

Case Study

Maintaining
involvement

Active Lifestyles

What were our objectives?

To increase participation in physical activities within East Hampshire District

Project description

Sport England awarded £94,000 revenue funding to East Hampshire District Council through the Active England programme. This funding along with £96,000 partnership funding employed an Active Lifestyles Development Officer to increase participation in physical activities within East Hampshire District from January 2005 to March 2008.

The project developed an 'Active Referral' outreach scheme. This targeted rural areas of the community across the district, in which local surgeries, physiotherapists, and health workers identified opportunities to enable older, younger and disabled people to take part in some physical activity.

Main activities of the project:

- Partner in the Rural Areas Play Project (RAPP), taking play activities to children in isolated rural areas;
- Healthy Schools Support – helping schools in the Healthy School Programme with a focus on developing physical activity opportunities;
- Develop Walking to Health opportunities by setting up short starter walks and providing walk leader training for new walk leaders;
- Cycling – promote family cycle (for example through family cycling events) and develop 'cycling for health' and 'cycling for all' (including for people with disabilities); and
- Older People Exercise classes – three chair-based classes in rural communities and two in residential care homes.

Rationale

The project came as a result of a Best Value Review carried out by East Hampshire District Council, a residents' survey and consultation with local parishes and committees. These identified a need to develop participation in physical activity,

particularly amongst residents who are disadvantaged and living in rural areas. Further evidence from the residents' postal survey highlighted the barriers to participation, which the project then looked to break down.

Project performance

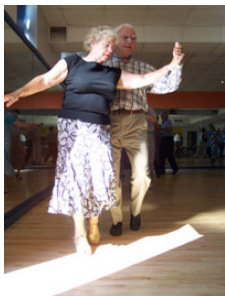
Through the activities of the Active Lifestyles co-ordinator new exercise referral documents were distributed to leisure centres and GPs. Through this there has been a 21% increase in the number of GP referrals to leisure centres in East Hampshire in the last three years. Although there has been a 3% reduction in the number of visits by the over 50s to specific over 50s activities at leisure centres in East Hampshire the project has been instrumental in setting up a number of sessions for 50+ including regular walks, chair classes and 50+ exercise sessions.

Active Lifestyles has developed working links with play-work and after school activity providers. Links have also been developed with local leaders in rural communities e.g. Parish Councils, Community Centres and Halls, Church Centres and Halls, local sports, play and activity clubs and providers. The project provides access to adults as well as children and has first hand knowledge of existing, or lack of, facilities.

RAPP gains from the partnership by widening the range of activities available to children in rural communities. This is achieved through access to play and sports development opportunities, sports networks, other schools and links to leisure centres.

Partnership working

Working in partnership has made it possible to make optimal use of human and pooled financial resources to provide the maximum possible gain for rural communities. This partnership working created improved provision for all residents across the district and in particular those residents in rural areas.



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