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Annual Disability and Activity Survey

2023-24

Differences for people with
different impairment types

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1. Introduction

This report outlines key findings from people with different types of impairments who took part in Activity Alliance's fifth Annual Disability and Activity Survey.

The full report is available on the Activity Alliance website.

971 disabled people and people with long-term health conditions took part in an online survey between October and November 2023. This project complements **Sport England's Active Lives Adult Survey**, providing a deeper level of understanding of disabled people's perceptions and experience of sport and physical activity.

This report outlines key data for seven impairment types, compared to the overall sample of disabled people and **previous years**. The sample size for each group was:

- Mobility: 613
- Learning, understanding, or concentrating: 93
- Long-term health condition: 338
- Mental health: 288
- Hearing: 133
- Visual: 71
- Social or behavioural: 94

Most people who took part in the survey had more than one impairment type (80%). The challenges experienced by disabled people can be similar, regardless of their impairment or health condition. This report provides more detail for groups who work with people with specific impairments.

We reviewed the findings and resources with the National Disability Sports Organisations.

Please contact Activity Alliance's research team to discuss how to access and use the data, or how to implement the recommendations. Email **research@activityalliance.org.uk** or call 08081 756991.



2. People with a mobility impairment

About this group

613 people with a mobility impairment took part in the survey.
91% have additional impairments.

The most common were:

- Long-term pain (66%).
- Breathing or stamina (44%).
- Long-term health conditions (36%).

12% were electric wheelchair, powerchair, or scooter users, 12% were manual wheelchair users, 3% were limb amputees or had congenital limb loss, and 1% had dwarfism or restricted growth.

50% had acquired their mobility impairment through illness, injury, or accident.

This group were more likely to think of themselves as disabled (71% vs 59% of disabled people overall).

This group was older than the overall sample, with 72% aged 55 or over.

Research findings

Participation and experiences

80% of people with a mobility impairment want to be more active (compared to 76% of disabled people overall).

The top motivations to be active were similar to other disabled people, and to the previous year of the survey. This included:

- To improve or maintain physical health (67%).
- To improve or maintain mental health (45%).
- To lose or maintain weight (40%).

Similar to last year's findings, people with mobility impairments were less likely to agree that sport is for 'someone like me' (21% vs 30% of disabled people) and that physical activity and exercise are for 'someone like me' (41% vs 49%).

64% enjoyed the last time they took part in sport or physical activity (similar as for disabled people overall).

People with mobility impairments were more likely to say their impairment or condition stops them being as active as they would like (89% vs 79% of all disabled people).

The other top barriers were similar to disabled people:

- Getting older (33%).
- A lack of motivation (18%).
- Finances (17%).

People with mobility impairments were more likely than other disabled people to say they would listen to advice on activity from physios, occupational therapists, and other healthcare professionals (55% vs 50%) and specialist doctors, consultants or medical professionals (53% vs 49%).

People with mobility impairments were slightly less likely to agree that they were given the opportunity to be as active as they want to be (38% vs 43%).

Websites (31%), friends and family (29%), and medical practices or professionals (27%) are the most common ways that people with mobility impairments find out about opportunities.

The top forms of support to help people with mobility impairments to be active were similar to last year and to disabled people overall:

- Support to improve physical health (41%).
- Greater awareness of suitable activities (32%).
- Practical support from a trained person (24%).

Cost of living

34% agree the cost of living crisis has affected how active they are (vs 39% of disabled people overall). 57% agree it has affected how much they socialise (vs 59% of disabled people overall).

40% of people with a mobility impairment consider sport and activity to be a luxury rather than a necessity.

40% agree when money is tight, the cost of being active is one of the first things they look to reduce.

Outdoor spaces

Similar to most impairment groups, people with mobility impairments were most likely to take part in sport and activity in outdoor green spaces (35%). This is the same as their preference (37%).

Two-fifths (38%) say it's easy for them to physically access outdoor spaces.

People with mobility impairments were more likely to take their own transport to their active places (62% vs 58%) and want to do so (64% vs 59%).

Mental health and loneliness

People with mobility impairments report their wellbeing similarly to other disabled people: 3% have very high life satisfaction (vs 5% of disabled people overall), 10% feel very happy (vs 11%), 17% find life worthwhile (vs 17%), and 25% experience very low anxiety (vs 22%).

