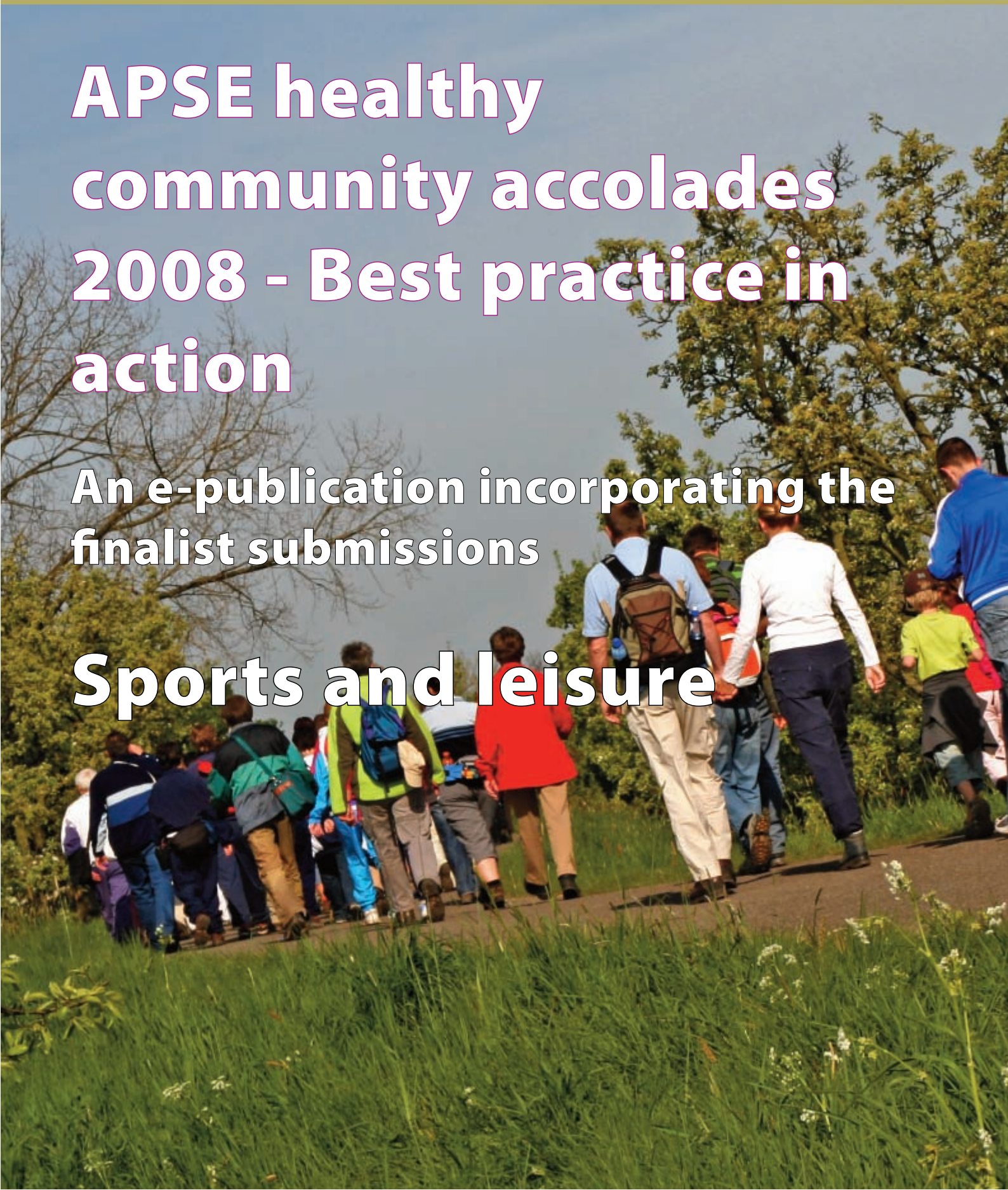


APSE healthy community accolades 2008 - Best practice in action

An e-publication incorporating the
finalist submissions

Sports and leisure



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Introduction

Health and well being has never been so high on the Government's agenda with its important contribution to healthy living and the attempt to tackle the issue of obesity in Scotland. The recognition of healthy eating within our schools has been nurtured for a number of years with the introduction of Hungry for Success. This was designed to change the way in which schools fed pupils and focused the attention onto healthier options.

