



Report Subject: **Wirral Positive Futures CLUB1 Programme**

Title: **Engaging 'Functional Sporty' Young People in Solo Sport activities**

Background

In partnership with Public Health Wirral, Wirral Positive Futures engages with young people who have offended, are at risk of offending, or have issues with substance misuse including alcohol and solvents.

The young people can be referred via a number of key agencies including Response, Service YOS and CAMHS, and more recently the Police and the Anti-Social Behaviour Team.

Following engagement with the referred young people the Positive Futures Officer - Colin Hunt - will mentor them in a range of activities leading to better outcomes in behaviour and improved lifestyle.

Wirral Positive Futures is managed by Wirral Sports Development and have been a part of the StreetGames network for a number of years. They currently deliver five Doorstep Sports Clubs, the StreetGames Young Volunteer Programme, and a more recently a CLUB1 Programme.

The CLUB1 Programme has been running since November 2014. The main aims of the CLUB1 Programme are to get more young people aged 14-25 to take part in solo activities, as part of a group and of their own accord. Delivery of a CLUB1 programme will enable the project to broaden the sporting offer, exposing young people to new 'solo sport' activities. The CLUB1 initiative should enhance and connect young people to activity opportunities in their local area, and help them make use of local facilities, preparing them to be active independently, thus create a Sporting Habit for Life.

A solo activity - any activity that an individual can take part in independently without having to go to an organised session eg gym/fitness, running, cycling, swimming etc

The Wirral Positive Futures CLUB1 sessions are delivered on a Sunday evening between 6pm and 8pm at Leasowe Leisure Centre, within a deprived estate on the Wirral.

The CLUB1 programme has so far engaged over 50 young people, with participants attending the session aged



Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

between 16-21 years old, and a female/male ratio of 60%/40% respectively.

Within the CLUB1 session Wirral Positive Futures hires out the full fitness suite (gym) at Leasowe Leisure Centre to give the participants exclusive use of the gym equipment for the two hours, as well as the spinning studio, a dance mats studio and half of the sports hall. Olympic Boxer Courtney Fry also supports the session offering mentoring, and one to one boxing training and sparring to the participants within the session.



Function Over Fun

The Wirral Positive Futures CLUB1 programme has been particularly successful in engaging new participants who have failed to historically engage in sporting activities through the Doorstep Sport Club programme, including a higher proportion of female participants, and engaging those who are at the slightly older end of the 14-25 target age bracket.

Insight from the Sport England Youth Review shows that valuing sport for its own sake gets lost in secondary school as it starts to be perceived as a more serious pursuit for those who are 'good'. This drives a definite shift in teenage years towards a 'functional' rather than sporting motivation for taking part.

How does the Wirral Positive Futures CLUB1 appeal to 'Functional' Participants?

Solo Sport Activities

The offer of fitness activities within the CLUB1 appeals to a whole new group participants, many whom have never previously participated in sporting activity within the project before. We now know that being fit is more appealing to many of our target group than being sporty. The shift towards fitness-related activity begins in the mid-teen years, earlier than previously thought. Fitness activities now come top for 18s, and in particular women and girls. This has been prevalent in the participation figures for the CLUB1 programme, which is currently engaging the older end of the 14-25 target age group than previously, as well as a huge amount of female participants (over 60%) who are attracted to the session because of the fitness based activities that are on offer to them.

'Whilst the activity may be sport, the message does not need to be.' Sport England Youth Review.

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StreetGames Insight shows that the implementation and delivery of the CLUB1 programme has changed the way a number of project managers deliver their sporting offer to engage new young people. This has been true for Colin Hunt (project manager) at Wirral Positive Futures.

Historically, team based sports have been delivered at Wirral Positive Futures, with high participation rates, but engaging the same young people each week.

The introduction of new solo sport activities within a gym setting are new to the majority of participants, thus providing more of a level playing field. New participants are performing at the same rate as some of their more 'sporty' peers, thus increasing the confidence and self-efficacy of new participants within the session.

Promotion Via Social Media

The sessions are youth led by the CLUB1 Promoters, Chelsea and Ellie. The Promoters take ownership of the promotion of the session via their specific CLUB1 Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts, as well as promoting the sessions face to face and through text messaging, and word of mouth across their peer groups. Promotion via social media enables Chelsea and Ellie to increase their reach to new participants. Chelsea and Ellie also use social media to post inspirational and motivating messages to participants, inspiring them and encouraging them to attend each week to get one step closer to achieving their goals.

"Promotion via social media comes in really handy, as a message is passed onto one person, they can forward it to another. Twitter is really handy as we have made our own page just for the session, so that if we tweet about the session to 1 person, they can re-tweet it so that all of their friends can see."
Chelsea, CLUB1 Promoter.

Goal Setting

CLUB1 Promoter Chelsea is a qualified gym instructor. When a new participant joins the session Chelsea will give them a gym induction, introducing them to the gym environment and equipment, as well as to other participants within the session. This will open up the lines of communication, and Chelsea will talk to the participant about their motivation for attending.

