**20 years of SHIIAN – Blog 4**

As part of the blog series to mark “20 years of SHIIAN”, Jo Winterbottom reflects on her experiences of Health Impact Assessment and how the learning can be applied to a new project in Glasgow City Region.

“*In November 2007, I was fortunate to be working for Glasgow City Council when Glasgow was announced as host city of the 2014 Commonwealth Games.  I was new to the Health Policy Team and recall a sense of trepidation as my boss explained that we would be undertaking an HIA of the plans.  The Commonwealth Games is colossal - a multisport event with new venues, transport systems, housing for athletes, volunteering and employment opportunities.  Where do you start?*

*We began by forming and training a team of people who would be able to take on specific roles and tasks and work together effectively.  Good teamwork is essential for a project this size and I ended up making some friends for life through the process.*

*Whilst the training was excellent, I discovered that “learning by doing” is the best way to get to grips with HIA.  The motto “be brave, not perfect” serves well!  For a project this size we had to break the work down into manageable chunks, both in terms of topics and types of activity.  Where possible it makes sense to embed activity within existing processes.  I led the Community Engagement element of the work.  Guided by the National Standards for Community Engagement we undertook survey work and participatory appraisal workshops supported by community leaders with a strong focus on ensuring feedback to local people.*

*It became clear how important it is to be proportionate and focus on the areas that have the greatest impact.  I learned not to get bogged down by process.  The* [*WHO guidance*](https://www.who.int/teams/environment-climate-change-and-health/air-quality-and-health/hia-tools-and-methods) *provides a helpful reminder that “the theoretical stages often overlap and intermingle, and a clean separation is not often obvious in practice”*

*In spite of what we might have been expecting we were careful to listen to what the evidence, the data and the stakeholders were telling us and worked hard to synthesise this into a useful and accessible* [*report*](https://www.stor.scot.nhs.uk/bitstream/handle/11289/579712/Commonwealth%20games%202014.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y) *that could be used for legacy planning.*

*The lessons I learned on the Commonwealth Games HIA have been put to good use since supporting other work including HIAs of a cycling strategy, licensing policy and housing strategies.  In my new role at PHS I will be contributing to* [*Glasgow City Region’s project*](https://www.health.org.uk/funding-and-partnerships/programmes/capital-investment-health-inequalities-impact-assessment) *funded by the* [*Health Foundation’s Economies for Healthier Lives Programme*](https://www.health.org.uk/funding-and-partnerships/programmes/economies-for-healthier-lives)*.  The project will co-produce and pilot a new HIIA toolkit for the development and delivery of capital infrastructure projects at all stages.  I am particularly looking forward to working with a diverse team, meeting new people and ensuring that a range of stakeholders can influence the work.  Glasgow Centre for Population Health will lead on the evaluation and we hope to bring people together to share the project learning across Scotland and the wider UK*.”