
Youth Sport Omagh

Sport Northern Ireland Community Sports
Programmes Project Level Evaluation Report
(June 2008)

Contents

Evaluation Report

Youth Sport Omagh

Sport for Older People and Disability Sport Project Evaluation

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Executive Summary

Youth Sport Omagh has recently completed the delivery of a three-year disability sport and older people sport programme which has been funded by Sport Northern Ireland's (SNI) Big Lottery Fund Community Sport Programme. The programme for older people aimed to increase the physical health and well being of the local elderly population through an effective physical activity programme. The Disability Sport programme aimed to increase viable physical activity opportunities for local people with a disability within the community.

Overall Youth Sport Omagh aimed to deliver sport and physical activity opportunities for two distinct target populations in the Omagh District Council area in partnership with a range of statutory organisations, for example, Omagh District Council and the Sperrin Lakeland Trust, with similar delivery responsibilities. Specifically Youth Sport Omagh aimed to achieve this through the provision of targeted programmes and facility provision and the overall project was coordinated by a designated Development Officer, who is also part funded through Sport NI's Community Sport Programme.

An integral element of this financial support is the completion of a detailed programme evaluation, which Youth Sport Omagh was required to tender and secure a suitable organisation to conduct. Copius Consulting was appointed in February 2008 to conduct said evaluation, which it completed in April 2008. This evaluation focused on the effectiveness of an activities programme for targeted groups in older people and disabled sport.

The initial objectives for the Programme for Older People were achieved through the provision of adequate opportunities for participants to experience new and varied physical activities, which changed and enhanced their institutional lifestyle.

The Disability Sport programme also achieved their objectives with their young participants benefiting from improved motor skills, an improved development of self-awareness and an enhanced social inclusiveness, which they had not previously experienced.

A detailed financial analysis was carried out as part of the evaluation and identified a financial deficit in programme expenditure, which occurred due to a shortfall in salary provision for the funded Community Development Officer. This was addressed through the Youth Sport Budget.

The evaluation also identified a number of recommendations, four relating to the Sport for Older People programme and another five for the disability programme. These focused on the need, desire and the opportunity to develop the programme further.

Introduction and Background to Youth Sport Omagh and the Sport for Older People and Disability Sport Programmes

2.1 Introduction to the Disability Sport and Sport for Older People Programmes

Copius Consulting were appointed to carry out an evaluation of the Youth Sport Omagh's Community Sports Programme Project, which was funded through Sport Northern Ireland's Community Sport Programme. The evaluation will ascertain the achievements, successes and impact of the following programmes.

- **Sport for Older People**- a participation based programme aimed at increasing the physical health and well being of the local elderly population through an effective physical activity programme.
- **Disability Sport** - an inclusive participation initiative aimed at increasing opportunities for viable physical activity for local persons with a disability within the community

2.2 Background to Youth Sport Omagh

The Youth Sport Omagh Centre opened in September 2002 and aimed to provide top class facilities for community interaction and outdoor sports. As a voluntary cross community organisation, it has in the past provided sporting and physical activity opportunities through its excellent facilities primarily to young people of the area. An integral element of this provision has been the Management Committee's success in attracting funding to secure both programme delivery and development and maintenance of the sports facilities at the site. A key aspect of their provision is the employment of two Development Officers who are responsible for the management and programming at the site. With specific reference to this project Youth Sport Omagh has appointed Steven McElhatton as their Community Sport Development Officer funded through Sport Northern Ireland and the Big Lottery Fund. This Officer has direct responsibility for the Older People and Disability Sport Programmes.

Through an extensive consultation process including numerous local, regional and national organisations Youth Sport Omagh identified that there was a distinct lack of participation opportunities in disability and older people sport.

To increase access and opportunities for young people with disabilities in the Omagh area and to widen the area to participate in sport and physical activity, a programme specific sub committee was re-established consisting of local representatives from the Arvalee School, the Sperrin Lakeland Trust, Cedar Foundation, Omagh Autism NI (PAPA) group and other special needs organisations. The Sub Committee's aim was to provide wider opportunities, reduce barriers, promote inclusiveness within sport and provide support and mentoring to these young people and their families.

In order to increase access and opportunities for older people in the Omagh district and improve participation in physical activity, Steven carried out a needs analysis through questionnaires and meetings with activity therapists of individual groups within residential homes and day care centres. This survey showed that there was a great demand to increase their residents' physical activity. The committee's second aim was to provide wider opportunities, reduce barriers, promote inclusiveness within sport and provide support and mentoring to those who work with older people.

