An evaluation of Lincolnshire Sports'

'Workplace Challenge' Physical Activity Programme

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Executive Summary

Introduction

This report presents an evaluation of the *Workplace Challenge,* a County Sport Partnership led physical activity programme which utilises a website designed to engage people from workplaces in physical activity. The Workplace Challenge operated within the geographical boundary of Lincolnshire and thus targeted workplaces within this region. The overarching aim of the Workplace Challenge was to enact culture change within organisations in terms of employees' physical activity habits.

Methods

A methods-driven, Programme Evaluation model was adopted which utilised qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. Qualitative data was obtained from three case studies of different groups engaged in the Workplace Challenge: A workplace from the private sector, a workplace from the public sector, and individual participants who took part in the programme but were either not associated to a workplace or were the sole representative from their workplace. Purposive samples of participants were selected from each case study who completed a semi structured interview regarding the programme, with results analysed via thematic analysis to highlight common themes. Quantitative analysis was conducted utilising the information stored on the Workplace Challenge website and using a computer script developed with MATLAB®, (MathWorks, Massachusetts, USA).

Key Findings

Key qualitative findings related to the social networks and relationships which operated during the programme and how these influenced programme delivery and uptake. The presence of a key programme driver within a workplace appeared crucial to the successful delivery of the programme; ensuring employees were informed, motivated and connected throughout the programme. Team bonding and intra-workplace competition were prominent outcomes of the programme, with competition motivating increases in physical activity levels amongst many individuals. Feelings of isolation were also apparent from individuals engaged in the programme who felt unconnected to a wider team, as well as negative feelings which stemmed from an individual comparing their physical captivity levels to a more active peer. With reference to the Workplace Challenge programme, responses indicated that the active

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transport element of the programme was unknown by many individuals, as well as the fact the programme website was staying live after the completion of the challenge. There also existed ambiguity over how to classify exercise intensity on the Workplace Challenge website. Key quantitative findings indicated the varied level of engagement which was apparent from individuals involved in the programme, with a large range of website activity entries being recorded and significant variations in durations of activity completed. The average number of modes of activity completed per participant was low indicating that individuals preferred to undertake a few chosen activities as opposed to the programme encouraging new activity forms.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the findings gathered from the evaluation, recommendations for Lincolnshire Sport were thus formed for the future implementation of the Workplace Challenge:

- To aim to identify an individual/individuals within each workplace prior to the programme who will act as a driver for the Workplace Challenge.
- To focus on encouraging intra-workplace competition through the Workplace Challenge as opposed to inter-workplace.
- To prevent feelings of isolation occurring within the Workplace Challenge by removing the required number needed to be a departmental 'team'.
- To limit negative feelings being produced about an individual's physical activity levels when compared to others by rewarding individuals for other elements of physical activity, such as for trying a new form of activity.
- To improve the promotion of the fact the Workplace Challenge website remains active throughout the year to assist with encouraging continual physical activity.
- To provide further information about the classification of the different intensity level choices for activity on the Workplace Challenge to prevent ambiguity and uncertainty.
- To ensure that the active transport element of the Workplace Challenge becomes a more prominent feature of the programme and increase awareness of its inclusion in the challenge.

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1. Introduction

The *Workplace Challenge* is a County Sport Partnership led physical activity programme which utilises a website designed to engage people from workplaces in physical activity. Employees self-record their physical activity over an eight week period, with points awarded on the programme website for activity completed. The programme seeks to promote a peer-challenge culture with the provision of online leader boards and an interactive virtual platform.

The Workplace Challenge was developed by Leicestershire and Rutland County Sports Partnership who have successfully trailed and refined the programme over a three year period. In 2013 the project was awarded a £500,000 investment from Sport England's Get Healthy, Get Into Sport fund which supports pilot projects aiming to encourage sedentary people to participate in sport. The investment paid for extensive evaluation and the development of the web based system for all County Sport Partnerships who wished to deliver the programme at a cost of £2,200 per year for two years. 23 out of 49 County Sport Partnerships opted to deliver the Workplace Challenge, and based on the success of the programme in year one, a further fourteen counties are joining ready for 2015.

Lincolnshire Sport opted to deliver the Workplace Challenge and the programme formed part of the wider Access LN6 project which included local led bike rides, a small grant scheme and support for workplaces who wanted to start new activities. Lincolnshire Sport allocated a full time project officer to support the programme who worked with local businesses to maximize uptake. Consequently, more than 1200 people joined the eight week challenge and, out of all participating County Sport Partnerships, Lincolnshire finished second in the country, a significant achievement given the region's population size.

1.1 Programme Boundaries

The County Sport Partnership has a county wide remit and thus this acted as the geographical boundary for the Workplace Challenge; with users required to submit a county based workplace postcode upon registration. A core postcode area of 'LN6' was also targeted within which a strong focus was placed. This was chosen due to funding the programme received to support active transport in this region. Although the programme targeted

workplaces, individuals were permitted to sign up to the Workplace Challenge website and did not necessarily have to be part of a wider organisation. To participate in the programme individuals had to be over the age of sixteen. Participants were recruited through cold calling; for example targeting the biggest employers within the county, via media recruitment, and through known contacts within organisations that the County Sport Partnership already possessed.

1.2 Programme Aim

A logic model was applied as part of this evaluation in order to highlight the established aims and objectives of the Workplace Challenge (Hills, 2010; see Figure 1.1). As can be seen within this model, The County Sport Partnership had a number of outcomes they wanted to achieve through the programme including:

- To promote behaviour change in employees in terms of their physical activity habits
- To increase the number of sedentary people doing sport
- To increase the number of days individuals are physically active a week
- To encourage employees to try new activities alongside their colleagues and thus increase the variety of activities individuals are undertaking
- To have one thousand individuals and thirty organisations engaged in the programme
- To see an increase in active transport completed within the region