Representation and belonging

People with mobility impairments were less likely than disabled people overall to say they see ‘people like me’ playing (22% vs 29%), working (12% vs 17%), and volunteering (11% vs 15%) in sport and physical activity.

People with mobility impairments are less likely to agree they have the opportunity to become a coach (5% vs 9%).



Summary and resources

We have developed four key areas for improvement in our **2023-24 full report** in collaboration with disabled people and organisations. Key findings and resources for people with mobility impairments include:

- People with mobility impairments often don't feel sport is for them or see representation. An older average of this impairment group may influence this. They trust healthcare professionals the most for advice.
- **WheelPower** provides online activities, multisport events, funding, free equipment for wheelchair users, and online coach training. **ParalympicsGB's Every Body Moves** helps people find inclusive and accessible sports and physical activities nearby.
- **LimbPower**, **Dwarf Sports Association UK**, and **CP Sport** provide guidance on including people with physical impairments in sports.

3. People with a learning impairment

About this group

93 people with a learning impairment took part in this survey. Learning impairments were classified when respondents indicated difficulties in areas such as learning, understanding, or concentrating. Similar to last year, all people with a learning impairment had multiple impairments. Mental health impairments were the most common additional impairment (67%), followed by mobility (59%), and memory (55%).

People with a learning impairment were more likely than average to think of themselves as disabled (73% vs 59%).

People with a learning impairment were more likely to be younger, with a third (34%) aged 16-34. A quarter (23%) of people with a learning impairment who took part in this survey identify as LGBT+.

Research findings

Participation and experience

Similar to last year, 76% of people with a learning impairment want to be more active.

Compared to disabled people overall, people with a learning impairment were more likely to be motivated to take part in sport or physical activity:

- To feel good about myself (56% vs 39%).
- To lose/maintain weight (54% vs 42%).
- To relax or have a break from other things in life (34% vs 21%).

People with a learning impairment were less likely to feel that sport is for 'someone like me' compared to last year (30% compared to 43% last year).

65% enjoyed the last time they took part in sport or physical activity (similar to disabled people overall). Enjoyment levels for this group have reduced from 79% last year.

People with learning impairments, like other disabled people, often feel that their impairment or health condition limits their activity (72% compared to 79% of all disabled people). They are more likely to say this is related to:

- Worrying it will make their impairment worse (59% vs 30% of disabled people overall).
- Unsuitable activities (39% vs 25%).
- Previous bad experiences (35% vs 17%).
- Negative attitudes from others (18% vs 8%).

Other top barriers include:

- Lack of confidence (41% vs 16%).
- Lack of motivation (39% vs 24%).
- Finances (38% vs 18%).

People with learning impairments are most likely to listen to advice from medical professionals and are more likely to listen to personal contacts (i.e. friends, family) compared to other disabled people (39% vs 28%).

48% of people with a learning impairment say they are not given the opportunity to be as active as they want to be (compared to 36% of disabled people and 20% of non-disabled people).

Websites (30%) are the most common source of information about opportunities, followed by family and friends (28%), and social media (23%). This group also relies more on school, college, or university for information.

People with learning impairments were more likely to say most forms of support would help them to be more active. The most common forms of support were:

- Financial (41% vs 20% of disabled people overall).
- Improved physical health (41% vs 39%).
- Improved mental health (34% vs 22%).

Cost of living

Nearly half (48%) of people with a learning impairment agree the cost of living crisis has affected how active they are (vs 39% of disabled people overall). 66% agree it has affected how much they socialise (vs 59% of disabled people overall).

53% consider sport and activity to be a luxury rather than a necessity.

60% agree when money is tight, the cost of being active is one of the first things they look to reduce.

40% say having more disposable income to spend on physical activity would make the most impact on them being active.



Outdoor spaces

People with learning impairments typically take part in sport and physical activity at home using digital tools (i.e. phone, laptop, TV) (39%) or in outdoor green spaces (i.e. parks, countryside, woodland) (38%). This is the same as their preference (37% and 41%).

Only 35% say it's easy for them to physically access outdoor spaces.

They are more likely than disabled people overall to travel with someone who supports them to activity spaces (25% vs 12%) and prefer to travel using public transport (17% vs 9%).