The change has been embraced by all local authorities and it has led to closer working relationships within schools, whilst a 'whole school approach' has led to many examples of best practice being identified. For one reason or another, many authorities fail to highlight these types of best practice and on many occasions it has previously passed by relatively unnoticed. However, through the APSE advisory group meetings, many examples of best practice have been identified and shared throughout the Scottish local authorities.

In order to address these issues, part of this process involves sharing of better practice examples. With the introduction of the Healthy Community Accolades, yet again, there have been numerous examples of best practice in this category. The local authorities who submitted for this years awards, proved that the health agenda is a high priority for councils, taking forward the Hungry for Success agenda and building a more stable, healthy approach to eating within our schools.

I would especially like to thank my fellow judges for helping to make this a memorable experience and I would readily welcome the chance to judge again next year. Hopefully it will be easier job to do then!

Pat Taggart



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Outstanding achievement in sports and leisure

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Winner

Winner: The Highland Council, “The High Life”

Until recently, leisure facilities in the Highland, in keeping with national trends, were suffering a downturn in user numbers and income, which threatened cuts in the service. The traditional approach of increasing prices was not an acceptable solution, both because it could compound difficulties with user numbers, and because ensuring access to affordable leisure and health opportunities remained a fundamental aim of the Service.

Facility Managers determined to try a radical solution: all-inclusive access to all activities at all facilities at a cost that would generate a ‘wow’ factor in the community. This was branded ‘High Life’. The cost of unlimited access to 20 different leisure facilities is £15 per month for an individual and £21 per month for a family, and uniquely includes access to instructional classes including keep fit, swimming lessons and holiday activities. This makes it radically different from any other comparable scheme. An addition to the High Life initiative is the ‘Budget High Life’ scheme that provides access for customers entitled to a range of national benefits for just 50p per activity.

High Life was a risk. It replaced several distinct income strands with a single low cost scheme that relies on large numbers of people participating. The intended result is more people participating more regularly, which means healthier lifestyles in the community.

Achievements

For High Life to be a success it required staff commitment with both the introduction of new technical systems, with infectious customer care that would inspire customers to enthusiastically embrace this new opportunity in large numbers if existing income levels were to be improved. High Life is based on a smart card system that required new technology and administrative procedures to be compatible across 20 facilities. At a time of budget constraints there would be no additional staff or additional marketing budgets to launch a new scheme with, leading to massive additional challenges on both the technology and administrative fronts, that were new to the staff involved.

One achievement of the smart card system is that all-inclusive and budget card holders, including ‘Looked After Children’ (who have cards distributed to them to provide free facility access), all present identical cards at reception so there is no stigma attached to different groups.

Despite the risks associated with the introduction of High Life, the commitment and confidence of staff to make it a success has been vindicated. User numbers have increased by 32% whilst income has risen 70%, even after annual inflation levels have been removed from the calculation. This represents a huge increase in healthy lifestyles. A significant number of customers have reported that, before High Life, when it was necessary to pay for each activity, they would think about the value of each visit, and attend irregularly. Now the system encourages regular attendance, plus an incentive to try new activities. Because of its value for money, individual customers are prepared to pay more into the High Life scheme than would have been the case under the pay-as-you-go system, resulting in an improved budgetary situation.

High Life is constantly under review and improvement. Due to the 20 facilities being operated on stand alone systems, the ability of the system to cope with customers moving between facilities was limited and led to some poor customer experiences. As a result, a project was initiated to link all facilities to one central database, providing instant information concerning changes in customer circumstances, wherever that customer attended. The large geographical spread of facilities, some in remote locations, has increased the complexity of this project. It is now nearing completion and again, has been led by facility managers as an addition to their normal workload and whom have a limited background in the technological challenges involved.

Summary

High Life is a new system of affordable, all-inclusive access to Leisure Facilities. It is unique in terms of price, the range of activities included and the number of facilities included. The value for money it creates has encouraged mass, regular participation in activity, resulting in healthier lifestyles for many.

High Life has successfully turned around a situation of declining user numbers and income, raising user numbers by 32% and income by 70%.

High Life has been introduced against a background of contracting budgets – no additional staff or marketing budgets have been available, requiring intense commitment from staff to introduce new technology and systems, while re-doubling enthusiasm to encourage customers to take up the new opportunities available. The undoubted risks of introducing High Life have been overcome by this commitment.