The long term objective of the Workplace Challenge is that it becomes a self-sustaining scheme. Employers will be given the opportunity to purchase their own website and continue to deliver a Workplace Challenge within their organisation. Ideally, this website will be led over the long-term by designated Workplace Champions who may emerge from within a workplace. Considering the above, the overarching aim of the Workplace Challenge is to enact culture change within organisations. This aim encompasses the aforementioned objectives of the programme since factors such as changes in physical activity behaviour and workplaces willingness to purchase and continue the programme allude to a new culture being formed.
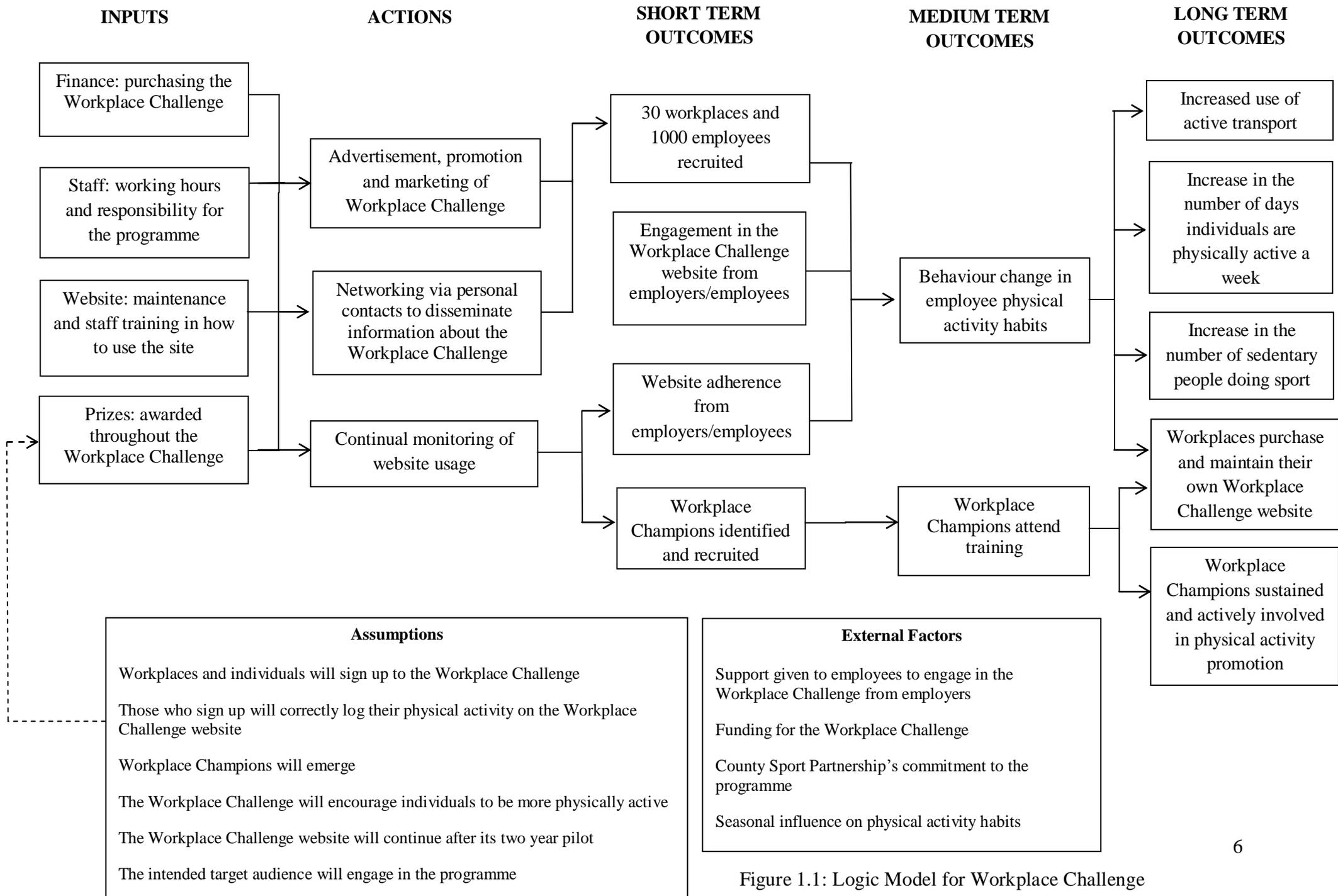
INPUTS

Finance: purchasing the Workplace Challenge

Staff: working hours and responsibility for the programme

Website: maintenance and staff training in how to use the site

Prizes: awarded throughout the Workplace Challenge

ACTIONS

Advertisement, promotion and marketing of Workplace Challenge

Networking via personal contacts to disseminate information about the Workplace Challenge

Continual monitoring of website usage

SHORT TERM OUTCOMES

30 workplaces and 1000 employees recruited

Engagement in the Workplace Challenge website from employers/employees

Website adherence from employers/employees

Workplace Champions identified and recruited

MEDIUM TERM OUTCOMES

Behaviour change in employee physical activity habits

Workplace Champions attend training

LONG TERM OUTCOMES

Increased use of active transport

Increase in the number of days individuals are physically active a week

Increase in the number of sedentary people doing sport

Workplaces purchase and maintain their own Workplace Challenge website

Workplace Champions sustained and actively involved in physical activity promotion

Assumptions

Workplaces and individuals will sign up to the Workplace Challenge

Those who sign up will correctly log their physical activity on the Workplace Challenge website

Workplace Champions will emerge

The Workplace Challenge will encourage individuals to be more physically active

The Workplace Challenge website will continue after its two year pilot

The intended target audience will engage in the programme

External Factors

Support given to employees to engage in the Workplace Challenge from employers

Funding for the Workplace Challenge

County Sport Partnership's commitment to the programme

Seasonal influence on physical activity habits

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Figure 1.1: Logic Model for Workplace Challenge

2. Evaluation Overview

A methods-driven, Programme Evaluation model was adopted as the overarching methodology for the present evaluation (Rossi et al., 2004). This approach places emphasis upon a theory-led approach in which a programme theory is produced and assessed against programme practice. The programme theory is designed to facilitate assessment of programme efficacy, fidelity and development.

The present evaluation features qualitative data obtained from three case studies of different groups who engaged in the Workplace Challenge: A workplace from the private sector, a workplace from the public sector, and individual participants who took part in the programme but were either not associated to a workplace or were the sole representative from their workplace. The selection of these three case studies allows an understanding to be built of the differences between *how* and *why* social networks developed within the Workplace Challenge and *how* information was disseminated between the groups. Such qualitative research permits analysis of the dynamics of social processes and context, enabling evaluators to answer 'how' and 'why' questions (Mason, 2006).

The workplaces involved in the evaluation were selected via purposive, convenience sampling; with employers being required to meet the following selection criteria:

- A minimum of thirty employees registered on the Workplace Challenge
- Workplaces were either from the public and private sector and registered on the Workplace Challenge
- Workplaces were centrally based in Lincoln within the following postcode area: LN6

Workplace involvement was also dependent on the researcher being permitted access to collect data from their employees.

Purposive samples of participants who were engaged in the Workplace Challenge were then selected from each employer. This was achieved by initially targeting all employees registered on the Workplace Challenge website under each of the workplaces. A recruitment email was sent to these individuals and those who responded as being interested in participating in the research were then interviewed. Participants completed semi structured interviews which used a number of predetermined questions (see Appendix A), but also

enabled the researcher to probe certain responses to elicit further information. A purposive sample of individuals who were not linked to an employer were also chosen to complete semi structured interviews using the same method and formed the independent participants case.

Following initial participant recruitment, snowball sampling was then adopted whereby after the initial participants were purposively chosen, further potential participants were identified. This occurred through individuals who were interviewed suggesting new potential participants to contact, or through individuals interviewed prompting others to take part in the research.

All interviews were recorded using a Dictaphone and transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Interviews were on average fifteen minutes in length. Qualitative data obtained from interviews was then analysed through a process known as 'thematic analysis'. Thematic analysis is a method of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data, providing a rich and detailed account of a data set (Braun & Clarke 2006). Appendix B provides a summary of all participants who were interviewed, whilst Appendix C documents the thematic analysis completed.

In addition to qualitative data, further quantitative analysis was conducted from the information stored on the Workplace Challenge website. A total of 34717 exercise bouts were logged over the eight week period of the Workplace Challenge by a total of 998 participants. A computer script was developed with MATLAB[®], (MathWorks, Massachusetts, USA) to process the data and analyse the following variables:

- the number of participants
- the average number of entries per participant
- the average number of modes of activity per participant
- the average and median intensity of the activity per participant
- the average duration of the exercise entries per participant
- the average number of points each participant accumulated

The data were subject to reliability checks, with five individual participants' data manually analysed to ensure the data produced by the MATLAB script was 100% accurate. This

quantitative data was used alongside the qualitative findings to enable a more complete picture of Workplace Challenge's impact and influence to be ascertained: A method of data triangulation (Mason, 2006).

3. Key Qualitative Findings

This section presents an overview of the key findings gained from qualitative interviews completed with participants from the three case studies of groups who engaged in the Workplace Challenge. In total, 15 one-to-one interviews were completed; 3 individual programme participants, 7 from the private sector workplace and 5 from the public sector workplace.

The findings from the process of thematic analysis, which revealed main and sub-themes pertinent to the evaluation questions, can be viewed in Appendix C. Main themes are presented in the text in **bold** with the sub-themes outlined in *italic*. The following sections are divided into the three case studies; private, public and individual participants, with discussion centred on what the findings mean tied in with participant quotes and relevant literature. Any quotes which appear are presented using pseudonyms for anonymity purposes, and identify the participants' age and gender in brackets.