The success of this funding has allowed Youth Sport Omagh to expand and enhance its delivery to these two specific target groups i.e. older people in the area and young people with disabilities. Youth Sport Omagh has also established a number of core principles within its community development strategy, which involved improving access and social inclusion in sport and enhancing participation.

Sport for Older People - According to the 2001 census there are some 7,400 people aged 60 years and over in the Omagh District Council area with over twenty clubs for older people on the Council's community register. The scale of this community coupled with consultation findings clearly demonstrated a need for a programme co-ordinator to work along side local older people and community organisations with the main objective of:

- To promote and develop safe and sustainable physical activity programmes which would contribute to improving health and well being of older people through physical activity and social inclusion.

Disability Sport - According to the same census there are 8,178 young people in the Omagh District Council area aged between 10 and 19 years of age. There are currently some 115

children registered with learning disabilities and 34 children registered with physical disabilities on the records of social workers in the Children's Disability Team of the Sperrin Lakeland Trust. There are twelve special needs / disability groups identified on the Council's community register.

Again the needs of this specific target group and consultation findings highlighted the demand for a project co-ordinator with the remit to enhance and develop the health and social well being of children and young people who had a range of disabilities and special needs and their families through the provision of a co-ordinated service within the community to help alleviate the impact of isolation and marginalisation. The project coordinator would also engage with the local council in addition to other voluntary/community groups and sporting bodies to deliver this initiative. This would also address the added objectives of:

- Increasing opportunities to develop their skills and learning through exposure to a range of sporting activities;
- Improving self-confidence and potential through range of team and sports events;
- Promoting a sense of inclusion, participation, achievement, choice and opportunity, as a pathway to help alleviate isolation and enhance their quality of life;
- Improving access to sport and promoting knowledge and interest in physical activity and sport; and
- Developing self-understanding of the benefits of sport and physical activity.

2.3 Youth Sport Omagh's Staff and a Associated Operational Activities

Name	Job Title	Responsibilities
Chris Brown	Project Manager, Youth Sport Omagh	Strategic and policy development Financial Management of Programmes
Steven McElhatton	Community Sport Development Officer	Deliver and co-ordinate Programmes
Breda Turbitt Eileen Knipe Seamus Doris	Community Sport Coaches	Deliver Activity programmes within Sport for Older People Programme
Josephine Devlin	Manager, Day Care Centres in Omagh District	Co-ordination of the Sport for Older People Programme in 6 Day Care Centres
Evelyn Carberry	Community Services Manager, Sperrin Lakeland Trust	Co-ordination of Disability Sport Programme in Youth Sport Omagh Centre
Greg Brown	Special Olympics Coach	Co-ordination of soccer for Disability Sport Programme

Terms of Reference and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the terms of reference agreed by Sport NI and Youth Sport Omagh. It also details the methodology and actions that have been taken to gather the raw data and complete the evaluation.

3.2 Terms of Reference

As an integral part of the Sport NI Community Sport Programme, Youth Sport Omagh has been tasked with appointing an independent evaluator to critique and report on the Sport for Older People and Disability Sport programmes. The following terms of reference were agreed prior to the commencement of the project:

- Identify and examine the effectiveness of the delivery processes, which develop participation in sport and physical activity in the above target groups;
- Assess the impact the programmes have had on the target groups and the wider community;
- Assess the activity impact on target groups and as a result their attitudes towards physical activity; and
- Assess the contribution of the programme deliverers in relation to achieving the projected aims.

3.3 Evaluation Methodology

The following methodology was agreed with Youth Sport Omagh and carried out at the centre and Gortmore Day Care Centre.

Agreed Methodology	Work Undertaken
Develop an understanding of the project and its objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial meeting with Chris Brown (Project Manager) and Steven McElhatton (Community Sports Development Officer) • Conducted desk research • Continuous liaison with project team
Develop understanding of objectives of the programme funder in financing the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of all corresponding documentation (Community Sport Programme application, Award letter of Offer) • Conducted consultation with Centre Manager and Community Sports Development Officer • Carried out desktop research
Develop understanding of how programme has been delivered and its proposed impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted in-depth interviews with Programme Co-ordinators to assess programme delivery from their perspective • Carried out detailed interviews / ongoing discussions with Centre Manager and Community Sports Development Officer • Conducted review of participants monitoring and evaluation forms and reports • Conducted review of Youth Sport Omagh reports to Sport NI
Develop an understanding of the effectiveness of the project in achieving it's aims and objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted detailed review of delivery partner Funder reports • Conducted focused consultation with key delivery partners (Youth Sport Omagh, Sperrin Lakeland Trust and Omagh District Day Care Centres Manager) • Reviewed participant monitoring and evaluation reports • Collated information gathered relating to