Mental health and loneliness

People with learning impairments were less likely than disabled people overall to report very high happiness (4% vs 11%), life worthwhileness (9% vs 17%), and very low anxiety (11% vs 22%).

Representation and belonging

Less than a third of people with learning impairments see 'people like me' playing (30%), working (17%), and volunteering (14%) in sport and physical activity.

They are less likely to agree they have the opportunity to become a coach (5% vs 9%).

Similar to last year, being involved in influencing activities mattered more to this group compared to all disabled people (40% vs 30%).

Summary and resources

- People with learning impairments are more likely to experience barriers to being active. They welcome support, particularly around their physical and mental health, and finances.
- They feel less included and have lower enjoyment levels compared to last year. Involving people in shaping activities could improve their sense of belonging and experiences.
- **Mencap** and **Special Olympics GB** offer advice on including people with learning disabilities in sports. Special Olympics GB exists to offer people with intellectual disabilities (ID) or learning disabilities a chance to take part in sport within their communities all year round.
- **Scope** provides practical information and emotional support, while the **Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities (FPLD)** promotes rights and offers mental health resources. **Paralympics GB** also offers resources for schools and communities to encourage activity.

4. People with a long-term health condition

About this group

338 people with a long-term health condition took part in this survey. Nearly all (92%) of those also had at least one other impairment. The most common additional impairments were mobility (66%), long-term pain (56%), and breathing and stamina (51%).

They were more likely than average to consider themselves disabled (68% vs 59%).

People with long-term health conditions were most likely to acquire their condition through illness or injury (51%) or aging (48%).

Research findings

Participation and experience

76% want to be more active (same as disabled people overall).

Motivations to be active were similar to those of disabled people overall and to last year. The top motivations were:

- To improve or maintain physical health (70%).
- To improve or maintain mental health (51%).
- To lose or maintain weight (41%).

People with a long-term health condition have similar perceptions of sport and physical activity to disabled people overall: only 26% agree sport is for 'someone like me' (vs 30%) and 44% agree physical activity is for 'someone like me' (vs 49%).

63% enjoyed the last time they took part in sport or physical activity (similar to disabled people overall).

Nine in 10 (87%) were most likely to report their impairment or condition as a barrier to being active.

They were more likely than disabled people overall to say a lack of suitable transport (10% vs 6%), fear of losing benefits (6% vs 3%), and a lack of available equipment (5% vs 3%) stop them from being active.



Healthcare professionals were the top preferred sources of advice on physical activity. People with a long-term health condition were less likely to listen to advice from sporting or activity sources (17% compared to 22% of disabled people overall).

39% say they have the opportunity to be as active as they want to be. This is similar to last year and disabled people overall.

Like previous years, people with a health condition were only slightly more likely to have received information about being active from medical practices or professionals (29% compared to 24% of all disabled people). They were more likely to find information about opportunities from disabled people (10% vs 7%).

The top forms of support to be active were support to improve physical health (43%), greater awareness of suitable activities (32%), and practical support from a trained person or coach (25%).

Cost of living

Similar to disabled people overall, over a third of people with long-term health conditions agree the increased cost of living reduced how active they were (38% vs 39%) and two-thirds agree it has reduced how much they socialise (60% vs 59%).

43% of people with a long-term health condition consider sport and activity to be a luxury rather than a necessity.

40% agree when money is tight, the cost of being active is one of the first things they look to reduce.

A greater proportion of people with a long-term health condition say they currently receive benefits because of their condition compared to disabled people overall (57% vs 50%). Four in 10 (41%), say a 'fear of losing benefits or financial assistance' stops them from trying to be more active.

Outdoor spaces

People with long-term health conditions usually take part in sport and physical activity in outdoor green spaces (35% vs 41%). This is the same as their preference (38% vs 40%).

Two-fifths (38%) say it's easy for them to physically access outdoor spaces.

Most are likely to take their own transport to where they are active (57% vs 58%) and want to do so (47% vs 59%).



Mental health and loneliness

People with long-term health conditions report their wellbeing as similar to disabled people overall, 4% have very high life satisfaction (vs 5%), 9% feel very happy (vs 11%), 15% find life worthwhile (vs 16%), and 21% experience very low anxiety (vs 22%).