3.1 Private Sector Workplace

Within the private sector workplace it was apparent that a *key programme driver,* or gatekeeper, existed who was an advocate of the Workplace Challenge programme. Employees emphasised the proactive nature of this driver:

> *'[she] was continually sending out the updates in terms of structure of the programme from more or less right the way through'* (Shaun; 38; male)

Participants from the private sector workplace frequently referred to this individual and recognised their efforts in promoting the programme. It was apparent the driver's role ensured the focus of the programme was maintained throughout and that information was disseminated across the entire workforce at regular intervals. The *key programme driver* was thus a key figure at the centre of the social figuration, a web of social relations (Elias, 1978), which was formed within the workplace during the Workplace Challenge programme. This driver was connected to numerous departments within the private sector workplace, and their

role in leading the programme and ensuring its prominence within the workplace in turn facilitated *competition* and social ties being formed between departments.

The formation of social ties and thus the creation of social networks, or figurations, were apparent across all three case studies. This **connectivity** however appeared to be a crucial factor in the effective delivery of the Workplace Challenge within the private sector workplace. Here notions of *team bonding* were expressed by many participants, with the programme creating a shared interest within the workplace:

> *'It's just improved the atmosphere, it's given people something to talk about which everybody is doing'* (Hayley; 57; female)

The positive social connections formed between different departments were also essential to the effective functioning of the programme, with the workplace being formed of lots of individual departmental teams. The programme thus became a company activity with the programme connecting employees from various sections of the workplace who may previously not have had much contact.

Through social connections formed throughout the Workplace Challenge a clear theme of *competition* also emerged, with social figurations being defined by the presence of *competiveness*. Within the private sector being engaged in *competition* motivated many participants to undertake more exercise or exercise at higher intensity levels. The use of a leaderboard within the Workplace Challenge programme seemed central to instilling this **competitive** atmosphere, with the idea of being able to overtake someone or beat another department driving exercise completion. *Competition* with others was not always positive though, with participants in the private sector workplaces expressing how *comparison to others* left them feeling less confident about their exercise habits. Participants who previously deemed themselves to be active suddenly doubted their activity levels when engaged in *competition* with more active peers, with some feeling jealous that they are unable to reach such levels of activity. This negative feeling additionally led to some participants doubting

the honesty and accuracy of the activity being reported by others and the consequential activity points they were generating on the Workplace Challenge website:

'I was quite shocked at some of the scores on there [the website]…they all seemed very, very high' (Helen; 44; female)

Although notions of *team bonding* emerged strongly from the private sector workplace's involvement with the Workplace Challenge programme, some participants did highlight the idea of being *isolated* and having a lack of **connectivity** to others. This seemed to occur when individuals were the sole participant from their department and thus were unable to register as a department on the Workplace Challenge website (where a minimum of three members was required):

'My team didn't have enough people, we didn't register anyway, so [the programme] didn't have any relevance to me' (Steve; 36; male)

Participants who signed up to the Workplace Challenge seeking motivation to change their physical activity habits were prominently found within the private sector workplace. These participants were either encouraged to join the programme by other colleagues, or joined to be part of the team and help contribute to the points accumulated. Comments from these participants indicated that the result of their involvement in the programme was not always entirely beneficial on motivation levels:

'I don't think it [the programme] could motivate me more because I think that's just me being lazy' (Emma; 26; female)

Unlike participants who were self-motivated to become part of the Workplace Challenge, here it is apparent that whilst these individuals recognised the importance of becoming involved in physical activity, hence the fact they signed up to the Workplace Challenge programme, it has yet to form part of their daily lifestyle. It can thus be said that these individuals are undertaking physical activity because they feel they should be, as opposed to

getting pleasure from it. This hence indicates why the Workplace Challenge programme may not have succeeded in increasing their motivation levels.

Figure 3.1 demonstrates the social network apparent within the private sector workplace and provides a summary of how the **programme governance** operated. At the centre of this figuration is the *key programme driver*, the individual within the workplace who acted as a gatekeeper for the Workplace Challenge. This driver had strong social ties with the departments within the workplace, represented by bold lines, as they were responsible for the messages and information which were distributed about the programme. Although the County Sport Partnership fed information about the programme to the workplace, it was this driver who chose how and what was disseminated. The programme also connected the different departments within the workplace strongly through the creation of a **competitive** atmosphere between them. With their department team engaged in the Workplace Challenge employees thus become involved in the programme figuration predominantly due to a sense of wanting to belong to their team and become involved in a team activity.
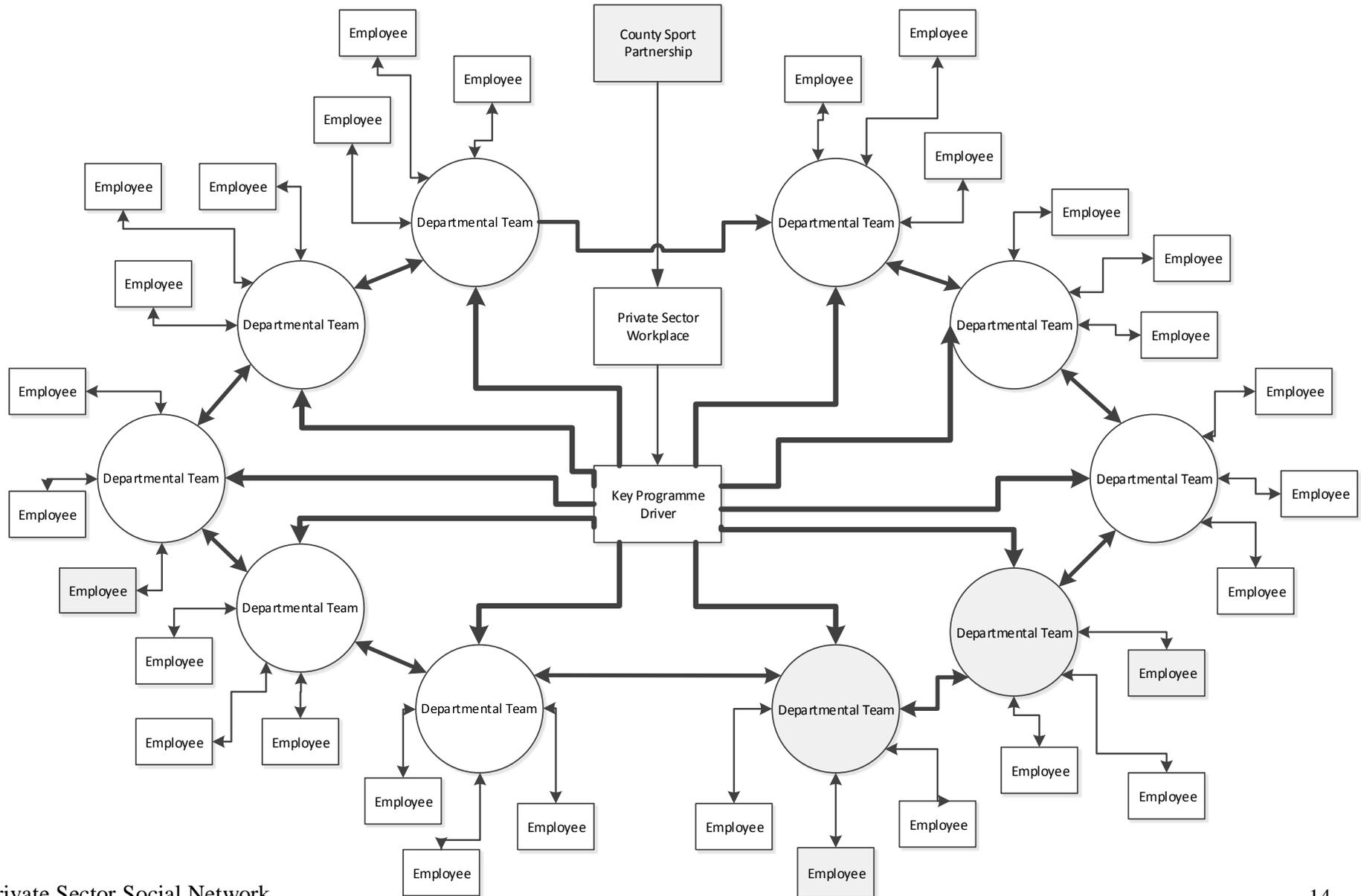
Figure 3.1: Private Sector Social Network

