

South Oxfordshire briefing on the activities delivered by the Participation Team

October 2015

When referring to leisure, many people only associate this with the facilities side of the team and the leisure centres that they are responsible for. The Participation team is the part of leisure dealing directly with the public, offering opportunities for all our residents to take part in sport and physical activity. Outlined below are some of the key areas of our work.

Sportivate is a £56 million Lottery funded London 2012 legacy project that gives more young people the chance to discover a sport that they love.

The programme started by giving 14-25 year-olds, who are not particularly sporty, access to six-to-eight weeks' of free or subsidised coaching in a range of sports. From September 2013, Sportivate extended its age group so that 11-13 year-olds can also take part.

During the six-to-eight weeks those taking part can work towards an event or personal challenge and when the free or low-cost coaching has finished they will be supported to continue playing sport.

Sportivate launched in June 2011 as a four-year programme but, due to its success, additional funding of £10m per year has been invested allowing the programme to run until March 2017.

In South Oxfordshire this year we have engaged 143 youngsters in sports including squash, basketball, golf, boxing and rowing.

In partnership with local clubs and our leisure provider, GLL, we have delivered holiday activities for youngsters aged 5 – 18, enabling them to stay active throughout the school holidays, trying new sports and hopefully going on to join the clubs and take part regularly in the sport of their choice.

The GO Active, Get Healthy Project in South Oxfordshire offers a variety of activities to encourage adults 16 + to live more active lifestyles.

- There are regular activities taking place such as: Nordic Walks, health walks, community tai chi, Pilates, Yoga, stretch classes and open water swimming.
- We work in partnership with our local leisure provider, GLL, to run reduced cost swim campaigns twice a year at all our leisure centres.
- During August we signed up to a national campaign, Love Parks, focusing on communities to take up sports and physical activities in their local parks. Some of these activities included volleyball, Nordic Walking tasters, tai chi in the park and ultimate Frisbee.
- We make sure we use our funding to set up sustainable activities such as the Didcot Park run where anyone can either run or jog a timed 5km loop every Saturday with volunteers organising and marshalling the event.
- We also use our funding to train coaches and volunteers to help us run sustainable activities. We recently funded a table tennis coach who offers coaching to a senior table tennis session at Thame Leisure centre with a group of 12 regular players. This group started as part of a table tennis taster day we offered to older residents.

In South Oxfordshire our Active Women team have run a variety of sessions for either mums to do with their children or on their own (e.g. badminton, powerhoop, yoga, boxfit).

We have set up new activities such as mum and toddler dance, zumba, badminton and we have also tried to provide childcare where possible, for example at Thame Racquets Centre we have set up a project where women can attend 6 exercise sessions on their timetable at £5 each and this includes crèche facilities. Many of our activities have continued as regular sessions and popular activities such as netball groups and boxfit sessions, initially set up by Active Women are now being led by the leisure centres.

Our main success projects have been our involvement in a swimming campaign across both Districts (in South Oxfordshire 176 ladies with children under 16 took part); a zumba course in Wallingford, which has attracted 92 ladies in total, to attend and have now continued as regular classes); and also powerhoop, where we have set up an additional class in Didcot due to it's the popularity.

Active Women have also run a mum and toddler dance session for Didcot Ladygrove children's centre, with a focus on low income families and regularly has eight mums attending.

GO Active Gold

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils have been awarded £227,000 by Sport England for Go Active Gold, a three year project offering a range of sports and classes in rural areas for people aged 60 plus.

Go Active Gold will target different villages each year to encourage people to do 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity each week. Sessions start in January and will be delivered by Go Active Gold 'activators' and local sports and activity coaches.

Members of the local community will also be encouraged to volunteer to help spread the message about what's on offer and set up and deliver some sessions.

Activities will begin in January and will include dance, tai chi, table tennis, golf, bowls, Pilates, yoga, Nordic walking and fitness

Taster sessions in the above will initially be held in Kingston Bagpuize, Steventon, Woodcote, Watlington, Chalgrove, Sutton Courtney and Shiplake.

Through increasing physical activity levels we will improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of older people, encourage social interaction and create lifelong habits and role models for younger generations.