	agreed project aims and objectives outlining specific
Provide an overview of the financial aspect of the project to assess effectiveness and efficiencies of delivery estimated budgets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted detailed review of budgeted and actual expenditure against programme delivery • Conducted financial analysis of income and expenditure reports
Develop a set of recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathered evidence throughout the duration of the project • Benchmarked this project with other community development projects in the area • Provided a detailed list of project recommendations to help any future interventions achieve their long term objectives
Conclusions - provide a brief overview of the full report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided a brief overview of the full report with immediate actions and finalised report conclusions

3.4 Presentation Findings

The findings of the project are detailed over the next four chapters. Sport NI's Community Sport Programme is examined firstly before critiquing the effectiveness and efficiency of the Disability and Sport for Older People Programmes. A qualitative overview of the findings is presented before a chapter designated to future suggestions and recommendations is presented in Section 8.

3.5 Conclusion

The Research Design and Presentation has been developed specifically to help Youth Sport Omagh make more informed decisions regarding the future for the Disability Sport and Sport for Older People Programmes. The staff members of the project agreed the Research Methodology, and their input into the evaluation has enabled them to assess the effectiveness of the project.

Sport Northern Ireland’s Big Lottery Funded Community Sport Programme.

4.1 Introduction

This section gives some specific information about Sport Northern Ireland before developing a more in depth analysis of the Community Sport Programme, which they currently manage.

4.2 Sport NI

Sport NI is a Non - Departmental Public Body of the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) and is charged with the development of sport in Northern Ireland. DCAL’s vision is of a “confident, creative, informed and vibrant community.”

The vision for Sport NI is embedded in DCAL’s vision: Through sport, to contribute to an inclusive, confident, creative, informed and vibrant community.”

Sport NI’s role is to provide a vision and strategic leadership for sport. It is committed to targeting support and delivering tangible outcomes that benefit the sporting community and wider society. Sport NI values the important contribution made by the community, voluntary and statutory sectors to sport in Northern Ireland and work closely with these sectors to build capacity and sustainability in development. Sport NI designs and implements programmes and partnerships that contribute to the following objectives:

- Increased participation in sport and physical activity
- Improved sporting performances
- Improved efficiency and effectiveness in the administration of sport

In the attainment of Sport NI's strategic objectives, the following Corporate Outcomes will be realised.

1. Professional, accountable and autonomous sporting organisations
2. Increased levels of spectators attending sporting events
3. Increased participation in sport and physical activity especially among under represented groups
4. Increased number of athletes with improved sporting performance
5. Contribution to broader government priorities
6. Increased efficiency and effectiveness in the attainment of corporate outcomes

Sport NI's business is designed to provide people, especially young people and under represented groups, with pathways and options for lifelong sporting and personal development

4.3 Community Sport Programme

In 2003 Sport NI secured £2.4 Million from the Big Lottery Fund to deliver the Community Sport Programme with the specific aim of improving the health and well being of those communities most at risk of low levels of participation in sport and physical recreation. The Community Sport Programme aims to improve the health and well being of individuals and build community cohesion through increased participation of children, young people and adults in areas of high social need and groups traditionally marginalised in sport and physical activity and in particular:

Sport NI, Community Sport Programmes Aims	How Older People's and Disability Programmes Achieve Community Sport Programme Aims
To increase the levels of sustained participation in sport and physical activity among under represented groups	The Sport for Older People programme which targeted residents in Day Care Centres increased their physical participation levels by 122% over 3 years. Over the same period the Disability Programme, which targeted children with a registered disability, increased their participation levels in physical activity and sport by some 200%. These programmes were delivered in six-week blocks, 3 times per annum, over a period of three years thus providing sustained activity for participants during that time.