Outstanding achievement in sports and leisure

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Finalists

Finalist 1: Argyll & Bute Council, “Stramash”

In 2004 Argyll and Bute Council’s Community Services set up Stramash with funding from the Big Lottery. The funding was given for a time-limited period of three years. The aim of Stramash was to encourage people to become “more active, more often”.

Argyll and Bute Council was one of the few Local Authorities in Scotland that until 2004 provided no or extremely few outdoor learning and activity opportunities. Despite Argyll and Bute having some of the best natural resources for outdoor learning and activity in the country, the utilisation of this resource had remained dormant. The reported benefits of these programmes have been health improvement and increased all round well being of young people, in both a physical and mental sense.

Two main areas of work provided the greatest benefits to our community – expeditions focusing on personal development, mental health issues, around self-esteem and confidence building and orienteering focussing on all of those, but with a strong emphasis on physical activity and increasing fitness in the outdoor environment, whilst having fun. Stramash always envisaged a programme of expeditions that was much more than just activity. The approach of “holistic outdoor learning” was taken from the start. The expeditions were to be about developing the individual. The activities would be used as a vehicle for the personal and social development of young people. They would learn about themselves, how to relate and interact with others and their role in the environment around them.

Achievements

The results from this project have been outstanding. The overall general aim of “more people, more active, more often” was been realised from very early in the project. The original targets and objectives of the project have been achieved and exceeded in some cases.

The specific targets that were set included the increased participation of girls in physical activities, the inclusion of particular target groups of young people in physical activity, the development of long term sustainable physical activity pathways, through the support and development of sports clubs and volunteers, the development of leadership potential of the region’s young people, the increased use of the environment for physical activity, plus the establishment of long term service provision beyond the funding time limit of three years.

Quantitative measures have shown very positive results.

- Numbers of young people taking part in summer expeditions and activity-

No provision pre-project

- year 1- 345
- year 2- 619
- year 3- 723

In order to engage young people, clubs and volunteers within the programme, a creative and innovative approach was taken from the beginning.

Many young people are attracted by risk and adventure. A programme of perceived high risk and adventure activities was developed to attract young people who would not normally engage in activity. The expedition programme has become probably the most extensive, exciting and exhilarating programme in the country. Some of the activities have included:

- Bushcraft and cave living on Islay
- Mountaineering and sea kayaking on Skye and Rum
- Mountaineering in the Arrochar Alps
- Open canoe descents of the rivers Spey and Tay and explorations of Loch Awe
- Wilderness expeditions in Assynt and the Loch Etive areas
- Sea kayaking around Seil, Luing and Easdale
- Yacht sailing around Mull, Colonsay, Jura and Lismore

The natural environment of Argyll and Bute and beyond has been used to develop the physical and mental wellbeing of our citizens. This has been done in an environmentally and socially aware way. Fairtrade foods are used on all the Stramash expeditions and a minimal impact approach is taken by all staff who in turn teach the participants this approach.

Summary

Undoubtedly, the project has had a big impact on the lives of individuals and communities and has done so in an efficient and cost effective way, maximising the resources available and developing a sustainable pathway for the future.

Before the project began there were a significant number of people who looked on the natural environment of the region as something they could not use and enjoy. It was seen as something that only visitors and tourists to the area used. This project has helped greatly to overcome this barrier, with people now realising the potential on their door step. Non-participation in physical activity has been another barrier that the project has helped to breakdown. Many people are put off by traditional team sports, but have come to experience taking part in activity in ways that they can personally engage with.

Finalists

Finalist 2: City of Edinburgh Council, “Searching for Challenges”

In April 2006, as part of the council review, a new department came into existence within the City of Edinburgh Council – Services for Communities (SfC). This new department brought together all of the services delivered directly to the citizens and visitors to Edinburgh.

This brought with it an internal organisation, the scale of which was the largest ever experienced. Once completed, the senior management team decided that the time was right to invest in SfC’s people, as it would be the people of the organisation who would lead the changes required to improve the services delivered.

In December 2007 Leading the Change was launched and focused on three main areas, people, performance and customer service. The top 100 managers were given a structured process through which to develop and implement the changes required to change the culture of the organisation.

During the development stages of Leading the Change it was identified that the health and wellbeing of SfC’s people was paramount to the success of changing the organizational culture and improving performance. It was further recognized that this could not be an add on to existing remits, instead, it had had to be the focus of a strategic cross functional post – the Health Improvement and Diversity Manager was appointed in February 2008 and took up post in April 2008.