Representation and belonging

They were less likely to say they see 'people like me' playing (25% vs 29%), working (13% vs 17%), and volunteering (12% vs 15%) in sport and physical activity than disabled people overall.

Summary and resources

- Similar to previous years, there were few differences between people with long-term health conditions and disabled people overall. Experiences, perceptions, and attitudes have not improved and people are still feeling less connected to sport and physical activity.
- **We Are Undefeatable** provide guidance on including people with long-term health conditions in sport and physical activity.
- **The Richmond Group of Charities** provide tailored resource packs for the sport and physical activity sector, health and care organisations, and the health and care workforce.



5. People with a mental health condition or impairment

About this group

288 people with a mental health condition or impairment took part in this survey. A large majority (91%) had more than one impairment. Long-term pain was the most common additional impairment (62%), followed by mobility (54%), and breathing and stamina (46%).

They were more likely this year to think of themselves as disabled (68% compared to 52% last year).

Respondents with a mental health condition were more likely to be working-age adults (between 16–64 years old) and female.



Research findings

Participation and experience

Similar to disabled people overall, 78% want to be more active.

This group were more likely to be motivated to take part in sport and activities to improve and/or maintain their mental health (70% vs 50% of all disabled people). Other motivations that were significantly more common included losing/maintaining weight (49% vs 42%) and feeling good (46% vs 39%).

In comparison to last year, this group were less likely to agree physical activity is for 'someone like me' (46% vs 54% last year), and that sport is 'for someone like me' (31% vs 40%).

Six in 10 (61%) people with a mental health condition enjoyed the last time they took part in sport or physical activity.

Like other disabled people, people with a mental health condition were most likely to say that their impairment stops them from being as active as they would like to be (76% vs 79%). Other top barriers include:

- Lack of motivation (38% vs 24%).
- Lack of confidence (29% vs 16%).
- Finances (25% vs 18%).

Listening to advice about taking part in sport or physical activity from physios, occupational therapists, and other medical professionals was the most common preference (47%).

Fewer people with a mental health condition feel they were given the opportunity to be as active as they want to be compared to disabled people overall (33% vs 43%).

Similar to last year, the most common information source for opportunities is websites (35%). They are more likely to use social media as a source of information (24% vs 17% of all disabled people), reflecting their younger age profile.

People with a mental health condition were more likely to say most forms of support would help them to be more active. The most common forms of support selected were 'support to improve mental health' (49% vs 22% of all disabled people), and 'support to improve physical health' (43% vs 39%).

Cost of living

Over half of people with a mental health condition agree the increased cost of living reduced how active they were (50%) and how much they socialised (71%).

Over half (52%) consider sport and activity to be a luxury, and agree when money is tight, the cost of being active is one of the first things they look to reduce (57%).

Those receiving benefits were more fearful that being active may lead to their financial assistance being removed (49% vs 38% of disabled people overall).

Outdoor spaces

People with a mental health condition usually take part in sport and physical activity in outdoor green spaces (42%). This is the same as their preference (38%). They are more likely to prefer being active at home compared to disabled people overall.

Two-fifths (39%) say it's easy for them to physically access outdoor spaces.

They are most likely to take their own transport to be active (50% vs 58%) and want to do so (49% vs 59%).

Mental health and loneliness

People with a mental health condition were less likely to report very high life satisfaction (3% vs 5%), happiness (5% vs 11%), and life worthwhileness (8% vs 17%), and very low anxiety (8% vs 22%).

Representation and belonging

Less than a third of people with a mental health condition see 'people like me' playing (28%), working (18%), and volunteering (16%) in sport and physical activity.

People with a mental health condition are more likely than disabled people overall to want the opportunity to become a coach (16% vs 11%) and influence types of activity (35% vs 30%).



Summary and resources

- People with mental health conditions recognise the impact being active can have on their wellbeing. Many want opportunities to be active outdoors. Lack of motivation, confidence, and finances are more common barriers for this group.
- This year, fewer feel that sport and physical activity are for 'someone like me'. They are keen to help design activities and join the sport and activity workforce.
- **Mind** provide further information, advice, and resources on including people with mental health conditions in sport and physical activity. **Disability Sports Coach** offer local disability sports clubs, inclusive sport coaching, and training courses for sports providers.