To improve the health and well being of programme participants	Day Care providers acknowledged that residents participating in the Older People's Sport Programme benefited psychologically by demonstrating a "new sense" of mental well being. While the Disability programme participants showed a distinct improvement in their behaviour, communication skills and confidence, which enhanced their emotional and mental well being. This evidenced through carer observations and direct participant feedback.
To develop capacity and build community participation and cohesion	Census figures (2001) identified over 20 clubs for older people on the councils' community register. Similarly the census identified 149 children with physical and learning disabilities not including autism. Youth Sport Omagh used these figures to demonstrate the need for provision in this area and as such appointed a dedicated community sports development officer to implement a programme to improve community participation and cohesiveness within this sector.
To establish and support the development of structures to sustain longer provision for the Community Sport Programme across NI	The 3-year Community Sport Programme has provided a strong framework and infrastructure upon which mainstream community service providers can ensure further development. Youth Sport Omagh are using this model practice to try to acquire additional funding through Big Lottery's Reaching Communities programme. If successful a broader programme could be provided which would guarantee continuity of provision.

Sport NI believes that by investing in community sport, real progress can be made in meeting Sport NI's Corporate Plan outcomes, which include:

- Increased number of physically literate young people;
- Increased participation in sport and physical activity among under represented groups;
- A competent sporting workforce;
- Professional, accountable and autonomous sporting organisations; and
- Increased efficiency through improved planning and administration.

4.4 Conclusion

The above section has clearly demonstrated how the Disability Sport and Sport for Older People Programmes can positively affect and meet a range of Community Sport Programme objectives, overall, assisting Sport NI achieve their overarching policy aims.

Effectiveness in Delivering Project Objectives

5.1 Introduction

In designing and agreeing the evaluation format, Youth Sport Omagh agreed that the focus and presentation of findings should be targeted at the Sport for Older People and Disability Sport programme objectives. As such this section will outline in detail how the programme related to the agreed objectives as well as highlight participation figures for the two programmes throughout the three-year period. It should be noted that there was no provision of this nature in the area and as such these programmes were delivered against a backdrop of no baseline information.

5.2 Programme Participation

Two programmes targeting the two identified groups ran in tandem from February 2005 to February 2008. Over the three-year period, the total number participating was as indicated in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Number of participants in the two programmes:

	Disability Sport	Sport for Older People
Year 1	126	21
Year 2	187	40
Year 3	280	64

It is important to point out that in the actual disability programme there were 40 participants in each of the three years and this number was increased by a six week summer scheme at the centre which increased the numbers as shown above. Participation in the Disability Sport

programme increased by 48% in Year 2 and by 50% in Year 3. Overall, there was a 200% increase from its inception. However this increase was due to the contribution of the summer scheme as stated.

The Sport for Older People programme showed an increase in participation of 50% in Year 2 and an increase of 37.5% in Year 3. Overall, there was an increase of 120% since its inception.

5.3 Sport for Older People Programme

The Sport for Older People programme focused its delivery on those older people who resided in Day Care Centres. The target groups involved six Day Care Centres at Gortmore, Beragh, Newtownstewart, Dromare, Gortin and Strathroy. The criteria used to identify the participants were that they had to be over 65 years of age with an assessed need. The participants involved those with physical disabilities, some with learning disabilities, persons with mental health problems and some who had sensory impairments. The specific programme focused on three main activities of bocchia, chair aerobics and new age Kurling. These activities were delivered in the Day Care Centres and ran for a rotating systematic period of six weeks. The programme was managed and co-ordinated by Josephine Devlin who is based at Gortmore and is manager for the facility.

The programme was delivered by coaches who liaised directly with day care centre staff who also participated in the programme and assisted with feedback and questionnaire comments from the residents.

5.3.1 Objective 1: *To promote safe and sustainable physical activity opportunities for older people*

Youth Sport Omagh developed an outreach activities programme, which was delivered to six Day Care Centres. The activities comprised bocchia, new age curling and chair-based exercises with yoga. Participants were resident in Day Care centres and were aged 65 and over with an assessed need, which in this case incorporated a variety of physical disabilities, mental health problems, some with learning disabilities and a few who had sensory impairments. Therefore being aware of these circumstances the coaches placed great emphasis on health and safety in the work place and worked with and indeed impressed the day care staff in establishing a very safe and relaxed environment within which they could deliver the range of activities.

Verbal feedback from participants and their carers indicated that participants responded in a very enthusiastic manner and enjoyed the opportunity to take part in something different. Overall the programme was successful, however there was a mixed reaction in some of the Centres to the chair based activities or chair aerobics. This occurred in some of the rural Centres where the residents were male and from an agricultural background and they did not participate as fully as the female resident. The mainstream day care providers identified a willingness, need and desire to develop the programme further.

All of the current delivery partners are mindful of sustaining the programme post the award period but have yet to confirm an appropriate way forward. All have admitted that it would be difficult to secure the funding from internal sources but it should be noted that all those involved place a high importance on continuing the programme and would explore all avenues to do so.