Participation in the Corporate Decathlon was identified as one way of embedding the new culture – one in which people feel better about coming to work and thus became part of the remit of the Health Improvement & Diversity Manager.

Achievements

Participation in this year’s decathlon was launched in March 2008. The launch included a message from the Director of Services for Communities (to evidence the commitment from the senior management team) and a call for participants to come forward from the decathlon captain, SfC’s Health Improvement & Diversity Manager.

From the initial expressions of interest a captain for each of the ten events were identified and it was these people who were invited to become members of the action group required to co-ordinate the activities.

The first task undertaken by the group was to brand the team. They chose the name Searching for Challenges as this reflected SfC and the commitment to continual self and service development.

To date, 59 people from across the four divisions of SfC have taken part in the competition on the day, including 5 people from other CEC departments – SfC are an inclusive bunch!! In addition to this there have been a number in excess of 20 who have taken part in the training schedules organized by the event captains. Four of the captains continue to meet with their team members on a regular basis, in order to train in preparation for next year’s decathlon.

The Touch Rugby and the Highland Games events provided the ideal opportunity to show case the personal and professional talent across SfC which resulted in an additional 10 becoming involved in the games.

In addition to the corporate decathlon the Searching for Challenges action group has implemented two other health initiatives – walking in the work place and Health for Live. The number of staff participating in each is 40 plus and 48 respectively.

Summary

The corporate decathlon has provided Services for Communities with a process to bring staff from across the divisions together, in order to compete in sporting activities, against teams from both the public and private sector.

The atmosphere in the office after events is electric, as competitors and supporters alike, discuss individual team performances, pending the official results. This has proven to be so infectious that people not competing in the actual events, want to participate in supporting the teams in their fundraising activities.

The Searching for Challenges action group have used this as a platform to promote involvement in next year's decathlon and have prepared a very pictorial road show to make this year's participation become alive and real to people who have not participated so far. The focus is currently on those who are hardest to reach in the workplace.

In addition, the action group is listening to and acting upon suggestions being put forward during the road shows, in order to ensure that the sporting needs of all SfC people are addressed. Recruitment to and the development of localized activity committees is also being promoted and supported in the development stages.

Participation in the corporate decathlon has broken down professional barriers, improved joined up working and provided staff with an outlet to enjoy each others company whilst getting fit and healthier at the same time.

Outstanding achievement in sports and leisure

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Finalists

Finalist 3: Clackmannanshire Council, “The ‘No Messin’ Partnership”

'No Messin' is an educational program delivered by Network Rail Community Safety team to educate young people aged 7 - 18 years on the dangers of trespassing on rail tracks. The Stirling - Alloa - Kincardine rail track was re opened in May 2008. In preparation for this, Network Rail Community Safety team embarked on an intense education program in Clackmannanshire as part of the National 'No Messin' campaign.

In 2007, as part of the National campaign, Network Rail employed an events company to work with local clubs and council departments to deliver a two day event offering diversionary activities to young people in Clackmannanshire. Over 3,000 young people attended. While the event was the best attended in Britain, Network Rail felt that the safety message had not been strongly endorsed and the events company had not delivered value for money. From a Council perspective the Activities and Events team from within Leisure Team were involved in a supporting role and felt that the Council could have played a bigger part in the campaign.

Lengthy discussion were held between Network Rail Community Safety team and officers from Clackmannanshire Council's Leisure team, the outcome of which was a joint project developing from the work started in 2007. Using the budget identified for the Events Company, a program of community partnerships was developed and Clackmannanshire Council's Leisure Team took on the role of Events managers for the 2008 Clackmannanshire event.

Achievements

One of the positive outcomes from the 2007 'No Messin' two day event was local clubs involved saw an increase in club membership. However, not all clubs had the capacity to absorb this increase. Two clubs in particular had a significant increase in membership. Alloa Boxing Club and Tullibody Wrestling Club. Neither club had the capacity to absorb this increase in terms of coaches or equipment. Both clubs are sited in areas which have the highest indices of multiple deprivation in Clackmannanshire and record the highest figures reported in anti social behavior and nuisance involving young people. The increase in club membership had a positive effect in areas of greatest need.