3.2 Public Sector Workplace

Within the public sector workplace a *key programme driver* or gatekeeper was not apparent, with information about the Workplace Challenge instead distributed sparsely through mass communication sources such as whole-staff email chains and online portals. This indicated a *lack of programme ownership* from the public sector workplace with no level of control taken by the upper management to ensure the programme was embodied by its workforce:

> *'the [workplace] didn't set this up, didn't encourage us, didn't give us, how can I say it, didn't email staff and say 'oh we noticed Chris and Mike have done particularly well this week'* (Phillip; 59; male)

Without a central figure connecting the programme together it was apparent within the public sector workplace employees' knowledge of who they were connected to through the programme was often imperfect, incomplete and inaccurate. The public sector workplace was formed of individual teams/departments competing internally as opposed to the programme becoming a cohesive workplace activity. This occurrence could thus be due to the fact that without a *key programme driver* connecting groups together, those participating in the programme were unaware of who else was involved and hence the tendency for the challenge to remain in small teams was apparent. Differences in the physical layout of the private and public sector workplaces may also have influenced employees' knowledge of whom else was within their social figuration and thus taking part in the Workplace Challenge. The spatial layout of the private sector workplace meant that all employees were housed within one large building, with offices located in close proximity to each other. The public sector workplace meanwhile featured small departments spread across numerous buildings, often in entirely different locations. In this case an individual's knowledge of their figuration and their awareness of others who may have been engaged in the Workplace Challenge could thus have been weaker:

> *'I guess where people work in an office or in a building together and maybe they're a bit more active physically anyway they would think about it [the programme] and be more competitive and sort of egg each other on a bit more'* (Sally; 60; female)

Despite the public sector workplace also being formed of individual departments and teams, the holistic involvement in the Workplace Challenge apparent in the private sector workplace was absent. The idea that the public sector employees focused solely on their own small team rather

than the workplace as a whole was expressed by many participants with departments tending not to get involved with anyone else. *Team bonding* was however still a prominent outcome of the programme within these smaller teams:

> *'We all kind of talk about it together, [it was] a good way of getting all your team mates involved'* (Lily; 21; female)

Competition also dominated the social figurations formed within the public sector workplace, and akin to the private sector workplace this *competition* did motivate participants to undertake additional exercise or exercise at higher intensity levels. The idea of comparing one another's exercise habits appeared to drive changes in activity levels, with the Workplace Challenge leaderboard again also proving a driver for change:

> *'There was a lot of competition between us, tryna you know 'up it', you know going 'I did this last night, it was like, right what else can I do!'* (Keira; 30; female)

Similarly to the private sector workplace, participants from the public sector workplace still highlighted the idea of being isolated and having a lack of **connectivity** to others. Through not belonging to a departmental team this thus impacted how participants used the Workplace Challenge website, with their only point of reference being the entire workplace. To some participants this thus proved daunting as they were often 'not even on the scale' in terms of activity points accumulated. This hence represents a constraining element of the Workplace Challenge programme through the way it put a quantitative target on the number of individuals needed to be deemed a team.

Within the case-study public sector workplace the Workplace Challenge proved to be more influential on participant's motivation through the *extrinsic rewards* offered by the County Sport Partnership. Spot prizes offered to participants who were logging activity on the website and the overall reward for the winner of the Workplace Challenge provided incentive to record activity as well as increase exercise levels:

> *'I wanted a hybrid [bike], and I thought 'oh I can't really, I don't know what I am going to do, I am just going to have to save up this year', and then this challenge came up and I looked at it and I thought 'that's my bike!'* (Keira; 30; female)

The drive of *extrinsic rewards* can possibly be said to be more prominent within the public sector workplace due to the absence of large scale *competition* and thus social figurations. Since, as has previously be identified, the programme remained mainly team based the social relationships operating within the programme will have predominantly be long standing and not developed through the programme. Hence colleagues can be said to be more comfortable and familiar with each other and possibly not wish to directly compete.

Figure 3.2 represents the social figuration formed in the public sector workplace and the **programme governance** that was apparent. The only bold lines and thus strong social connections apparent within this are those formed between the employees and their own departmental teams. Within the public sector workplace the Workplace Challenge was a team based activity and did not connect the workforce together, as was seen within the private sector workplace. Social connections between departments are thus absent from this figuration as is the presence of a programme gatekeeper. Information about the Workplace Challenge was provided to the workplace by the County Sport Partnership, which was then distributed to departments. This dissemination of information was only facilitated minimally through mass communication sources and not continually provided, hence indicating why a strong social relationship between the workplace and departments is not present within the figuration.
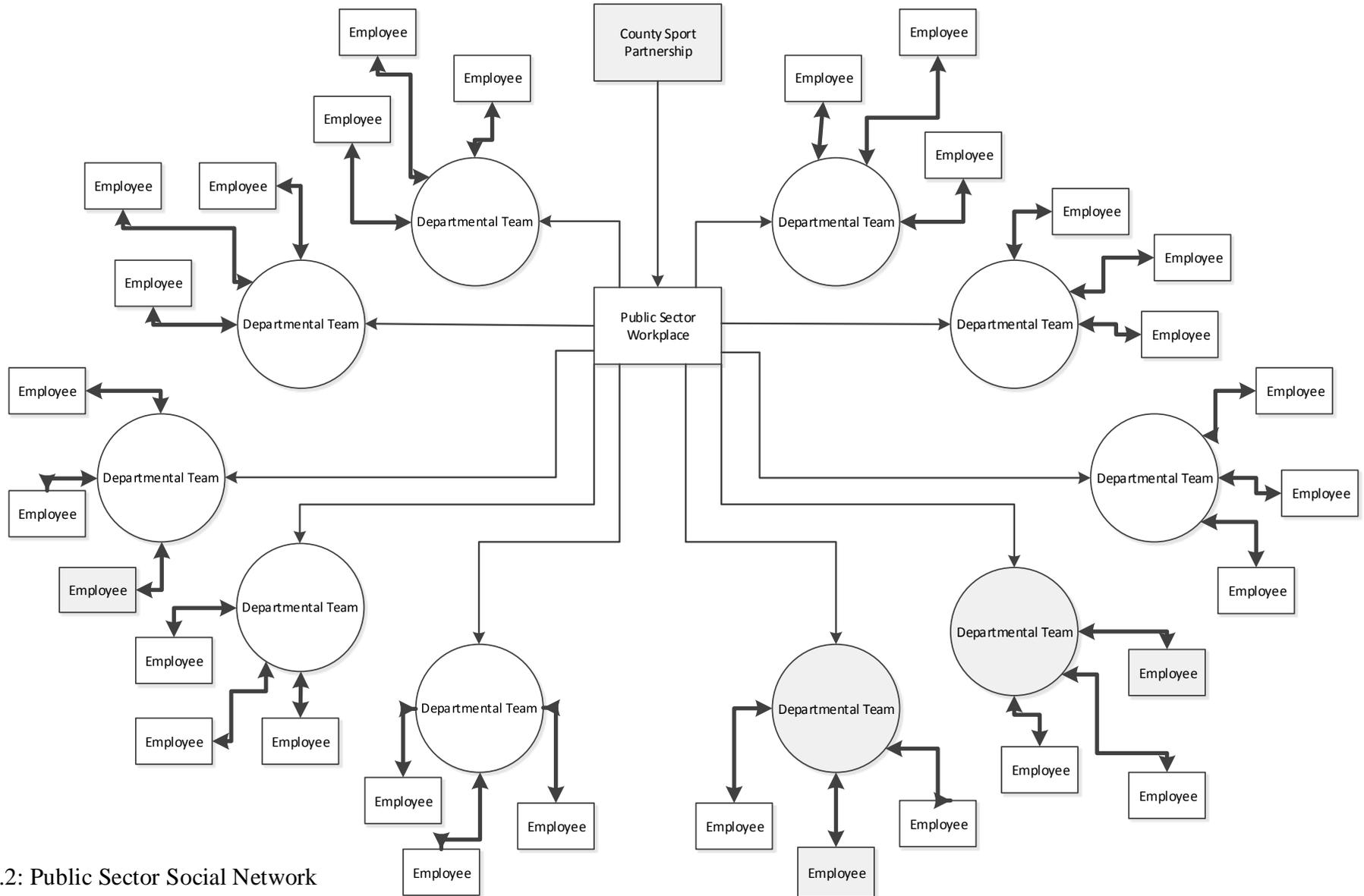
Figure 3.2: Public Sector Social Network