5.3.2 Objective 2: By increasing participation improve health and well being through social inclusion

It is important to understand that the residents in Day Care Centres lead an institutional lifestyle that is characterised by a somewhat regimented daily routine with regular daily procedures that are necessary for the centre to function. The residents are inquisitive and will show interest and respond to a new face or change in situation. The programme offered a break from the normal routine and proved to be very mentally and physically stimulating. It had a very positive impact on both the attitude of staff and residents in the centres. For the residents it brought a new dynamic to their lives.

The activities were new, exciting, and different and created a new 'sense' of well being. The residents really enjoyed the activity sessions, which enhanced their self-esteem and self-confidence. They were able to interact more easily and responded well to the novelty of a routine. It established a great human 'faith' amongst the residents. The programme, which lasted six weeks, added an extra dimension to the normal day care programme. The personnel involved enhanced delivery, for example, Seamus (coach) was very popular with the participants because of his direct participation and singing during the sessions.

5.4 Disability Sport

The target group comprised children from the Omagh catchment area aged between six and eighteen years old who had a recognised disability under legislation and their siblings. The programme ran from February 2005 to February 2008 and was activity and sport based. Evelyn Carberry (Manager of the Social Work Team and Multi Disciplinary Services) coordinated it and was responsible for managing services and support for children who have a broad range of disabilities and their families. Consultation enhanced provision and was conducted at every stage of the programme.

5.4.1 Objective 1: To include and involve children who have a range of disabilities in mainstream activity

Children with a range of physical and learning disabilities as well as children with autism were involved in the programme. The planning of the sports and activity programme was modified to reflect the sensitivities and mobility needs of the children and was carried out both indoors and outdoors at the Youth Sport Omagh Centre. There are some 220 registered children with physical and learning disabilities not including autism that are known to social services. This list was used to target forty potential participants who initially took part in the programme. Additional children joined as a result of their participation in the Summer Scheme organised at the Centre.

5.4.2 Objective 2: To promote sport to achieve and develop health and well being among the disabled population and their families

There was a very positive physical and emotional response to the varied programme from the children and their families. There was also a recognisable development and response to the opportunity for social inclusion which was acknowledged by the children themselves through verbal feedback. The modified programme with the varied range of sports (see objective 5.4.3) was delivered alternate Saturday for eighteen months between 10.00-12.30am. It was reinforced with the Youth Sport Omagh Summer Scheme that ran each day for three weeks throughout the months of July and August. Peer group interaction lead to improved communication, behaviour and confidence of the participants which in turn enhanced their emotional and mental well being. This evidence was produced using formal and informal verbal feedback and written evaluation surveys on completion of the programme, completed by the participants themselves, their parents, their siblings and other professionals.

5.4.3 Objective 3: To respond to the social, leisure and peer group needs of children who become disadvantaged and isolated as a consequence of their disability

The programme provided ample opportunities for social inclusion for participants, siblings and parents as a means of respite. It also allowed for peer group fairness to develop. In relation to the required needs of the children the modified programme included activities such as soccer, rugby, play based floor activities, hockey, Gaelic coaching, rounders and track running.

The participants were identified and targeted through the special and mainstream schools. The planning and delivery of the programme was based on parental consultation at every stage, which also included two parents providing training on disability awareness and autism.

5.4.4 Objective 4: To support and increase opportunities for children and young people with disabilities and to enhance their learning and skill development through exposure to a range of activities within a sporting environment

The modified sports programme provided the opportunity to develop skills and raise the children's awareness of their own disability and give them a positive outlook as well as provide something for their other family members (siblings). As a result of their participation in simple activities like, for example, the egg and spoon races, evaluation highlighted an improvement in participants' motor skills, self-confidence and self-belief.

5.4.5 Objective 5: To help individuals achieve their potential and self confidence by promoting involvement in a range of sports and team events

As a direct consequence of the planning environment and planned activities individuals had the opportunity to select and engage in a variety of sports, including Rugby, Gaelic Football, Rounders, Athletics and Football. Adequate provision was incorporated in the programme that allowed progression opportunities for participants at appropriate times. The programme of activities was carefully selected to allow participants the opportunity to take part in team events in a safe and secure environment, which significantly enhanced their self-esteem. The structured routine, boundaries and rules of the programme created a safe and sensory environment that suited the children.

