

## Wellbeing, Sport & Leisure Transcript

Deborah Holmes

**[Text:** Deborah Holmes, Strategic Manager for Wellbeing, Sport and Leisure, Durham County Council]

**Images** [Graphic skyline image across bottom of page. Logo with County Durham Together Partnership logo and Better for everyone strapline]

**[Video:** Deborah Holmes sat with pool in background]

**[Deborah Holmes:** The wellbeing team sits within my service area which is wellbeing, sport and leisure but we do cover the culture side as well. We work in libraries; we work in the museums, and we also open up the facilities to physical activity opportunities, so we've got that integrated approach as a team. Things like walks and bike rides from The Story as an example and we will do things like crafts and social activities within the libraries as well, as well as gentle exercise. So, the wellbeing team is pretty much the service. What we did is we built advocacy within all the job descriptions, so all of our staff have physical activity and health and wellbeing with their JD (job description) and as part of their day to day activities. So that was a big shift in the service which we did as part of our restructure.

So, the approach to wellbeing is integrated into our service plan as it is in all of our service plans across Durham County Council. Within my service area, what we've done is we've developed a physical activity framework with a set of principles that all support that approach so that is broken down into people so within that it's about how we engage our customer, how we engage our non-users, how new reach people in a different way.

We've got a pilot that we are also supporting over in Peterlee and its very much about working with local communities to break down barriers. Within the facilities, we are also developing different approaches to focus groups, feedback, and looking at areas regarding insight, research and actually very much about what the customer wants and using a lot more insight to actually plan our activities, which is something we weren't very good at before.

Our enablers are about the systems and the processes that actually make us more efficient but also its about how we reach people, how we allocate our resources which are very much focussed on areas of health and social deprivation, rather than having fourteen leisure centres that all do exactly the same.

So over the last 12 months, we've been prioritising staff training, very much focused on providing introductory support to encourage people who wouldn't traditionally access a leisure centre. It's been around our customer services and our softer skills as well and making sure that our staff are equipped to be able to deal with people that come in with lots of underlying health conditions to support them and handhold, probably more than anything else, to start them on their journey.

Within that as well we have our volunteer programme which has been rebuilding since covid. We've got a really good support programme within the department so we have volunteers that work within the facilities, our volunteer programme within the communities is basically, that's something we couldn't deliver our walk leaders, our cycle leaders, our run leaders are all volunteers and what we do in return is we provide them with training and support and things that they need to get them started and keep them safe.

But across the sites now we've got a ten pin bowling alley., we've got soft play areas, we've got water features to get babies and toddlers into the water and get comfortable in the water, we've got tag active which is a mixture of ninja warrior meets gladiators for the teenagers, we've got trampolines, we've got cafes so you can actually come in as an individual, as a family and have that wider experience. So, coming in and taking part in nontraditional physical activity and enjoy it as a family as there is something for all ages.

**[Images: County Durham Together Partnership logo]**