

# Case Study



## Project

Developing our community through promoting our health.

## Organisation

Derrynoose Community Development Association

## Date

September 2008

## Contact

Patricia McMahon

## Contact details

Derrynoose Road  
Crossnamoyle  
Coady  
T60 3EZ  
Telephone: 028 3753 0887

## About the Organisation

Derrynoose is a village in a very rural part of South Armagh. Its only opportunities for physical activity were Gaelic sports, but many children did not feel "sporty" and many mothers only provided transport to activities without having anything to join themselves.

The Derrynoose Community Development Association set out to change this using their Lottery-funded sports hall and access to the hall in the primary school next door. They are now offering a range of non-sporty activities to a keen audience of different ages.

The Community Development Association runs the wider activities at the community centre through a management committee. The Active Lifestyles project has a subcommittee that focuses on its activities and development. The project also has a part-time project co-ordinator who looks after the activities.

## Project overview

The Community Association identified demand for a range of activities which they have been able to offer as part of a programme of weekly sessions. This includes:

- Yoga;
- Salsa;
- Combat training;
- Circuits;
- Line dancing;
- Irish dancing;
- Walking;
- Aerobics;
- Kick boxing;
- Badminton; and
- Tennis.

## What has it achieved?

Some activities proved more popular than others with the most successful ones now being run by local people. They have managed to forge partnerships with other local providers such as schools, community groups and service delivery agencies. These provide a wide ranging, easily accessible network of activities for people of all ages.

## How did the project get people involved?

The project was promoted through the local schools, parish bulletin and posters in local shops, as well as leaflets at the centre.

At a local fair the project targeted people whose families may have used the centre but who had not used it for themselves, as well as the wider community. They asked people what activities they would like to take part in. This was an effective way of testing demand for specific activities before launching them.

For the children's after school yoga, the project co-ordinator and head teacher sent a joint letter home to all parents about the class. The head teacher's backing was important in giving the class credibility.

Mothers of children already using the centre have been delighted to find the centre has designed activities just for them. This gives them time for themselves to enjoy activities without other responsibilities.

## What was innovative and what worked well?

The project has been successful in reaching new people by identifying non-sporty physical activities and then testing the demand for these before starting.

The project also grouped some of the less well-known activities together for six weeks of taster sessions. This introduced people to more activities than they might otherwise try. It also helped the project co-ordinator manage their time and marketing effectively.

Integrating project activities with the well-established activities at the Community Development Association centre and school has given the project a head start and increased its profile in the community.

The project appeals to people who previously felt there was nothing for them because they weren't sporty. It also provides a social side to activities, gives people a chance to chat during warm up, to have a laugh and meet new people.

The project co-ordinator encourages people to try other activities if the activity they were interested in will not work for them due to time commitments.



# Case Study



## Were there any unexpected outcomes?

The project found that people can become very proactive when engaged on physical activity provision. This showed that there was significant demand that was not catered for within the community. All it needed was for them to become fully engaged and give them an opportunity to take part in a new activity.

An example of this is John. He originally came to the project as a participant but after attending a course started to lead on some of the sessions. To further support his new role he attended a first aid course and he was able to use this new training outside of his role on the project. Driving home one evening he was able to give CPR to a woman who had suffered a heart attack by the side of the road. The hospital said he saved her life by doing this until the ambulance arrived.

## The future...

If there were opportunities in the future the project coordinator would concentrate a bit more on the elderly citizens. This is a large area of need but the project has not been able to sufficiently address it.

The project would also like to expand the range of activities on offer by training up more local people and volunteers. There is demand for circuit training and this is something the project will be looking into.

The size of the grant was sufficient. The project coordinator feels that if money comes too easily people don't appreciate it.

## Lessons from the project

There are many key lessons to take from the Derrynoose programme about engaging with inactive people and tapping into latent demand.

- There was a need to educate the local population about certain activities such as yoga.
- Using well established venues meant that people were comfortable with going there.
- Ensure the right people are receiving training to deliver activities and sessions, not just the first people to show an interest in it. This helps to guarantee the long term sustainability of the programme.
- The project co-ordinator plays a very important role in the project delivery and their rapport with the local community is possibly more important than their experience of the post. Being able to engage with local people meant the project was a greater success.
- Sort out the budget and fund raising at the application stage. The first year of the project was spent raising money and refining the budget as this was not sorted out during the application stage.