3.3 Individual Participants

Individual participants (those not connected to a workplace or who were the sole representative of their workplace) were predominantly informed about the programme via *mass communication source*s usually through the medium of social media. The public nature of social media thus meant that despite the County Sport Partnership targeting the programme specifically at workplaces, the open accessibility of the message provided meant they were interpreted in different ways by different people. This hence provides indication of how the majority of these individuals became engaged in the Workplace Challenge. Individual participants who were interviewed expressed however that their involvement in the programme was positive, and whilst recognising the benefits of the taking part as a workplace, also identified that they felt adequately able to participate individually:

> '*I think the way the website was set up meant that you didn't have to be part of a team really. You could still be on a leaderboard and still be able to log what you are doing, and keep a check.*'(Stephen; 48; male)

In contrast to notions of *isolation* and lack of **connectivity** which stemmed from both the private and public sector workplace, the fact individual participants had to use the county wide leaderboard on the Workplace Challenge website as a point of reference did not seem to act as a deterrent for their involvement in the programme. Comments indicated individual participants instead found it more of a challenge to be able to compare activity points and compete with others county wide. The individual participants did however identify with how the Workplace Challenge could have helped stimulate aspects such as team spirit within their workplace, which without a team they were unable to achieve:

> '*In workplaces where teams took part I can see how benefits would have occurred as well, you know, things like spirit and alike*' (Stephen; 48; male)

Suspicion of others' activity levels was a prominent feature of the social relationships formed by the individual participants involved in the programme. Without a workplace these individuals were hence competing with 'unknowns' and creating online inter-workplace competition. The virtual social relationships produced thus meant that individuals were unable to witness or speak to people about the activity they were reportedly undertaking, and thus doubted its occurrence:

> *'I mean three hours of climbing, you didn't do that! And three hours of spin and three hours of boxing on the same day!'* (Kara; 28; female)

Considering the fact that feelings such as *suspicion* and doubt stemmed from all three case studies when referring to others' activity levels, the Workplace Challenge hence appeared to create an environment where the term 'active' used as an adjective to describe someone completing physical activity, become a blurred term. What exactly it meant to be active was unsure; was it being at the top of the leaderboard, was it logging something every day, or was it doing activity for five hours on one day? This ambiguity hence fuelled notions of mistrust and disbelief.

Interview respondents taking part in the Workplace Challenge as individuals (rather than being affiliated to a work-based group) were strongly *self-motivated* to be active. These individuals were already active and relished the programme as a means of logging their activity and using website features such as graphs to track their training progress:

> *'I train every day, fitness is very important to me, so for me it was a chance to record this and log it down, almost like you know a training type diary'* (Stephen; 48; male)

The fact that these individuals actively signed up to the programme without the reinforcement of a workplace itself provides indication of their interest in physical activity and thus the fact they actively become involved is probably somewhat unsurprising. The terminology used by these individuals in relation to their physical activity suggests the role they see activity having within their lives. These participants referred to physical activity using language such as 'fitness' and 'training', terms which suggest routinised actions which are part of their everyday lifestyle, but the fact they are motivated to continually undertake them also indicates that the element of enjoyment and fun associated with sociable pastimes still remains. The Workplace Challenge thus appeared for these individuals to be a medium through which they could log and formally track their daily exercise habits. One individual participant referred to those akin to her active personality and who thus dominated the top of the leaderboards as 'fitness freaks' creating an established identity for this group which may have been daunting and suppressive to others outside of this personality.

Figure 3.3 displays the individual participants' social figuration and the **programme governance** present. Here there are no bolder lines, demonstrating that all social connections formed within the figuration are of an equal strength. This is due to the fact that no individual or body within this figuration acted as a *key programme driver* or gatekeeper for the programme. Information was distributed into the public domain by the County Sport Partnership which individuals accessed themselves and then personally acted upon. Once engaged in the programme individual participants referred to the national Workplace Challenge leaderboard and other individuals involved in the programme that were unknown to them in order to compare activity points. These connections were however not strong due to the fact that these relationships were virtual and facilitated solely through the programme's website, and thus notions of mistrust and uncertainty dominated the figuration.
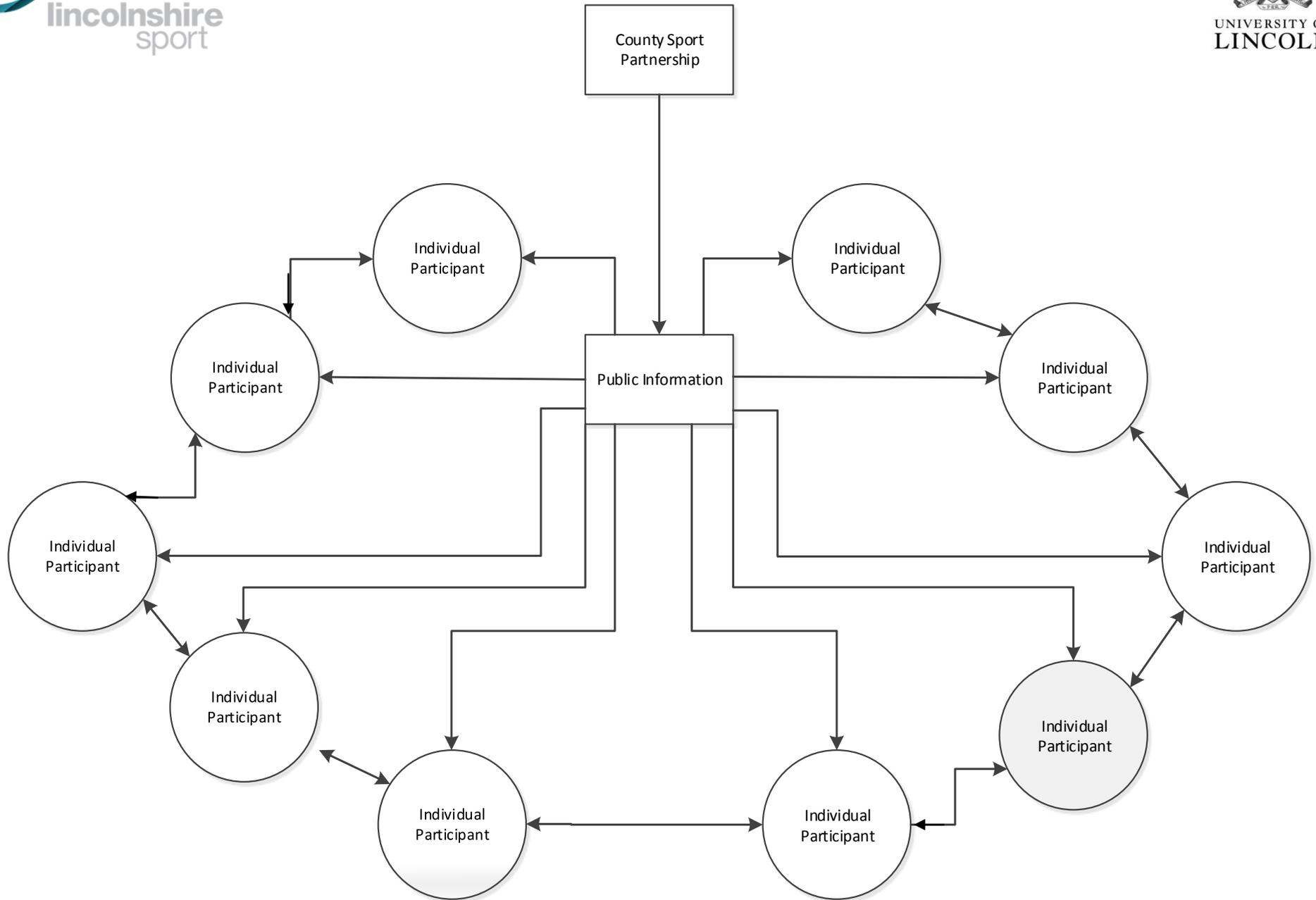
Figure 3.3: Individual Participants' Social Network

