

WAY TO GO SUFFOLK

Social Prescribing for Active Travel

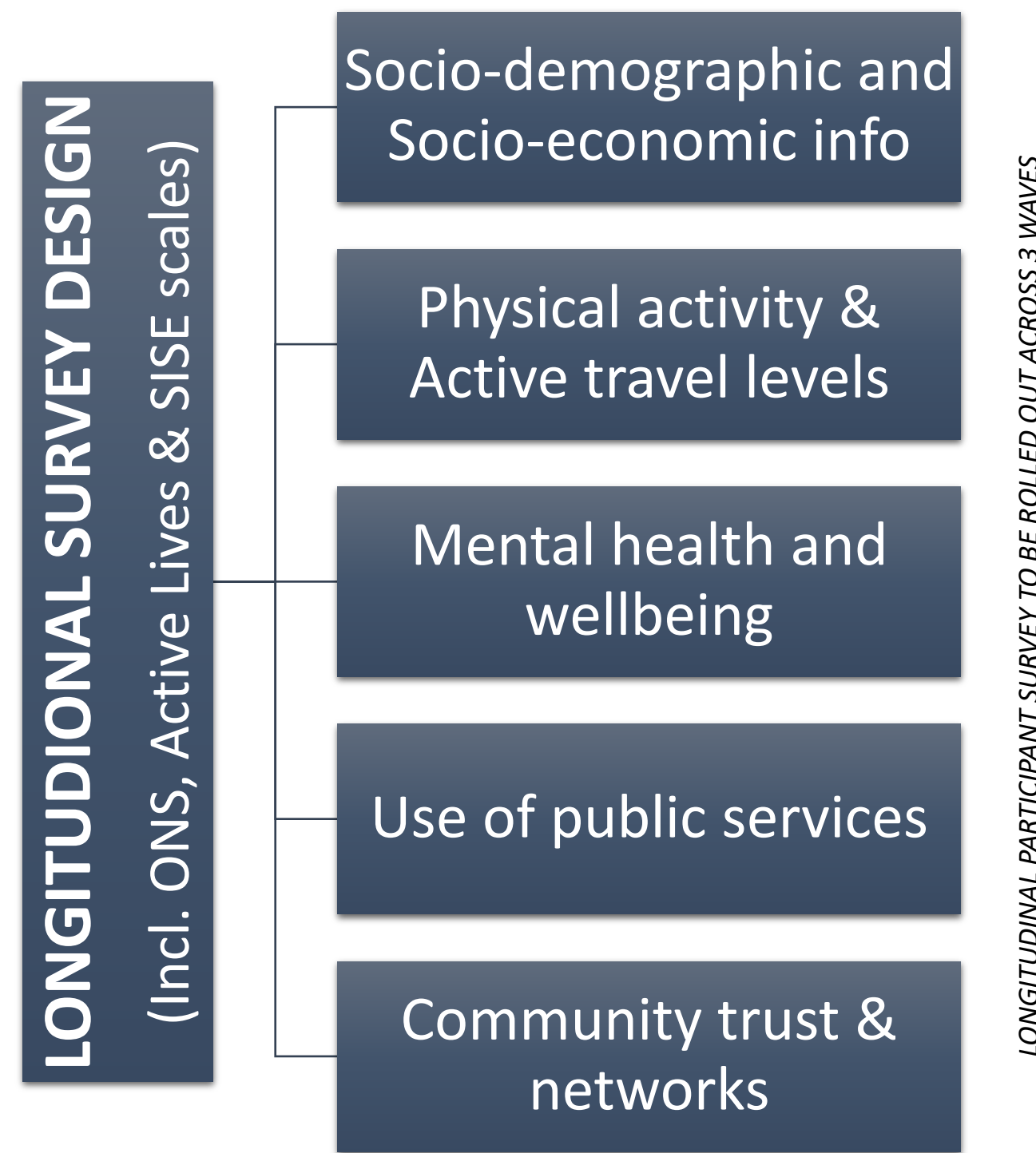
Key Aims

1. Improve biking and walking accessibility for underrepresented groups, to support reduction in health inequalities
2. Facilitate increased physical activity
3. Create a sustainable social prescribing network in Suffolk
4. Increase awareness and use of active travel infrastructure
5. Increase social inclusion, a sense of community & resilience through group-based walking, wheeling & cycling projects