6. People with a hearing impairment (D/deaf people)

About this group

133 people with a hearing impairment took part in this survey.

Nearly all (97%) had at least one other health condition or impairment:

- Mobility (68%).
- Long-term pain (59%).
- Breathing or stamina (48%).

Visual impairments were more common in this group than in disabled people overall.

This group were more likely than average to consider themselves disabled (67% vs 59%).

Age may be partly behind some differences in this section. 60% acquired their hearing impairment through aging and 55% of the sample of D/deaf people were 55 years or older.

Research findings

Participation and experience

More D/deaf people want to be more active this year compared to last year (71% compared to 65% last year).

The top motivations to be active were:

- To improve or maintain physical health (61%).
- To improve or maintain mental health (49%).
- To feel good about myself (42%).

D/deaf people were more likely to be motivated to be active to meet new friends (17% compared to 10% of disabled people overall).

They have similar perceptions of sport and physical activity to disabled people overall: 28% agree sport is for 'someone like me' (vs 30% of disabled people overall) and 48% agree physical activity is for 'someone like me' (vs 49%).

68% enjoyed the last time they took part in sport or physical activity (similar to disabled people overall).

D/deaf people were as likely as disabled people overall to say their impairment or condition stops them from being as active as they would like (79%), this is an increase from last year (67%). They are more likely to say getting older (55% vs 31%) and lack of suitable transport (12% vs 6%) are barriers.

Like disabled people overall, the top three preferred sources of advice for D/deaf people are:

- Physios, occupational therapists and other medical professionals (51% vs 50%).
- Specialist doctors and consultants (50% vs 49%).
- GPs or nurses (50% vs 48%).

D/deaf people were more likely to agree that they were given the opportunity to be as active as they want to be (47% vs 43% of all disabled people).

They are most likely to find information about opportunities from websites (29%), community facilities (26%), and friends and family (25%).

The top forms of support that would help D/deaf people to be active were similar to disabled people overall. Support to improve physical health (36%), greater awareness of activities (26%), and practical support from a trained person or coach (26%).

Cost of living

Similar to disabled people overall, 44% of people with a hearing impairment say the increased cost of living reduced how active they are (vs 39%) and 59% say it reduced how much they socialise (vs 59%).

Similar to disabled people overall, 40% of people with a hearing impairment consider sport and activity to be a luxury rather than a necessity.

Two-fifths agree when money is tight, the cost of being active is one of the first things they look to reduce.

Outdoor spaces

Similar to disabled people overall and all other impairment groups, D/deaf people were most likely to take part in outdoor green spaces (44% vs 41%) and preferred to do so (39% vs 40%).

Over four in 10 (44%) say it's easy for them to physically access outdoor spaces.

Most are likely to take their own transport to be active (59% vs 58%) and want to do so (63% vs 59%).



Mental health and loneliness

People with a hearing impairment report their wellbeing similarly to other disabled people. 6% have very high life satisfaction (vs 5%), 12% feel very happy (vs 11%), 20% find life worthwhile (vs 17%), and 20% experience very low anxiety (vs 22%).

Representation and belonging

Less than a third of people with a hearing impairment see 'people like me' playing (27%), working (17%), and volunteering (17%) in sport and physical activity.

Summary and resources

- D/deaf people share similar motivations with other disabled people for being active, primarily for physical and mental health. Additionally, they are motivated by the positive feelings it brings and the social opportunities it offers.
- D/deaf people are more likely to say getting older and lack of suitable transport stops them from being active. They are more likely to prefer advice on being active from healthcare professionals.
- **UK Deaf Sport** provide further information and advice on including D/deaf people in sport and physical activity.



7. People with a visual impairment

About this group

71 people with a visual impairment took part in this survey. Most people (97%) who took part have more than one impairment. The most common additional impairment was mobility (75%), followed by long-term pain (61%), and breathing or stamina (52%). Hearing impairments were more common in this group.

Nearly a quarter (73%) think of themselves as disabled (compared to 54% of all disabled people).

The age profile was similar to the overall sample, with 66% being over 55. People with visual impairments were more likely to be in a lower social grade.