4. Key Quantitative Findings

Analysis of the activity entered onto the Workplace Challenge website over the eight week programme by all 998 participants focussed on the following variables listed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Summary statistics of the physical activity of participants actively involved in Lincolnshire Sports' Workplace Challenge programme

SUMMARY STATISTICS

		Standard deviation
Average Number of Entries per Participant	34.79	±35.09
Average Number of Modes of Activity per Participant	4.19	±3.19
Average Intensity of the Activity per Participant	1.94	±0.53
Median Intensity of the Activity per Participant	1.94	±0.71
Average Duration of Exercise Entries	53.89 minutes	±33.94 minutes
Average Number of Total Points per Participant:	10782.55	±12852.78

Quantitative analysis reveals a large standard deviation in the number of activity entries inputted per participant on the Workplace Challenge website. This suggests that a varied level of engagement was apparent from individuals involved in the programme. The average number of entries per participant was 4.34 per week. This is less than the suggested 5 sessions of physical activity adults are recommended to undertake per week (NHS, 2013); which over an eight week period would account to forty entries, an amount greater than the 34.79 entries results report. However, the average duration of activity logged on the Workplace Challenge website is 53.89 minutes, which if completed just three times a week would equate to over the recommended 150 minutes of physical activity per week for adults (NHS, 2013). Results thus indicate that on average participants who engaged in the programme were meeting the recommended physical activity guidelines through completing longer durations of activity over fewer sessions. It should be noted however that the standard deviation for the average duration of entries is high, representing the variation across individuals, and implying that within the programme there were a range of participants doing

different lengths of activity - rather than everyone recording similar activity lengths. The intensity of activities completed was self-selected by participants, with a level of 1 indicating a low intensity, 2 a medium intensity and 3 a high or vigorous intensity. The average intensity recorded by participants was 1.94 indicating that most deemed their activity to be of an average intensity. The average number of modes of activity completed per participant was relatively low at four. This suggests that whist the duration and frequency of activity was varied amongst participants, individuals preferred to undertake a few chosen activities as opposed to trying a variety of options during the programme.

5. Evaluation Conclusions

From studying the way in which the Workplace Challenge was delivered across the three case studies it seems apparent that as power shifted into the hands of workplaces this gave opportunity for the **programme governance** to change and hence unintentionally develop from its intended aims. Whilst the County Sport Partnership initially had control over the programme, through forming links with workplaces and allowing them to access the Workplace Challenge this central control over the programme was lost. Instead each workplace gained authority to decide how they wished to deliver the programme, whether this met the intended outcomes of the County Sport Partnership or not. As Kjaer (2011) noted, networks and partnerships formed do not always feature members with shared goals, and thus deviances in programme delivery and interpretation were apparent. Within the private sector workplace it was clear that *programme drivers* within the workplace took strong control over the programme. The workplace recognised the benefit it could bring to their organisation and thus fully embraced its delivery, assigning a *key programme driver* who acted as an advocate for the programme. The public sector workplace meanwhile did not embrace the Workplace Challenge and the benefits it could bring to their workforce, and whilst providing information for employees, did not advocate the programme or use it to achieve any particular objective; indicating *a lack of programme ownership*. In the case of the individual participants, their involvement in the programme was not an intended programme outcome, with the Workplace Challenge targeted at workplaces and their employees.

In terms of social relationships created through the programme, the Workplace Challenge appears to have been utilised in the public sector workplace case study in a more individualised manner featuring small groups of unconnected people. On the other hand, the private sector case study workplace utilised the Workplace Challenge in a whole company interconnected approach. In both cases social *bonding* however appeared a prominent outcome of programme engagement. Findings also indicate that embodied social relationships within workplaces created a **competitive** atmosphere, which motivated increases in physical activity and strong programme engagement. Where participants relied upon 'virtual' relationships with other participants the programme had weaker uptake and reduced influence on physical activity levels, indicating the importance of peer support and

the power of peer observation on physical activity choices. A clear example of this can be seen in the identification of *isolation* within the programme. Without having their own departmental team engaged in the programme individuals in workplaces therefore struggled to relate to other 'unknown' groups or online users. Social relationships formed within the programme were not always positive though, with some individuals feeling less confident about their physical activity when comparing their scores to the high levels of physical activity reported by others.

The majority of participants interviewed already deemed themselves to be active prior to engaging in the Workplace Challenge and were thus *self-motivated* to undertake physical activity. These individuals did find the programme a useful way to log their training and record the numerous activities they were undertaking. Individuals previously inactive did not always find the programme motivating to undertake additional physical activity, which may have been due to the presence of these highly active individuals who enjoyed regularly participating in physical activity. The notion of how comparison to others was seen to produce negative, demotivating feelings for some individuals in terms of their physical activity habits supports this. The use of spot prizes within the programme was however deemed a way of increasing motivation, with these *extrinsic rewards* particularly beneficial within the public sector where there was an absence of a cohesive workplace *competition*.

In terms of the programme itself, the Workplace Challenge website was popular amongst those interviewed and there was a clear desire for programme to be delivered again. Only negative comments relating to the ambiguity of how to classify their activity intensity levels, and what to log certain activities as were prominent. Uncertainty stemmed from the classification of intensity levels when logging activity on the website, where participants had to select between 'low' 'moderate' and 'high' levels of intensity. It was also identified how often an activity was not listed on the website and thus again it was difficult to choose an appropriate category to log the activity under. For the County Sport Partnership the most concerning factors stemming from participants' overall view of the programme were firstly the fact that the active travel element of the programme website was not obvious to some. Participants could log the distance they had covered whilst, for example, cycling and the consequential carbon dioxide (C02) production they had saved, but a number of participants commented how they were unaware of this. This is significant to the Workplace Challenge

due to the fact the County Sport Partnership received funding to specially focus on the aim of stimulating more active transport. Secondly a number of participants were also unaware of the website staying live following the conclusion of the programmes eight week duration. To encourage factors such as long term physical activity behaviour change, the ability for participants to continually access and utilise the programme website is thus a core outcome of the programme.

