

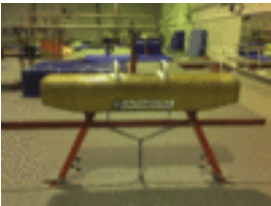
Case Study

Equity focused
- under 16

Gymnastics in Ipswich

What were our objectives?

To set up a permanent, purpose-built gymnastics and multi-sport facility



Project description

Sport England awarded £517,600 capital funding and £79,000 revenue funding to Gymnastics in Ipswich through the Active England programme. The capital funding went towards building an extension to the existing gymnasium to meet a growing gymnastic and multi-sport need. The revenue funding, started in 2006, went towards community coaching with out-of-school and after-schools clubs. The total project cost £785,100.

Rationale

The original gymnasium was completed in 1999 with support from the Sports Lottery of £529,490. By 2003 the facility was catering for more than 2,000 participants. Demand was exceeding supply and there was tension between the needs of elite performers versus recreational users.

Project aims and objectives

The project aimed to:

- build a permanent self-contained gymnastics facility on the site of the existing Gainsborough Sports Centre; and
- set up the Gymnastics in Ipswich MEGA Community project.

These two objectives have been achieved.

Project performance

The new facilities include two gymnastic halls, a dance studio and classroom/meeting room, reception area and catering facilities. The new facilities have resulted in:

- An overall increase in participation with 7,320 new members since the project began;
- An increase in the number of coaches working at the centre from 34 in 2007 to 54 in 2008;
- Increasing the profile of gymnastics at a local, regional, national and international level;
- Over 80 elite gymnasts using the centre; and

- One of the highest retention rates of all gymnastics clubs in the country.

The extension of the facility made it possible to create a multi-sport environment, which caters for a wider programme of sports and activities. These include dance, netball, tennis, roller-skating, trampolining, martial arts, karate and cheerleading.

Delivery in schools

Since January 2006 the club has carried out 1,800 school visits and introduced thousands of children to gymnastics.

Lessons Learned

Leadership and vision

The main gymnastics club was driven by a determined, passionate, knowledgeable and experienced lead coach. His ambition was to develop an environment where all people, regardless of age, background or ability could take part in gymnastics at every level. He formed the Gymnastics in Ipswich Association in 1991 to bring together the three local gymnastic clubs and other partners (Ipswich Borough Council, schools and dance specialist) to set up a permanent centre for gymnastics and other related sports.

Partnership working

A good working relationship has been established between the Association and Ipswich Borough Council. The good working relationship with the nearby Gainsborough Sports Centre has been of benefit as:

- The Association receives discounted use of the Sports Centre and utility services using local government buying power;
- There is a reciprocal relationship where the Council can use the Association's dance studio, meeting rooms and catering area.



For more information:
www.gymnasticsinipswich.co.uk
Email admin@pipersvale.plus.com
www.sportengland.org

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