Research findings

Participation and experience

Seven in 10 (69%) people with a visual impairment want to be more active. This is higher than findings from last year where 59% wanted to be more active.

Motivations to be active were similar to those of disabled people overall, with the top reasons being to improve or maintain physical health (63%) and mental health (56%). They were more likely to be motivated by challenging themselves (41% vs 28% of disabled people overall).

This group has similar perceptions of sport and physical activity to disabled people overall: 26% agree sport is for 'someone like me' (vs 30% of disabled people overall) and 52% agree physical activity is for 'someone like me' (vs 49%).

Two-thirds of people with a visual impairment enjoyed the last time they took part in sport or physical activity (similar to disabled people overall).

86% say their impairment or condition stops them being as active as they would like. Contrasting to last year, this is higher than for disabled people overall (79%). This was most likely to be related to symptoms making it hard to be active (81%).



People with a visual impairment were more likely to report a lack of money to take part (33% vs 18%), preference for other activities (14% vs 7%), and not enough inclusive and accessible facilities (16% vs 5%) as barriers compared to disabled people overall.

They most commonly get information about sports or physical activity from specialist doctors, consultants, or healthcare professionals (58%).

They were more likely than disabled people overall to listen to advice from social prescribing link workers (6% vs 2%).

46% of people with visual impairments say they have the opportunity to be as active as they want to be. This is slightly higher than disabled people overall.

Top information sources for this group are friends and family (38%) and websites (30%). They are also more likely to find information from supporters/carers/befrienders (11% compared to 5% of disabled people overall).

The top forms of support for people with visual impairments that would help them to be more active were:

- Support to improve physical health (46%).
- Practical support from a trained professional (31%).
- Financial support (30%).

Cost of living

Over half (52%) of people with a visual impairment agree the cost of living crisis has affected how active they are and how much they socialise (65%).

47% of people with a visual impairment consider sport and activity to be a luxury rather than a necessity.

Similar to disabled people overall, 49% agree when money is tight, the cost of being active is one of the first things they look to reduce.

People with a visual impairment are more likely to say cheaper activity sessions would make an impact on them being active (37% vs 24%).

Outdoor spaces

People with a visual impairment were most likely to take part at home not using online or digital tools (38% compared to 29% of disabled people overall). Outdoor green spaces are their preferred place to be active (41%).

A third (34%) say it's easy for them to physically access outdoor spaces.

They are more likely to take own transport to the places where they are active (62% vs 58%) and want to do so (64% vs 59%).

Mental health and loneliness

People with visual impairments report their wellbeing as similar to disabled people overall: 3% have very high life satisfaction (vs 5%), 7% feel very happy (vs 11%), 20% find life worthwhile (vs 17%), and 15% experience very low anxiety (vs 22%).

Representation and belonging

Less than a third of people with a visual impairment see 'people like me' playing (32%), working (18%), and volunteering (21%) in sport and physical activity.



Summary and resources

- Practical barriers, such as a lack of inclusive facilities and financial constraints, remain common for people with visual impairments. They prefer to be active in outdoor green spaces, but this preference often doesn't match their current activity locations.
- While people with visual impairments generally have more opportunities to be active compared to other disabled individuals, over 50% still want to increase their activity levels. They would benefit most from health, practical, and financial support.
- **British Blind Sport** provides an online coaching course, resources, research, and workshops to assist those who are delivering sporting sessions with advice and guidance on how to include people with sight loss.

8. People with a social or behavioural impairment

About this group

94 people with social or behavioural impairments took part in this survey. Almost all (98%) have more than one impairment. The most common additional impairment was mental health conditions (78%), followed by breathing or stamina (56%), and mobility (54%).

They were more likely to think of themselves as disabled compared to disabled people overall (68% vs 59%).

People with social or behavioural impairments who took part in the survey were more likely to be younger than the overall sample, female, and identify as LGBT+.

Research findings

Participation and experience

Seven in 10 (69%) would like to be more active (compared to 76% of disabled people overall).

Similar to last year, the top motivation for this group is to improve or maintain mental health (65%, vs 50% of all disabled people). This top motivation differs from most other groups, apart from people with a mental health condition, with other groups most likely to be active to improve or maintain physical health.

They are less likely to say physical activity is for 'someone like me' compared to last year (40% compared to 47%).