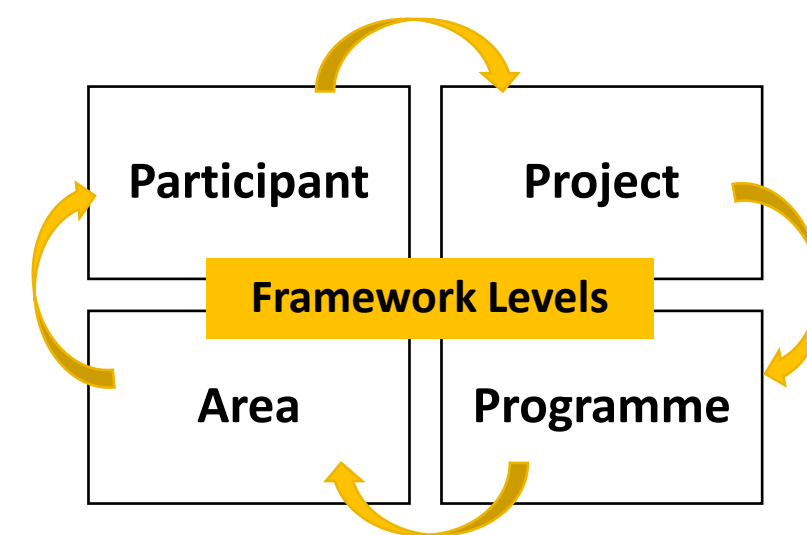
Context & Project Information

£13.9 Million total > £1.5 Million to Suffolk > 3 years

Social prescribing refers to the use of non-drug interventions to help patients manage their health. GP time is increasingly limited, 20% of patients access primary care for non-medical reasons (Torjesen, 2016). Social prescribing offers a cost-effective approach to healthcare, relieving the pressure on front-line health professionals. Social prescribing has shown improvements in physical health, wellbeing, resilience, and reduced depression & anxiety (Bertotti et al, 2017; Pescheny 2020). Social Prescribing has been gaining momentum since the 1980s. Today, models of social prescribing are widely delivered across the UK. In 2020, the NHS identified social prescribing as a key component, officially identified in the NHS long-term plan and commitments. The *Way to go Suffolk* social prescribing model received funding for areas in Ipswich and Lowestoft from Department of Transport, managed by Active Travel England. Types of intervention might include; group walks and cycling, cycling confidence & maintenance, journey planning.



The Evaluation: Framework Design



Way to Go Suffolk is being evaluated across 4 levels. The survey will gather data from participants only, across 3 waves minimum. Qualitative data will be collected across the framework levels throughout the project.

