

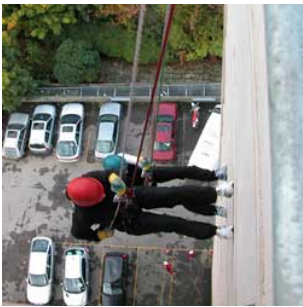
Case Study

West London YMCA – The Tumbler

Equity focused
– young people

What were our objectives?

To engage young people in exercise and health activities.



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[http://www.westlondonymca.org/
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Project description

Sport England awarded West London YMCA £50,000 capital funding and £10,000 revenue funding through the Active England programme. The project aimed to convert the former Tumbler pub into a youth centre. The ground floor had already been converted into youth centre facilities, the Active England funding enabled the YMCA to turn the former beer cellar into a fitness space and dance studio. The total project cost £375,300. The project started in January 2005 and finished in January 2008.

The new fitness space and dance studio is a flexible space that is used to promote physical health and serves to support the current provision, being used for drama sessions that help raise awareness of substance misuse for example. The sport and physical activity programme is delivered through affordable classes.

The Tumbler Youth Centre is on the border of two of the most deprived wards in Hillingdon and targets young people between 11 and 25. In September 2004 the ground floor of the new centre was officially opened. It has an IT suite with 9 PCs, used for training sessions, graphics workshops, web design classes and homework clubs. There is an area that is used for work with young mothers, generic youth work provision, sexual health drop-ins, workshops and befriending projects.

Rationale and project aims

A great demand for sports facilities in the area was identified through a consultation with local young people.

The main aim was to become a focal point for youth work in the local area, involving young people to develop a space dedicated to them and where they feel safe, secure, welcome and respected. At every step of the way young people were consulted to try to ensure that the leisure and informal

education options and programmes on offer met their needs.

Project performance

The project engaged with over 900 participants and had a total throughput of almost 8,000. The project used 16 coaches and 27 volunteers. The main activities at the centre are weight sessions, kickboxing, fitness classes and dance sessions.

The Tumbler offers recreational activities that are not all sport focused. The project offers incentive schemes and Youth Achievement Awards, as ways to keep young people interested. The project tried to get them actively involved in planning future services.

The project developed slowly at first. Being a brand-new centre it has taken time to make young people in the area aware of the services on offer. However, the main difficulty was keeping fitness instructors. Most fitness instructors get frustrated because young people do not come consistently. Some lost interest as they were not getting high numbers to their class and moved to other fitness centres. As a result, things took much longer to set up.

But due to the nature of the project young people came in to use one service and ended up accessing others because they take place in the same building. For example, young mums came in for a support session, and through consultation the centre have been able to deliver a fitness class for them. They have been able to give young people the opportunity to develop peer leadership skills, with two 15-year-old girls developing dance sessions for other younger girls.

“Through our support work we have seen clients starting to grow in confidence, access training and employment and start to get really motivated about volunteering in the community. They have learnt new skills and have become very committed to sessions they are a part of.”