

Barriers to Participation – Disabled People

Key Facts

- Less than one in eleven people in Harlow with a limiting disability take part in sport three times a week for thirty minutes, one in five people without a limiting disability take part this often.
- Just over one in ten disabled adults feel that they have had a negative experience in sport due to their health problem or disability.
- Only one in twelve Harlow residents with a limiting disability has taken part in an organised competitive sport in the previous year, compared to one in five people without a limiting disability
- When asked for the main reason that had prevented participation in sport, the top three answers were: health limitations (74%); lack of time (5%); and lack of money (5%). A lack of local facilities to play sport was only cited by 3% of respondents.
- Disabled people make up 20% of the UK population

Main Barriers

- Inaccessible facilities
- Information not available in different formats
- Discriminatory attitudes
- Lack of training and awareness – people may need advice as to what sports are accessible to them or require a coach that understands their disability
- Lack of time
- Lack of money

How can these barriers be addressed?

- Consider fonts and the sizes used for people with visual impairments or learning disabilities
- Use images in publicity which show disabled people taking part in different sports – not just basketball
- Facilities need to be totally accessible, this means not just in the entrance but also showers and access to the bar
- Encourage clubs to take the 'A Club for All' workshop
- Encourage coaches to take part in 'Equity in Your Coaching' or 'How to Coach Disabled People in Sport' workshops

Case Study

Pedal Power - Waltham Forest

Pedal Power is a cycling club for young adults with learning disabilities, involving approximately 20 participants at each session.

The group was set up by Jo Roach for her daughter Suzie and her friends and enables participants otherwise vulnerable to becoming overweight to get some exercise in a fun way. The club fosters healthy eating habits as well as providing for the absolute beginner through to encouraging its regular cyclists to try for the Special Olympics. The club is in part run by the young people themselves and sessions are held during daytime on an enclosed track, ensuring the safety of the participants. Cycle training instructors are supplied by the London School of Cycling and the group encourages parents, carers and support workers to cycle too.

Promoting the scheme has been done by flyers and posters were created on a home PC and distributed on the internet via groups such as Tower Hamlets Wheelers. This networking and marketing has led to the groups profile and impact continually increasing.

Sources / Further Information

Active People Survey - <http://www.webreport.se/apd/login.aspx>

Disabled Adults Participation in Sport 2001 -

http://www.sportengland.org/adult_disability_headline_findings.pdf

Pedal Power - <http://www.hackney-cyclists.org.uk/pedalpower.htm>

Sport England Promoting Sport Toolkit www.sportengland.org/promotingsport

Sports Equality East 'Promoting Equality in Sport and Physical Activity' -

<http://www.sportengland.org/equality-proofing-a4-v1b.pdf>

What Works for Women - <http://www.whatworksforwomen.org.uk>