Clackmannanshire Council Leisure Team has a close working relationship with both clubs and were aware of the difficulties both clubs were facing. Working with the club officials and Network Rail, a partnership was agreed to support the development of both clubs and therefore, the talented boxers and wrestlers from Clackmannanshire.

Network Rail funded an upgrade of the boxing gym in Bowmar Centre, Alloa with a professional ring, new competition kit and coach education for three boxing coaches. The gym has been branded the 'No Messin' boxing gym. Funding was also given to Tullibody Wrestling club in the form branded kit and assistance for the club to attend a National competition weekend in Brighton. However the greatest need identified by the Wrestling club and Boxing Club was support for the talented young wrestlers and boxers who have been selected to train as part of the GB squad. This involves considerable expense for the families involved. Network Rail agreed to fund a scholarship scheme for these talented youngsters. Clackmannanshire Council Leisure Team in conjunction with the Wrestling Club and Network Rail wrote the sponsorship agreements, setting criteria and monitoring procedures. Clackmannanshire Council Leisure Team will administer the scholarships, monitor the progress of each individual and ensure the scholarships are being used appropriately. Network Rail will use the scholarship recipients as role models in their National 'No Messin' campaign.

The Leisure Team delivered the 2008 'No Messin' two day event involving local clubs and groups, provided over twenty diversionary activities and attracted over 4,000 young people to the event. TV coverage of the event linked into the 'No Messin' National campaign, raising the profile of Clackmannanshire and proving the smallest main land authority can deliver the best national 'No Messin' event.

Summary

By using the expertise within the Leisure Team a successful partnership was forged with Network Rail which will provide lasting benefit for areas in the county in greatest need. Council objectives have been achieved in areas of social deprivation and exclusion by using innovative working practices whilst communities gained maximum benefit from external funding partners.

The partnership continues to grow with further developments in both clubs plus a national boxing show, resulting from a visit by both clubs to Amir Khan's gym in Bolton earlier this year, which actually included a question and answer session with Amir himself. All involved in the visit found it both inspirational and aspirational as well as an endorsement for having a healthy lifestyle.

Finalists

Finalist 4: Dundee City Council, “Youth Sport Development Project”

The Youth Sport Development Project (YSDP) is now in its eleventh year of existence and has always been an externally funded project. Over the years, the projects main philosophy has been to create opportunities for children and young people from Dundee’s most deprived areas to participate in physical activity and sport, along with using sport as a tool to raise attainment levels, increase employability prospects and reduce anti-social behaviour levels.

The team consists of 1 Youth Sport Development Officer (YSDO) who leads the team, 5 Youth Sport Officers (YSO) who deliver and lead the projects main programmes and 1 Senior Clerical Assistant. As Dundee has 5 Community Regeneration Areas (CRA) each of the 5 YSO represents the YSDP in 1 CRA.

The team delivers 6 main programmes; Participation Programme, Diversionary Programme, Learn Thru Sport Programme, Springboard Programme, Volunteer Development Programme and Holiday Programme.

Achievements

Why employee/team or initiative deserves recognition

This team deserves recognition, not for just one area of work, but for the way in which it uses sport as a vehicle, in a variety of ways, to impact on children and young people’s lives across the city of Dundee, especially those who come from difficult backgrounds. It has six key programmes, each with its own unique aim, representing issues that need addressed across Dundee in general.

The Participation programme aims to increase opportunities for children and young people from disadvantaged areas to participate in physical activity and sport.

The Diversionary programme aims to use sport as a tool to divert young people aged 12+ away from anti-social behaviour in the evenings.

The Learn Thru Sport programme aims to raise attainment levels through sports accreditation programmes, along with other learning opportunities using sport as the tool, targeting those who are having difficulties within the education system.

The Springboard Programme aims to get unemployed people back into work, by using sport as a tool to deliver qualifications and work experience opportunities.

The Volunteer programme aims to offer volunteering opportunities in a local context that allows local people to get involved in sport, allow young people to stay in sport if they stop participating and gives vital experience and qualifications to people wanting to have a career in sport.

The Holiday Programme aims to deliver intensive weeklong sports courses such as Sports Leaders Awards, gives people the opportunity to use the skills they have learned in participation programmes and allows children and young people to take part in constructive activities during the school holidays.

Contributions made

Over the period of 2007/08, the project delivered over 60 different programmes, with a total of 978 sessions being delivered and 24,505 attendances at all programmes.