5.4.6 Objective 6: *To promote a sense of inclusion, participation, choice achievement and opportunity as a pathway to help alleviate isolation and enhance quality of life*

The programme design promoted participation opportunities for disabled children, their siblings and parents and as a result of the nature of the programme and method of delivery it produced a positive hugely reaction and noticeable development in the behaviour of children, markedly those who were autistic and those with learning disabilities. The programme gave them the chance to interact and engage with other people with similar issues, which resulted in enhanced self-esteem.

The programme in itself improved participants quality of life in that access to this type of activity was not available previously thus provided local disabled people key access to key services and lifestyles choices.

Efficiency in delivering project objectives

6.1 Introduction

This section gives a brief overview of the funding that was made available through Sport NI's Community Sport Programme and the efficiencies with which the money has been spent on achieving project objectives.

6.2 Budget and Analysis of Expenditure

Sport NI through its Community Sport Programme has supplied the financial resources to enable the Disability Sport and Sport for Older People programmes to be implemented throughout Omagh District Council area. Youth Sport Omagh also receive financial support to part fund a Community Sports Development Officer who is directly responsible for the delivery of the two programmes stated above. They also receive funding from Omagh District Council, Peace II, Co-Operation Ireland and the Foundation for Sport and the Arts to assist with the delivery of their overall programme.

In line with award guidelines the Centre Manager held a very tight control on the financial management of the funded project. The following table provides an up to date analysis on the financial budget of the project, the financial support from the Sport NI Community Sport Programme, the amount spent from the Youth Sport Omagh budget and the total amount spent on each particular element of the programme delivery.

The budget for the two programmes was funded as follows:

Community Sport Programme	£37,982
Youth Sport Omagh	£20,950
Combined Total Budget	£58,932

The breakdown of the expenditure breakdown over the three years was as follows:

	% of overall budget	Community Sport	Youth Sport Omagh	Combined total
Salary	41%	£15,699	£9,219	£24,918
Administration	8%	£3,042	£1,676	£4,718
Travel	4%	£1,368	£838	£2,206
Programme costs	27%	£10,316	£7,542	£17,858
Staff Development	4%	£1,444	£1,676	£3,120
Recruitment	5%	£1,881	-	£1,881
Project Evaluation	4%	£1,500	-	£1,500
Inclusive Community Coaching	7%	£2,732	-	£2,732
Total	100%	£37,982	£20,951	£58,933

There was a salary overspend of some £2,300. This was because the Community Sport budget allocated £416 towards the Community Sport Development Officer's salary which in actual fact grossed around a £1,000 per month. Youth Sport Omagh made up the deficit that was added to their budget of £18,650, which was their estimated contribution to the start of the programme. The Centre manager managed the budget.

Over a three-year period Sport NI provided funding totalling £37,982 to Youth Sport Omagh covering all aspects of the Community Sport provision. This award included a funding to conduct a post project evaluation as well as the delivery of an Inclusive Community Coaching programme. 27% of this funding (£10,316) was allocated to the programme delivery (incorporating both programmes). Youth Sport Omagh supplemented this by £7,542 making the total amount expended on programme delivery equate to £17,858. A significant portion (41%) of the total Sport NI award was allocated to the programme coordinator salary costs, which

equated to £15,699. Overall Sport NI provided 64% of the total programme budget with Youth Sport Omagh providing the remaining 36%.

Based on the number of participants involved throughout the three-year delivery period this programme investment equates to approximately £49.09 per participant (this figure excludes Sport NI's contribution of £2,732 to the Inclusive Community Coaching Programme).

6.3 Conclusion

This section provides information pertaining to the allocation of the Disability and Sport for Older People Programme budget and the efficiency with which it has been managed. The adjustment to the Community Sports Development Officer's salary resulted in an overspend of £2,300 over the three years, however this cost was incurred by Youth Sport Omagh directly through their agreed budgeted contribution.

Other Qualitative Findings from Consultation

7.1 Introduction

In addition to the aforementioned programme objectives, a number of observations were made that are important and should be considered as a future way forward for this and other community sport programmes. This focused on the following:

- Quality of Experience
- Programme Delivery
- Programme Development and Sustainability
- Marketing Profile
- Partnership Building

7.2 Quality of Experience

The Older People's sport participants welcomed the programme and the change it brought to their institutionalised lifestyle. It provided a new dynamic to their daily routine and gave them a new feeling of well being. The disability sport participants developed a greater awareness of theirs and others disabilities, which enhanced their interaction with their fellow peers.