An interesting element of the Workplace Challenge was the fact that it encouraged individual's sport and physical activity to become part of their workplace. Physical activity is usually completed outside of working hours; however within this programme although activity did not take place during working hours, it was brought into the social environment and discussions. It was furthermore apparent that as a result of engaging in physical activity during the programme both new and stronger social relationships were formed within the workplace. Through sport and leisure activities individuals are said to be able to reproduce emotional arousals that are closely linked yet different to those they experience in their working life, without going against social expectations of behaviour (Elias & Dunning, 1986). Through the Workplace Challenge individuals however appeared to find a way to bring their spare time leisure choices into the workplace without having an undesired influence, and often improving elements of employees' professional attitudes:

> *'It just makes people more open instead of whinging about work, they have got something else to talk about'* (Hayley; 57; female)

6. Recommendations

From the findings gathered from this evaluation of the Workplace Challenge the following recommendations can be suggested to enhance the future delivery of the programme:

- To aim to identify an individual/individuals within each workplace prior to the programme who will act as a driver for the Workplace Challenge. This driver can then advocate and ensure regular information and encouragement is disseminated across the workforce and connect the workplace together.

- To focus on encouraging intra-workplace competition through the Workplace Challenge as opposed to inter-workplace. This form of competition was more successful in motivating physical activity increases and also created fewer feelings of mistrust and suspicion over activity which had reportedly been undertaken by others.

- To prevent feelings of isolation occurring within the Workplace Challenge by removing the required number needed to be a departmental 'team' and thus allowing all departments to feature on a workplace's leader board.

- To limit negative feelings being produced about an individual's physical activity levels when compared to others by rewarding individuals for other elements of physical activity. For example this could be rewards for meeting the national recommended guidelines for physical activity per week, or for trying a new form of activity.

- To improve the promotion of the fact the Workplace Challenge website remains active throughout the year to assist with encouraging continual physical activity. This is especially apparent considering the number of individuals who utilised the website as a training diary tool.

- To provide further information about the classification of the different intensity level choices for activity on the Workplace Challenge to prevent ambiguity and uncertainty.

- To ensure that the active transport element of the Workplace Challenge becomes a more prominent feature of the programme and increase awareness of its inclusion in the challenge.

- To acknowledge that whilst the programme is targeted at workplaces, individuals not associated to an employer may still become successfully involved in the programme.

7. References

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8. Appendices

Appendix A: Semi Structured Interview Questions

Appendix B: Interviewee Details

Appendix C: Thematic Analysis

Appendix A: Semi Structured Interview Questions

How were you initially informed about the Workplace Challenge?

(Who provided the information? Any key drivers of the programme? Who have you told?)

What made you decide to become part of the Workplace Challenge?

(Motives? Goals? Employer influence?)

Has being part of the Workplace Challenge caused you to change your pre-existing physical activity habits in any way?

(Change of activity performed? Amount of physical activity? Goals of your physical activity – health, fun etc.)

Has being involved in the Workplace Challenge resulted in any changes to social dynamics/relationships within your workplace?

(Increased competition? Support others to be active? Motivating others?)

What influence does the website leader board and hence the physical activity of other employers and /or employees have on you?

(Impact of seeing the leader board? Motivation to do more/do less? Rivalry? Internal/external competition with workplaces/departments?)

What are your perceptions of the Workplace Challenge programme?

(Observations? Positives? Negatives? Effective at improving physical activity? Anything you would like to add?)

(all names are pseudonyms)

Name	Employer	Activity Points Scored	Key Information	Key Quotes
Anne	Private Sector	6,568	Found out about challenge through a key driver within her employer Already active – used programme to log existing activity completed Programme brought department together and enhanced team environment Not a competitive person, involved to be part of the team Liked being able to log all areas of fitness/activity	'it was certainly a talking point within the team' 'it was nice that it was a company thing that we could get involved in'
Hayley	Private Sector	12,280	Found out about challenge through a key driver within her employer Already active – competition motivated her to maintain exercise habits, make them more consistent Competitive person Programme brought department together and enhanced team environment Liked being able to use the site as a training diary	'those nights when I've thought do you know what I can't be bothered it's actually made me go because those were my points' 'if I knew someone was snapping at my heels I would do that fourth class whereas I might of wimped out on it'
Helen	Private Sector	10,250	Found out about challenge through a key driver within her employer Compared her physical activity to others – produced a negative feeling Already active – used programme to log existing	'I was surprised how low I was, and I thought I did quite a bit but erm compared to a lot of people I don't. It made me feel really lazy' 'I still did exactly the same things I would have done'

			activity	
			Not enough in her team taking part to create a competitive atmosphere or influence social dynamics	
Kate	Private Sector	7,565	Found out about challenge through a key driver within her employer	'I'm just going to do what I am going to do'
			Already active – used programme to log existing activity completed	'just taking part, I think it was more about that'
			Not a competitive person, involved to be part of the team	
Shaun	Private Sector	15,726	Already active – enjoyed being able to log all forms activity they were doing	'I probably walked a few more times to places just to score a few more cheap points'
			Competitive person	'[my goal was to] beat people I knew basically!'
			Competition motivated some increases in activity to score points	
			Programme brought department together and enhanced team environment	
Emma	Private Sector	2,657	Found out about challenge through a key driver within her employer	'I just don't have the time to do it'
			Non exerciser	'we don't really get a lot of chance to talk to each other anyway, so I wouldn't notice a difference'
			Not a competitive person – involved in the programme to try lose weight	
			Working environment very isolated, no team to create a competitive atmosphere or influence social dynamics	
			Programme didn't help remove her existing barriers to exercise – motivation and time	

Steve	Private Sector	32,160	Took part in the programme out of curiosity to see how he compared to others Already active – used programme to log existing activity Not enough in his team taking part to create a competitive atmosphere or influence social dynamics	'my team didn't have enough people, we didn't register anyway, so [competition] didn't really have any relevance to me' 'I didn't do anything more of less because of it [the programme]'
Sarah	Public Sector	19,950	Found out about programme through mass communication source Involvement in the programme was focussed solely on her department Programme brought department together and enhanced team environment Already active – enjoyed being able to log all forms activity they were doing Competition motivated some increases in activity to score points	' I didn't know him that well, so through that [the programme] you know, we've got to know each other better' 'we didn't sort of get involved with anyone else really'
Sally	Public Sector	10,715	Found out about programme through mass communication source Already active – already motivated to be so to reduce her carbon footprint Unaware of active transport element of programme Isolated working environment – found it difficult to be competitive with others Age barrier – found it difficult to compete with other younger participants in the programme	'I am an old woman…the people in my office are two younger blokes, and so socially it wouldn't do anything' 'we are in this separate office away from the main site…we are a bit isolated'