Participation programmes include a range of sports and activities, also, sessions are offered locally at low or no cost as it targets children and young people from Dundee’s most deprived areas, aiming to break down barriers to participation.

The Diversionary programme delivered mainly Football and Dance Drop In programmes with 15 programmes being delivered, with 348 sessions and 2389 attendances over the course of 2007/08. Programmes are targeted at youths who cause annoyance in their communities, from intelligence from the police, local youth workers and community safety wardens. Last years midnight league was a major success with one of Dundee's teams being crowned East of Scotland champions. These programmes have a significant effect on youth causing annoyance calls to the police.

The Learn Thru Sport has delivered sessions in 8 out of the 10 secondary schools in Dundee with young people successfully achieving sports leaders awards and other sports related accreditation.

The Springboard programme is still in its infancy, however, it has engaged with 35 unemployed young people since April 08 and is working very well towards its target of engaging with 150 unemployed young people, assisting them back into, or introducing them to employment.

The volunteer programme has worked with 27 volunteers on a 1to1 basis in year 07/08, and this programme is viewed very highly as an example of good practice in Dundee on how to engage and work with volunteers.

Any challenges or barriers overcome

These achievements have to be commended, as this project over the years has had to change in line with the key priorities of Dundee, yet still, it has continued to produce magnificent results in terms of making a significant impact to the lives of children and young people in the city. The one key challenge for the project is to work with a very small operational budget each year of approx £15,000, which again has been reduced this year. It has to work very hard to seek funding in order to meet the local needs. The 5 full-time officers have also to be commended for their efforts in making the programmes such a success.

Summary

The Youth Sport Development Project is an integral part of Dundee's Community and does an excellent job in introducing children and young people into healthy and active lifestyles. It contributes to the main issues in the city such as low levels of attainment and high levels of unemployment. The results are also very impressive considering that officers have a very limited budget and work with over 60 partners across the city to meet the needs of the people it works with. Recognition of the work this project delivers is well overdue and I believe some of the programmes can be used nationally as examples of good practice.

Finalists

Finalist 5: South Lanarkshire Council, “Successful partnership working through integrated facilities”

In early 2002, a review of the existing leisure provision in the Rutherglen /Cambuslang area showed that there was no dedicated outdoor PE provision for the school curriculum due to the ground being contaminated, Rutherglen Pool, a post war facility, was past its economic life as was the local Adult Day Care Centre at Cathkin.

As a result multi agency discussions developed an innovative and integrated model to replace the above facilities, whereby it was proposed to build a single complex which would provide both leisure and day care facilities and which would allow each set of customers (and staff) to fully integrate on a daily basis.

Delivery of the service from a central location created natural opportunities for inclusion and integration; ensured access to previously segregated facilities by members of the local community; removed the stigma and disadvantage that comes from the service being provided in an exclusive setting; provided leisure facilities designed for those with disabilities and accommodated service users, who have more complex and challenging needs.

Achievements

The new integrated facility, South Lanarkshire Lifestyle Eastfield, has significantly contributed to the overall regeneration of a deprived neighbourhood in not one, but three, distinct areas, namely in health improvement, social inclusion and partnership working.

The challenges for the facility and South Lanarkshire Leisure were to overcome local negative perceptions of leisure, to encourage the traditionally sedentary market in a deprived area, to become more active and to encourage partnership working between previously disparate agencies, (Greater Glasgow Health Board, NHS (Lanarkshire) and South Lanarkshire Council's Social Work Department), whilst raising the awareness in the local community of the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Attendances are able to prove that such challenges have been successfully met. In this last year (2007/08) a total of 277 897 attendances were recorded at the facility, a considerable increase over the 55 184 which was recorded in Rutherglen Pool's last full year of operation (2003/04). Of this total, 85 000 (30%) attendances were recorded by individuals eligible for either discounted or free use by virtue of their economic or physical circumstances. This, in comparison to the 13 200 (23%) recorded in 2003/04, would seem to imply that those most vulnerable, whether through poverty or disability, are leading more active lifestyles and so improving the health of the local community.

A major contributor to this upturn in attendances, aside from the attraction of a new facility, was the development of two excellent partnerships – the first, with Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board (GGCHB) helped deliver the 'Live Active' exercise referral programme and the second, an innovative partnership with the Managed Clinical Network (MCN), which developed and funded a specific programme aimed at individuals with Coronary Heart Disease (CHD).