7.3 Programme Delivery

The staff delivering the programme were knowledgeable, skilled, committed and created an interactive environment establishing a good working rapport with the participants who found the experience very enjoyable. The Youth Sport Centre management team also provided additional training opportunities (Sport for All Leader Award) for delivery staff, which not only assisted them to effectively facilitate the programme, but added to their coaching provision for the future.

7.4 Programme Development and Sustainability

The Youth Sport Omagh team have had the vision to plan for the future by providing appropriate, purpose built facilities and adequate programmes that positively impact the local community and wider Omagh area. Since the implementation of the three-year Community Sport Programme, they have been actively planning to take the concept to the next stage by seeking funding from the Reaching Communities Programme. This would enable them to introduce additional programmes on Ethnic Minorities and Women in Sport. There was a notable absence of female interest and enthusiasm in the programme delivery process. An increased gender mix in this area would add another dimension as well as improve the delivery process.

7.5 Marketing Profile

It is evident that in order to highlight the advantages and benefits that community sport programmes can bring to disadvantaged groups within the community, as well as promote these Youth Sport Omagh programme as examples of good practice greater emphasis should be placed on increasing their profile. A sports patron would certainly help to raise the profile. Sport Northern Ireland may be in a position to assist identifying a number of sports personnel who may be willing to become involved.

7.6 Partnership Building

The programme coordinator has developed many worthwhile and beneficial relationships with a range of organisations (Age Concern, Disability Sport NI etc), which have vastly improved the programme delivery. It is suggested however, that these relationships / partnerships be formalised and further developed which could lead to resource efficiencies by reducing duplication of services for example.

7.7 Conclusion

The above chapter gives some qualitative information on specific areas of the Disability Sport and Sport for Older People programme as agreed with the Youth Sport Omagh staff upon initiation of the evaluation. The above 5 areas are further discussed in the recommendations section (section 8).

Recommendations for the Development of Disability and Older People's Sport Programmes

8.1 Introduction

This section presents a number of recommendations, which have been based on the evidence gathered, and the interviews carried out throughout the duration of this project. Recommendations will be presented for each programme individually for the purposes of clarity.

8.2 Sport for Older People's Programme

8.2.1 Recommendation 1: Development of Long Term Programme

Youth Sport Omagh having completed a successful three-year programme should develop a more permanent programme that will engage a larger cross section of resident participants within Day Care provision in the Omagh catchment area. This could be achieved through securing extended or new public funding to continue and develop the programme or explore the possibility of securing mainstream funding from relevant Statutory providers. This will not only sustain physical activity among the older population but also continue to promote and increase levels of physical participation.

As such Youth Sport Omagh should continue to explore all avenues to secure the necessary funding, for example, Awards for All, Children in Need, Lloyds TSB and O2 funding streams. Additionally, Youth Sport Omagh should continue to build on the relationships developed to deliver this programme with a view to lobbying for mainstream support from for example, Sperrin and Lakeland Trust, Disability Sport NI and Age Concern.

8.2.2 Recommendation 2: Programme ownership

Now that the Day Care Centres have embraced the programme they should be encouraged to incorporate it permanently into their service provision. This would be an excellent selling point for their social care workers who promote elderly care among the aged who would qualify for day care residency. There would be no cost to Youth Sport Omagh in achieving this recommendation.

8.2.2 Recommendation 3: Staff training

This is an ideal opportunity to train additional Day Care Centre staff to deliver physical activity programmes for older people on a much larger scale. In addition to training, some Day Care Centre staff who could deliver a programme on site, extra coaches could be trained to deliver similar programmes to older people who do not require special care yet are able to use the Youth Sport Omagh facility. The estimated cost of building the capacity within the Day Care provision would be £500 per staff member.

8.2.3 Recommendation 4: Selective programme delivery

Day Care Centre managers agreed that to deliver a similar type programme would require a change from the day(s) on which it was previously delivered. This would provide an opportunity for a different group of residents to avail of a new and exhilarating experience. Also there should be a break in the programme so that residents can also have a break in continuity. This could also encourage an opportunity for establishing inter centre collaboration and sharing of activities.

8.3 Disability Sport Programme

8.3.1 Recommendation 1: Programme Leadership

A Sub Committee should be established to carry the momentum of the programme to the next stage. This will strengthen leadership and help provide needs training and mentoring. It will require additional representation from mental health groups, people with autism interests and local Council representatives to recognise the value of the work. The Sub Committee would give a broader representation of disability groups and could work alongside the Youth Sport

Omagh centre. The cost of establishing such a committee would be minimal but would require committee members to give of their time voluntarily, however a small budget of £250 per annum is suggested to facilitate meetings throughout the year.