Phillip	Public Sector	15,968	Found out about programme through mass communication source Already active – used programme to log existing activity Compared his physical activity to others – produced a negative feeling Unaware of active transport element of programme Not enough in his team taking part to create a competitive atmosphere or influence social dynamics	'there weren't enough of us taking part to actually be competitive' 'I'm not even on the scale here [of points]! Bit disappointing really'
Keira	Public Sector	73,995	Found out about programme through mass communication source Already active – used programme to log existing activity Programme brought department together and enhanced team environment Programme brought out the competitive person in her Competition motivated increases in activity to score points Competed with department as well as other individuals not linked to her workplace Motivated to win overall prize	'I looked at what they did, when they did it, what type of activities um, how frequently they logged it! I know quite addictive' 'then this challenge came up and I looked at it and I thought, that's my bike! And that was it!'
Lily	Public Sector	6,248	Found out about programme through mass communication source Already active – used programme to log existing activity Involvement in the	'when we started having a bit of a competition between us, I definitely went out of my way to do more' 'I tend to do more if someone is watching me'

			programme was focussed solely on her department	
			Programme brought department together and enhanced team environment	
			Competition motivated some increases in activity to score points as well as the effect of others being able to view her activity	
Olivia	Individual	44,098	Found out about the programme through social media	'I got quite suspicious of people to be honest'
			Took part as an individual – no workplace	'I was getting really focussed on the people in the places close to me'
			Already active – used the programme to log existing activity	
			Competed with unknown others – inter-workplace competition	
			Suspicious of others' reported activity levels	
			Found being without a workplace more of a challenge	
Kara	Individual	37,879	Found out about the programme through social media	'with more people around I think it would be much more fun to compete with everyone really'
			Took part as an individual – no workplace	'I mean three hours of climbing, you didn't do that! And three hours of spin and three hours of boxing on the same day!'
			Already active – used the programme to log existing activity	
			Competed with unknown others and friends at other workplaces – inter-workplace competition	
			Suspicious of others' reported activity levels	
			Would find the programme	

			more fun within a workplace environment	
Stephen	Individual	17,520	Found out about the programme through mass communication source Took part as an individual – no workplace Already active – used the programme to log existing activity Not competitive – used programme as a logging tool	'I am very active anyway…it's just part of my life' 'I train every day, fitness is very important to me, so for me it was a chance to record this and log it down, almost like you know a training type diary'

Appendix C: Thematic Analysis

Private Sector Employees' Perceptions, Opinions and Observations of the Workplace Challenge Programme

Example Raw Themes	First Order Themes	Second Order Themes	Higher Order Themes
'[she] was continually sending out the updates in terms of structure of the programme from more or less right the way through' 'the way she driven it, she made sure it never lost its focus'	Programme Advocate Driver of the Programme	Key Programme Driver	Programme Governance
'it just improved the atmosphere, it's given people something to talk about' 'it just makes people more open instead of whinging about work, they have got something else to talk about' 'it brings the department challenge doesn't it, you're all looking at each other' 'nice that it was a company thing that we could get involved in'	Bonding Whole Company Activity	Workplace Bonding	Connectivity
'there might have been [competition] in other departments but I didn't notice anything, in my team itself, I was the only one in it' 'my team didn't have enough people, we didn't register anyway, so [competition] didn't have any relevance to me'	Lack of Participants Absence of a Team	Isolation	
'I've been on a fitness programme since January last year, so it's, for me it was just logging stuff I had already done' 'it hasn't changed at all, still did exactly the same things I would have	Already Active Activity Log	Self-Motivated to Exercise	Programme as a Motivator

done' 'it means I've got a log of all my activity, and quite like the graphs and things' 'it's a good training diary'			
'I didn't have the time to be fair to do anything more to be competitive' 'I don't really think it could motivate me more because I think that's just me being lazy'	Lack of Time Lack of Motivation	Existing Barriers to Exercise	
'there's a competition that goes on, they are all really competitive, so they all like looking at the leaderboards and trying to beat each other' 'I've got one in particular who was going to beat somebody do or die!' 'I was quite shocked at some of the scores on there…they all seemed very, very high' 'I was surprised about how low I was and I thought I did quite a bit but erm compared to a lot of people I don't, it made me feel really lazy!' 'if someone was snapping at my heels I would do that fourth class, whereas I might of wimped out on it' 'I probably walked a few more times to places just to score a few more cheap points'	Competitive Atmosphere Comparison to Others Competition Motivated Exercise	Competitiveness Competition with Others	Competitive Networks

Public Sector Employees' Perceptions, Opinions and Observations of the Workplace Challenge Programme

Example Raw Themes	First Order Themes	Second Order Themes	Higher Order Themes
'just an email really that was sent out to everyone' 'it was an email…it got put on online on our 'staff net' just to let all staff know it was going off' 'I don't think there was anyone particularly pushing it' 'the [workplace] didn't set this up, didn't encourage us, didn't give us, how can I say it, didn't email staff and say 'oh we noticed Chris and Mike have done particularly well this week'	Mass Communication Not Employer Driven	Lack of Programme Ownership	Programme Governance
'we all kind of talk about it together' 'good way of getting all your team mates involved' 'just within our department, not the whole [workplace]' 'I concentrated more on my own team'	Bonding Department Focussed	Team Bonding	Connectivity
'I guess where people work in an office or building together …they would think about it and be more competitive and sort of egg each other on a bit more' 'there weren't enough of us taking part to actually be competitive'	Lack of Participants Absence of a Team	Isolation	

Quotes	Initial Theme	Subtheme	Theme
'people who were constantly at the top of the leaderboard and my goals was always to do more than them' 'I was trying to beat other people' 'there was a lot of competition between us, tryna you know 'up it', you know going 'I did this last night, it was like, right what else can I do!' 'when we started to have a competition between us I was trying to sort of do more and more' 'you start to compare yourself to others and you think 'woah' I am not doing as anywhere near that' 'how did it make me feel [comparing to others] um a little bit jealous…I am doing almost the maximum I can do given the circumstances…can't see how I can adjust my day to do any more than I am doing'	Competitive Atmosphere Competition Motivated Exercise Comparison to Others	Competitiveness Competition with Others	Competitive Networks
'good way for me to track what I was doing' 'I do exercise anyway as a daily thing so I thought, oh why not, and it will be a good idea to log it and keep track of when I am exercising' 'it was more or less formalising what I do anyway' 'it didn't make me do anything different, but I was recording what I was doing so I could visualise what I was doing'	Activity Log Already Active	Self-Motivated to Exercise	Programme as a Motivator
' I thought it would be a bit more motivation for me, especially with the prizes'	Prizes		

'I wanted a hybrid [bike], and I thought oh I can't really, I don't know what I am going to do, I am just going to have to save up this year, and then this challenge came up and I looked at it and I thought that's my bike!'	Desire to Gain Rewards	Extrinsic Motivation	

Individual Participants Perceptions', Opinions and Observations of the Workplace Challenge Programme

Example Raw Themes	First Order Themes	Second Order Themes	Higher Order Themes
'it was via the Access LN6 facebook page' 'I saw it online, maybe twitter, facebook'	Social Media Mass Communication	Public Information	Programme Governance
'using the Lincolnshire one [leaderboard] was just more of a challenge' 'you could still be on a leaderboard, and still be able to log what you doing' 'with more people around I think it would be much more fun to compete' 'in workplaces where teams took part I can see how benefits would have occurred as well, you know things like spirit and alike'	Relevance of Programme to Individuals Suitability of Programme	Programme Accessibility	
'it was more inter-workplace competiveness' 'I was competing with people from lots of workplaces'	Competition Competing with Unknowns	Competiveness Competition with Others	Competitive Networks
'I mean three hours of climbing, you didn't do that!' 'I got quite suspicious of people to be honest' 'only negative I guess, um, was people lying'	Mistrust in Others Belief in Cheating	Suspicion	

'I am very active anyway…it's just part of my life' 'I go to the gym, I cycle and I walk a lot' 'I train every day, fitness is very important to me, so for me it was a chance to record this and log it down, almost like you know a training type diary'	Already Active Activity Log	Self-Motivated to Exercise	Programme as a Motivator