Some time will be spent on goal setting. In order to engage 'Functional' Participants within the CLUB1



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programme, identifying the participant's motivation for attending and finding a way that the session can meet their motivation is crucial. Demonstrating that taking part can deliver something that participants do care about, whether that be looking and feeling good, achieving personal goals or providing a social setting to be with friends, along with continued communication via social media between sessions has proved to be invaluable in maintaining high participant retention within the CLUB1 session.

'Since I have been running on the treadmill at CLUB1, I now go running more. I now run on my own outside of the CLUB1 session and I never did that before. I feel more motivated through coming to CLUB1.' CLUB1 Participant, Female, 16.

'Since coming to CLUB1 I am learning to do pull ups - I am working on building up my upper body strength with the pull up machine.' CLUB1 Participant, Female, 17.

Rewards and Incentives

'Rewards act a carrot to dangle in front of them'.

Colin Hunt, Project Manager.

The CLUB1 Rewards and Incentive scheme has been used as a tool to encourage and reward continued participation. Young people like to work towards a reward, and the CLUB1 has tailored the incentive scheme to meet their own needs. Once the participants have achieved 10 sessions, they will be rewarded with a CLUB1 T-shirt, by accessing further sessions they will be rewarded with additional CLUB1 branded kit including headphones, a cap and a snood. Participants within the CLUB1 really like the branded kit, and by reaching their goals and being



rewarded for doing so, this enhances their sense of achievement and belonging to the group. The kit gives a sense of belonging and makes them feel part the group.

Participation with their social group

'Young people's lifestyles are structured around experiences with friends and family which are then magnified through social media.' Sport England Youth Review.

Wirral Positive Futures used this insight to influence the development of the CLUB1 programme. A 'functional' reason for participation in sport or fitness activity is to share experiences with friends and 'fit in' with the peer group. Young people are encouraged to attend the CLUB1 session with their peers - the style and format of the session is informal and laid back, allowing for maximum social time whilst exercising.

Participants are encouraged to Facebook, tweet and Instagram pictures and posts of them exercising within the CLUB1 with their friends, using the Hashtag #MyCLUB1. This has successfully created a CLUB1 session that young people are proud to attend. The social media

Background Facts for Doorstep Sport



statistics of sport and leisure centres. Cost plays a large part, but also a lack of knowledge and confidence to access leisure facilities. Data from the Sport England National Benchmarking Service Survey shows that there has been a fall in the proportion of leisure facility users aged 11-19yr olds in 2013/2014. At the same time, the cost per visit has increased from £3.03-£3.47, above the amount we know low income families have to spend on active sport/leisure per week.

The CLUB1 baseline participant survey showed that 75% of participants do not use a Leisure Centre on a regular basis and 60% of participants do not use a gym on a regular basis. Even if a participant wants to access leisure facilities for 'functional' reasons, the cost of activity sessions was identified as the second most cited barrier to participation.

buzz surrounding the session has generated interest from peers, creating a unique and 'cool' session that other young people don't want to miss out on.

'My favourite thing about CLUB1 is meeting new people, and getting to exercise with my friends.' CLUB1 Participant, Female, 16.

'It's good because it's like your own session - all younger people here. We have the freedom to do what we want - it's good the same people come every week, it's always full.' CLUB1 Participant, Male, 17.

Connecting to the mainstream

Young people are under represented amongst the usage

Wirral Positive Futures have done a fantastic job of addressing and breaking down these barriers through their CLUB1 programme. The project manager has negotiated a reduced cost to hire out the entire fitness suite and spinning studio. Wirral Positive Futures provides a free mini-bus service which enables participants to access the session who live slightly further out of the area. The participants are accessing a leisure facility that some of them didn't even know existed, at a time when the gym would normally close. The participants are given a free gym induction at their first session, and a concessionary rate has been negotiated for the participants should they want to access the gym or classes within the leisure facilities in their area outside of the CLUB1 session.

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'Without CLUB1 I wouldn't be able to come here and train the way I do.' CLUB1 Participant, Male, 17.

'The gym session is brill - the variety of different activities and it's good because it's free - otherwise I couldn't afford to go to the gym a lot.' CLUB1 Participant, Female, 21.

What's next for Wirral Positive Futures CLUB1?

Colin, Project Manager is keen to build on the success of the CLUB1 programme. Going forward Colin feels that sustainability of the programme through youth leadership

is a key priority. This will increase capacity and enhance the sustainability of the session.

'Next for the CLUB1 will be giving the promoters more responsibility within the session. Giving them ownership of how we deliver, and most importantly upskilling them so they can increase their knowledge and qualifications and take a more active role in the delivery of the programme.'

Colin Hunt, Project Manager.

StreetGames

StreetGames is a national partner of Sport England and a centre of expertise for developing doorstep sport in disadvantaged communities.

The charity supports community based sports projects that deliver sport and volunteering opportunities to young people living in the 20% most deprived wards in the UK.

StreetGames works with National Governing Bodies of Sport to establish and develop links between community and mainstream sport. Recognised by the London 2012 Olympic & Paralympic Games Inspire Mark, StreetGames is creating a lasting legacy of doorstep sport in the UK.

