

TREHARRIS BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB

Peer Researchers



As longstanding members of Treharris Boys and Girls Club, Olivia, Elisha and Cadence (pictured left to right), were encouraged to take part in this Us Girls peer research project. They all regularly attend fitness sessions at the club and are working towards their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh awards. Elisha said *"I did it because I wanted to help people. I used to go to the gym but it's full of 40-year-old men and it's not the most comfortable place. We can see girls in the street and they aren't doing great so we could really help a lot of girls where we live"*.

StreetGames posed the following research question:

'What does an attractive sport and physical activity offer look like for girls and young women, in a post pandemic world?'

The girls opted to use an online survey shared via the club's Facebook page and created mind maps to *"get their ideas down on paper"*. Cost is key barrier for girls and young women in Treharris, especially the cost of accessing the gym and transport to provision. Cadence added to this, saying *"I think a lot of issues came up about confidence. Treharris is terrible with the judgement from boys. The girls haven't got confidence to be able to go out without the boys saying something to them and that's why I don't go out as much anymore. I'd rather go to the club and socialise with some of my friends rather than go out and socialise with the boys"*.

With this in mind, the peer researchers proposed transforming an unused room in the club into a fitness/dance studio. The funding will help the club to install lighting, heating, flooring, mirrors and equipment. The girls are also keen to become junior fitness leads to *"support the club by running classes so we don't need as many outside organisations coming in"*.

Elisha said;

"I wanted to do this course because I want to be able to do personal training classes because I think most girls who start fitness are scared because instructors are very male dominated. I think that puts a lot of girls off so I want an opportunity to change that".

Elisha, Cadence and Olivia all showed resilience and courage when preparing for their Dragons Den pitch.

Olivia said;

"I would never have thought of coming here to do a presentation, it's a bit scary! I've got butterflies in my stomach". However, to overcome their nerves the girls practised regularly. "Every time we went up the club, we took 20 minutes out to go over what we had so far on the script. I think doing it gradually over time helped us a lot to understand what we had to do. If we had finished the presentation first and then practised it all at once, I think that would have stressed us out".

Olivia said taking part in this project has;

"built my confidence for speaking to people I don't know because I used to hide myself away but this has given me the opportunity to speak and I would like to do more things like this in the future". Cadence said "I struggled with my reading but [this project has] helped me to get more confident at reading out loud to people. I also struggle with my mental health and this helped me a lot with doing things like this instead of sitting in your room in silence, being on your own".