Updates So Far

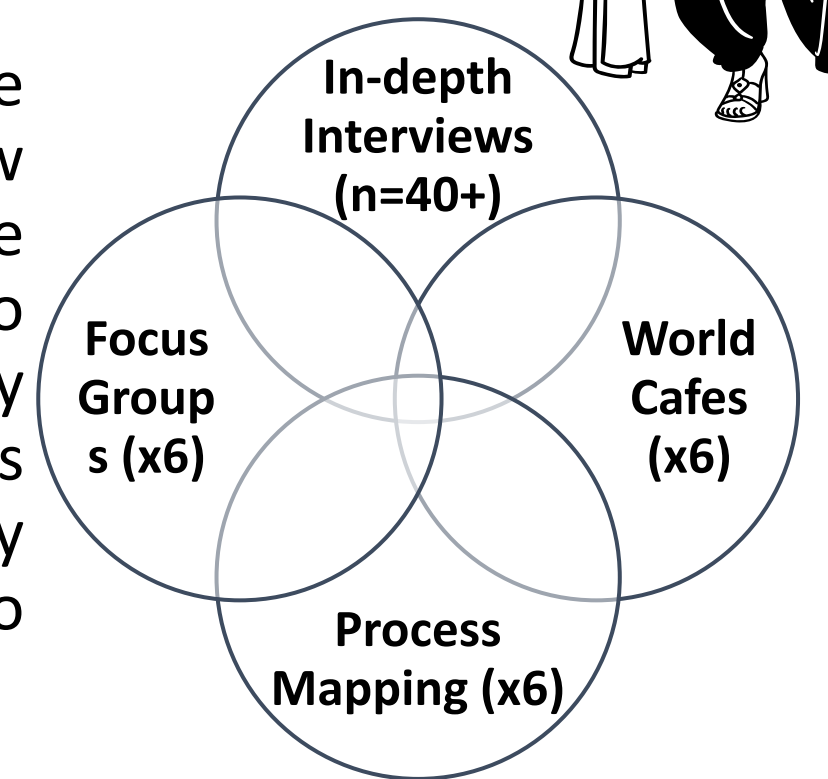
50+ Referrals 75% women 75% Aged 35-44 42% Referred by friend/family

“ I KEPT PUTTING ON WEIGHT, I REACHED OUT TO MY SURGERY AND THEY ENCOURAGED ME TO JOIN THIS. I WAS RELUCTANT AT FIRST, BUT BEING AROUND THESE PEOPLE, IT WAS DIFFERENT ”
Cycling Participant, World Café, November 2023



Qualitative Evaluation Methods

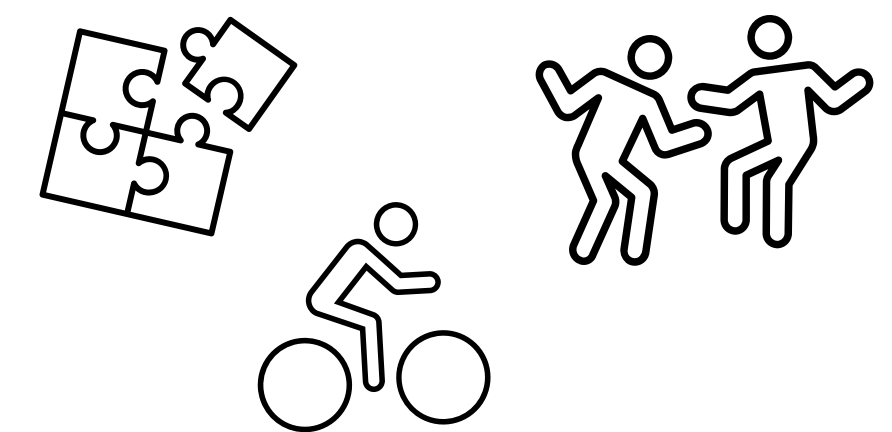
The qualitative evaluation is an iterative and fluid one. The World Café, interview & focus group tools follow the same conceptual framework, designed to capture impacts, challenges, key learning and insights. The process mapping tool will be revisited annually at participant and programme levels, to better understand the mechanism itself.



Voices of Participants and Leaders

Project delivery began in September 2023. The evaluation team have delivered a World Cafe, a focus group, and process mapping sessions across participant and programme levels. A number of positive impacts have already been reported by participants:

- ✓ Increased social networks
- ✓ Improved physical health
- ✓ Better confidence & wellbeing



“ The elderly gentlemen said it has really improved the strength in his legs and his mobility, he can do two stairs at a time now and use harder gears... the ladies are spending more time outside together now - they're not at home lonely anymore ”

Project leaders shared examples of increased confidence in navigating cycle routes, improved sense of community, & empowerment. Participants expressed a desire for further training & volunteering.