Day centre clients (with both mental and physical disabilities) are able to easily access the fully DDA compliant leisure facilities, making regular use of the 'The Club' gym and its Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) accredited equipment, participating in the various fitness classes on offer, as well as using the 25m pool. Day centre clients are able to integrate with the other leisure centre customers and gain valuable work experience within the centre by working alongside leisure centre staff in the daily operation of the facility. This level of integration was never foreseen in the initial stages and without doubt has led to not only more physically active clients but also to improvements in their mental health through improved self esteem.

Summary

The most apparent benefits provided by the project are:

- Environmental improvements, as the project has created a modern attractive facility which is built on a previous derelict and contaminated site, improving the appearance of the area.
- The removal of barriers (both physical and mental) to participation for the local community and day centre clients in particular.
- Improved health through the provision of high quality opportunities for participation in physical activity in a regeneration area.
- A 25% rise (220 000) in attendance levels at the local leisure centre
- The integration of South Lanarkshire Leisure and Social work staff and their respective customers/clients where previously such a union had never existed (not only locally but nationally).
- Local schools use the indoor and outdoor facilities

Such has been the success of this project that another integrated facility has recently opened at Fairhill in Hamilton, which it is hoped will have the same positive impact on the health and wellbeing of the local regeneration area as that shown by South Lanarkshire Lifestyle Eastfield.

Outstanding achievement in sports and leisure

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Finalists

Finalist 6: The Moray Council, “From a vision to reality”

In October 1997, following a few years of uncertainty due to local authority funding, ageing buildings, CCT regimes and a central government drive to reduce costs of local authority leisure facilities, a new section within the Moray Council was created – called the Sports and Leisure Services section.

At the time, the portfolio of facilities was in poor condition, both structurally and in terms of the equipment. Also, they were not particularly well supported by the population of Moray and there seemed to have been a natural “drift” away from using the facilities, rather than a dramatic drop-off, never the less, the usage was relatively poor.

As I took over the section in late 1997 one of the first things that I purchased for my Office was a cheap pre-printed painting for decoration, that had the caption underneath which reads – “GOALS: However long it takes the end result is always worth the effort”.

This was an inspiration for me to turn around the poor usage, do away with the sub-standard facilities and to take the opportunity to create an infrastructure of leisure and community facilities across Moray that people would be proud of, staff would want to work in and neighbouring authorities would look upon with envy.

In choosing to enter the APSE Healthy Communities Accolades 2008 under the Achievements in Sports and Leisure category I feel that we have an ideal example of how hard work, team effort, dedication and a clear vision can make a huge difference.

The submission pages that follow highlight the facilities as in 1998 and the facilities in 2008 – a huge improvement made possible through many funding sources but all with one aim – improvement and long term sustainability.

Achievements

Evolution of the Service Over 10 Years:

Buckie Swimming Pool

A standard 25 metre pool with sub-standard changing accommodation. No additional facilities.

Forres Swimming Pool and Fitness Centre

One of the better facilities – equipped with a very small fitness room (5 pieces of equipment), and a sauna/steam room.

Keith Swimming Pool

A facility that had undergone a partial refurbishment with new changing rooms but no other facilities.

Lossiemouth Swimming Pool

An ex school pool that was in serious danger of closure due to structural defects through long term neglect.

Speyside Swimming Pool

A school pool with a very limited programme of opening and poor usage.

2 x Multi-sports areas

Areas that were reasonably well used but suffering from poor surfaces.

10 x Football pitches with pavilions

A mix of facilities, some of which were in good condition but most in a poor state of repair.

Points of interest:

- In 2007/2008 the total number of users for all the facilities was 601,137.
- In the year 2000 we were awarded the Quest Quality Assurance Award.
- In 2003 we had a project nominated for the APSE Annual Awards – runner up in the category.
- The budget for staff wages alone is now more than £2 million per year with a complement of 153 full time and part time staff.
- Most of the facilities are accredited by VisitScotland.

Summary

As will be noted there has been extensive investment in the facilities and we continue to seek new opportunities for funding future projects. This year we will have two full sized 3rd generation synthetic pitches added to the portfolio – another jointly funded project with sportscotland and The Big Lottery.

My vision of “However long it takes the end result is always worth the effort” is now more than a vision.

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