8.3.2 Recommendation 2: Specialised training

The very competent Youth Sport Omagh centre staff could benefit through increased knowledge and awareness in such areas of autism, moving and handling and child protection. This would improve their confidence and further develop the Centres' programme service delivery. Training in such areas as deaf awareness, epilepsy and intimate training could be provided to parents to encourage more involvement. Some funding may be available from the Sperrin Lakeland Trust to help fund extra carers. The initial cost of delivering this objective is estimated at £150 per participant.

8.3.3 Recommendation 3: Enhance profile

Now that the programme has been delivered successfully the bar needs to be raised. A high profile Sports patron with a specialist interest in this area is required to be sourced and appointed. This patron will be responsible for highlighting and raising disability awareness and help capitalise on much needed resources and funding. The cost associated with securing the services of such an individual would be minimal however a small budget of approximately £250 per annum would be required for the patron's expenses.

8.3.4 Recommendation 4: Formation of a Club

The formation of a Disability Sports Club should be explored with a view to establishing a formal club. This Club could be based out of the Youth Sport Omagh Centre and would help address the equality issues, interest, knowledge and positive awareness towards disability. Consultation findings indicate that August would be an ideal time to establish this as it would receive substantial support from parents and children because of the parental availability and routine at this time of year. The cost of establishing a club of this nature would be in the region of £10,000, which would include coach development, coaching fees, facility hire, travel, equipment and insurance cover.

8.3.5 Recommendation 5: Programme ownership

In tandem with the Sport for Older People programme the Youth Sport Omagh Centre should incorporate a disability programme within its own centre programme. A Saturday morning would ensure parental support and an opportunity for greater usage. Consultation has also highlighted demand to deliver a disability programme for the older people. As such it would be worthwhile devising and delivering a pilot targeting this population. The cost associated with this provision would be approximately £7,000 per annum.

8.4 Conclusion

The following recommendations were based on comments and evidence that was collected during the consultation and research gathering. Based on best practice and experience of Community Sports Development the consultants have identified five recommendations for the Disability Sport Programme and four for the Sport for Older People Programme that the staff and Management Committee of Youth Sport Omagh as well as Sport NI should give due consideration to regarding the future of the respective programmes.

Conclusion

9.1 Conclusion

9.1.1 Sport for Older People Programme

The Sport for Older People Programme successfully achieved its objectives within its set target group. Participation increased 200% from year one and it had much benefits for the participants. It added a new dimension to their lifestyle and created a sense of enjoyment and well being to their lives. It encouraged and promoted a social mix that did not previously exist. Further financial investment is essential to sustain physical activity opportunities for older people. Without it, the social and health experience afforded to this section of the community will have been wasted.

9.1.2 Disabled Sport Programme

The programme was based locally and delivered in a safe and secure environment. It was planned, supervised and delivered with care and expertise. The staff were knowledgeable, experienced and exercised patience and understanding of the hearing, impaired and visual needs of the participants. The activities were enjoyed individually and collectively and improved the children's communications skills, developed peer friendships and peer support. New interests and skills were developed in areas of art, painting and creative drama and dance. Development was age appropriate. There was a dependency on volunteers due to the nature of the programme.

However, if this programme is to be sustainable, a consistency of approach is necessary through more committed leaders. There was a perception from some families that the service was one sided in the community, (a perception of a nationalist centre). It is important to note that this may be due to the location of the Centre and not the impression given by staff and programme deliverers. As such this may be overcome through positive marketing and promotions of the Centre as being open and accessible to all sections of the community.

The precedent has been set. A programme of this nature needs continuity and permanency. There is a desire that it happens again and it will be disappointing if it does not happen given the impetus that has been initiated. The opportunity has been provided to young people with a disability to engage in activities that have helped their self-development, improve their self-esteem and enhanced their health and well being. It would be detrimental if this opportunity were no longer available in the future.

In order to achieve this the Youth Sport Omagh team have proactively attempted to build relationships and partnerships with a range of organisations including Omagh District Council, the Sperrin and Lakeland Trust and Disability Sport NI as a means of sustaining this provision. To date this has generated some limited success but not to the required level.

Overall, the programme is totally reliant on public funding and should that cease the programme would find it difficult to continue - it is for this reason alone that careful consideration should be given to future funding based on the wide ranging benefits linked to the delivery of the programmes as detailed in this evaluation.