

Shifting cultural norms, ideologies and policy/governance in girls and young women accessing sport, physical activity and movement in a safe and meaningful way



Trio lead

Christine Bland

Strategic Lead, Active Children & Young People

GMMOVING

Trio members

Lauren Whaley

Donna Livesey

Sally Carr

Ella Williams

Start

Overwhelmed

Determined

Curious

Our starting point

Moving matters to all women and girls! Everyone has a role in closing the gender activity gap by addressing the most marginalized and inactive women and girls. Increasing activity levels requires tackling structural, systemic, and cultural barriers in individuals, social environments, organisations, policies, and cultural norms.

Reducing Inequalities



System barriers



Leadership exercised primarily within organisations and job descriptions

Exhausted front line teams focused on managing demand and risk

Formal governance primarily accountable to national government rather than local people

Community organisations operating at the margins, on short-term funding

Our system shifting trio

Passionate and dedicated to making a difference!

This experiment built on a strong foundation, clarifying what, why, and how.

In the future we would like to work directly with the GM Equalities Panel and IWG Women & Sport.



Lightbulb moments

- Change takes time – it's hard at first and that's OK!
- Being explicit in naming the Brighton Declaration as the experiment was key but also how it contributes to broader strategic thinking and ways of working.
- Relationships and people are key!
- Data and Storytelling – we had the 'from the heart' part, just needed the 'how part' to complete the jigsaw.
- Feel connected with clear roles and direction.
- Asking good questions to help us explore what we hope to achieve in terms of system change.
- Meet online, clear agenda, clear actions and who's responsible (being mindful and realistic of people's capacity).



Our biggest challenges

- Time and capacity of trio members.
- Sometimes it feels messy and not straightforward.
- Lots to connect, sometimes felt overwhelming, but being explicit and clear helped us stay calm.
- Agency - Realign practice, reconnect people, reveal leadership.
- Power - Rebalance governance, reallocate resources, reframe accountability.

Our insights and breakthrough

International working group – Pearl Celebration event (motivator, connections, and bigger picture thinking).

City Region partnership - Developing the Brighton Declaration across two city regions, Greater Manchester and Liverpool.

Bringing in an additional trio member, offering a fresh perspective and positive challenge.

Commitment will continue beyond the experiment timeframe - this is just the beginning.

Next Steps

- Engaging with strategic leaders across GM and Liverpool to bring the Brighton Plus Helsinki Declaration to life, addressing barriers for women and girls in sport, and guiding systemic change.
- Plan to attend the IWG conference in July 2026 to showcase commitment.



Now

Connector

Passionate

Determined



A strategic partnership between Innovation Unit and Greater Manchester Combined Authority