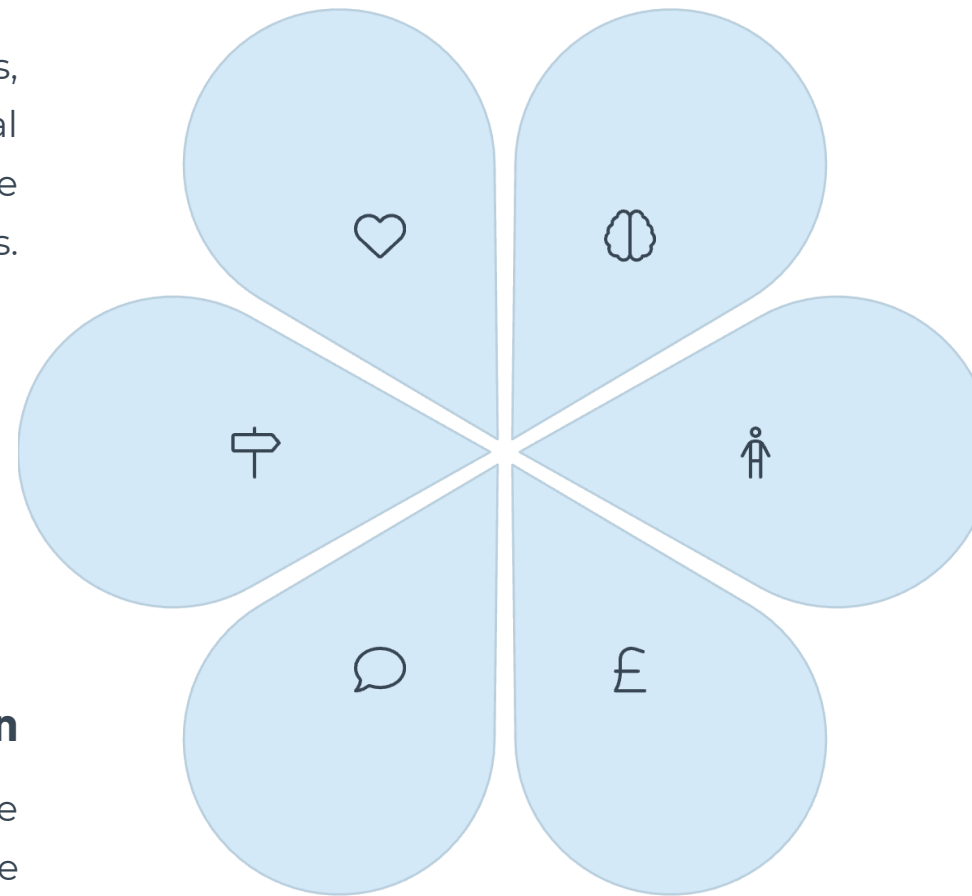
Participants reported improved fitness levels, increased activity, and better overall physical health through regular engagement with diverse exercise options.

Service Awareness

Increased knowledge of local resources empowered participants to access additional support services beyond physical activity.

Cultural Inclusion

Culturally relevant activities like Bollywood dance and gender-specific sessions ensured diverse communities felt welcomed and represented.



Mental Wellbeing

Regular participation reduced stress, anxiety, and depression, with the inclusive nature of sessions providing a welcoming environment for all backgrounds.

Social Connections

Activities fostered stronger community bonds as participants interacted in a non-judgmental, supportive environment, building friendships and reducing isolation.

Financial Accessibility

By eliminating cost barriers, the project ensured physical activity was accessible to all, particularly benefiting those in areas of deprivation.

Active Body Healthy Mind's holistic approach addressed multiple dimensions of wellbeing simultaneously, creating a comprehensive impact on community health that extended far beyond physical fitness alone. By connecting physical activity with mental health support, social engagement, and access to wider services, the initiative fostered a more integrated approach to wellbeing across Redbridge.

Active Body Healthy Mind: The Future

- ▶ The project will be ending July 2025
- ▶ Vision Redbridge Culture & Leisure are currently exploring the introduction of wellness memberships that would incorporate the innovative sessions delivered through the project within community spaces, such as forest bathing

