

Case Study

CREST (Coastal and rural extreme sport)

Wheeled/
extreme sports

What were our objectives?

To use the natural environment to introduce sport and physical activity in an exciting way



Project description

Sport England awarded North Cornwall District Council £122,200 revenue funding through the Active England programme for the CREST project – an extreme sports development programme. The Active England funding covered 73% of the total project cost. The Active England funding started in March 2005 and finished in March 2008. The continuing project is now funded through North Cornwall District Council and commercial sponsorship.

The key component of the project is using the coast and land as natural facilitation to introduce activities that are known to be strong in lifestyle elements that are attractive to young people.

The project co-ordinated by a Coastal Recreation Officer concentrates on surfing, skate/wheeled sports, surf life saving and land based extreme activities. The project has set up a surf academy and helped to fund the Billabong Junior Surf Championships at Widemouth bay in 2005. Both in-house and external providers deliver activities. Most of the activities are based on the coast apart from the kayaking and climbing. The skate-board aspect of the project is a mobile facility.

The whole idea of the project is that surfing is popular commercially and has enormous prestige among young people.

Project origin

The idea for the project came about because it seemed there was nothing really catering for lifestyle sports. Sport England use surfing for their publicity but had not, up until Active England, provided any funding for it. The project offers two levels: a developmental programme and guiding people into competition.

Rationale

Sport England's regional plan for the South West had a strapline saying 'Life is

out there, go and get it!'. The strapline was embodied with the image of a surfer. The project manager was well aware that this was not a sport strongly invested in within the area. It is a lifestyle sport, which does not often attract funding, as it is quite a spontaneous and unstructured activity.

Project aims

The project aimed to deliver high profile opportunities for local people, focussing particularly on young people, to enjoy North Cornwall's natural environment by participating in extreme lifestyle sports.

Innovation

CREST offers introductions to extreme sport as well as developing progressive opportunities for talented individuals within a variety of sports from surfing, climbing and kayaking to skateboarding and BMX. It uses the natural environment and has attracted many young people.

Project performance

The project has been a success with over 7,000 participants taking part. The throughput for the project was over 8,000 and they have also used 2 coaches to help deliver the activities.

North Cornwall District Council recognised the success of the project and the initial coordinator post funded by Sport England has been mainstreamed within the council. There are also ongoing commercial sponsorship opportunities.

Academies have been established in surfing, climbing, surf kayaking, canoeing and others. The project caters for all levels from beginner, club, development and professional level courses. The project aims to create opportunities in extreme sport so the regular sporting activity becomes part of everyday life.



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