62% enjoyed the last time they took part in physical activity – a similar level to disabled people overall (65%).

Like other disabled people, people with social or behavioural impairments were most likely to say that their impairment or health condition stop them being as active as they would like (68% vs 79% of all disabled people). They were more likely than other disabled people to say this was related to bad experiences in the past (32% vs 17%) and negative attitudes from others (18% vs 8%).



They were more likely than other disabled people to say a lack of confidence (49% vs 16%) and motivation (48% vs 24%) were barriers, as well as finances/lack of money (34% vs 18%). Not being able to pay with cash was more of a barrier for this group (12% vs 3%).

Specialist doctors or consultants were the most preferred source of advice on being active (46% vs 49% of disabled people overall). They were less likely to prefer advice from occupational therapists or other medical professionals (40% vs 50%), and more likely to prefer advice from carers or supporters (15% vs 5%), parents/guardians (11% vs 5%), and social workers (10% vs 3%) than other disabled people.

People with social or behavioural impairments were less likely than other disabled people to agree that they are given the opportunity to be active as they want (31% vs 43%).

Similar to last year, social media is a more common source of information for this group (30% vs 17% of disabled people overall). Websites and friends and family are other common choices.

This group were most likely to say 'support to improve mental health' would help them to be active (46% vs 22% of all disabled people). They were more likely than other disabled people to say most types of support would help them to be active.

Cost of living

People with a social or behavioural impairment were more likely to agree the cost of living has reduced how active they are (59% compared to 39% of disabled people overall) and how much they socialise (70% vs 59%).

They were more likely to consider sport and activity to be a luxury rather than a necessity (52% compared to 41% of disabled people overall).

58% agree when money is tight, the cost of being active is one of the first things they look to reduce.

Outdoor spaces

People with social or behavioural impairments were most likely to take part in activity at home using digital tools (i.e. phone, laptop, TV) (45% compared to 26% of disabled people overall). They have a preference to be active in outdoor green spaces (41%).

37% say it's easy for them to physically access outdoor spaces.

Most likely to actively travel to the places where they are active (53% vs 47%) and equally want to do so (47% vs 46%), along with using their own transport (47% vs 59%).

They are more likely than disabled people overall to travel with someone who supports them (25% vs 12%).

Mental health and loneliness

People with social or behavioural impairments were less likely to report very high life worthwhileness (9% vs 17%), and very low anxiety (11% vs 22%).

Representation and belonging

They are more likely to say they see 'people like me' playing sport and physical activity compared to disabled people overall (38% vs 29%).

They were more likely to agree that they'd like to be involved in influencing the types of activities they take part in (41% vs 30%), and to strongly agree disabled people should have more of a say in the policies they are involved in (69% vs 43%).

Summary and resources

- People with social or behavioural impairments are more likely to see representation in sports and activities and are more eager to help design these activities. The younger average age of this group may contribute to these positive trends.
- For this group, challenging negative attitudes, supporting their mental health through activity, and creating opportunities in outdoor spaces would help them to be more active.
- **Activity Alliance's Inclusive Activity Programme (IAP) eLearning** equips workforces with the skills to provide more inclusive experiences. **Mind's resources** help workforces to prioritise mental health alongside physical health.



9. Appendix

Defining disability and activity

Our survey identified respondents as disabled if they answered ‘yes’ to both of the following questions:

- Do you have any long-term health conditions, impairments or illnesses? This could include, for example, physical, sensory, learning, social, behavioural, or mental health conditions or impairments. Long-term means that they have lasted, or are expected to last, 12 months or more.
- ‘Do these health conditions, impairments or illnesses have a substantial effect on your ability to do normal daily activities?’

We defined physical activity as: the number of days in a normal week people did 30 minutes or more of physical activity that was enough to raise breathing rate. This includes sport, exercise and brisk walking or cycling for fun, or to get to and from places.

Sample

Two sample sources were used. People who had completed Sport England’s Active Lives Survey in the last two years and agreed to take part in further research, and people from an independent research panel.

The profile of the sample was representative of the UK profile of disabled people across key demographics and is consistent with previous surveys.

For more information, please access the full report.





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This document is also available in Word format. Please contact us if you need more support. Report published in September 2024.

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