

## **Us Girls Melksham pilot – summary of a successful programme**

### **Briefing Note No. 25 - 10**

**Service:** Leisure, Culture & Communities

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#### **Introduction**

Wiltshire Council has published an impact report on the outcomes and achievements of its recent Us Girls programme pilot in Melksham. The full report has been enclosed with this briefing note but here is a summary of this successful project.

#### **Background**

Research indicates that teenage girls are less likely to meet daily physical activity guidelines, largely due to a combination of social, psychological, and environmental challenges. Closing this gap calls for targeted approaches that create inclusive, supportive, and empowering spaces where girls feel motivated to stay active.

Therefore, Us Girls created welcoming, safe spaces where young women could thrive through sport and physical activity. With a focus on breaking down barriers and closing the gender activity gap, tailored sessions were provided with the aim of inspiring confidence and fostering connection.

Melksham Town Council successfully secured Area Board funding to host a wide range of activities for young people over the recent summer holidays. Most of these activities were offered free of charge and held at King George V Park in the heart of Melksham. The town council awarded £500 to support the project, contributing to the cost of providers, facilities, and promotional materials.

Wiltshire Council connected with local providers and clubs to develop a tailored programme of summer activities, carefully shaped around the preferences highlighted by some of the teenage girls engaged in its Doorstep Sports Club programme and through targeted interventions in the local secondary school.

The council also saw an opportunity to help the girls build positive social connections and friendships after the sessions, adding an extra layer of support to encourage their continued participation in future activities. To support this, the council added extra time at the end of each session for the girls to relax, chat, and socialise in a safe and welcoming environment.

A range of sessions to help the participants be more active and to support positive mental health were provided, including:

- Girls rugby with the Fawns Melksham RFC
- Boxercise with Energym
- DanceFit with Wiltshire Inclusive Dance
- Mindfulness and meditation with MindCraft
- Jujitsu with Grace Barra Melksham
- Spin and gym at Melksham Community Campus

## Outcomes

The programme proved to be successful in terms of the number of people that participated and the positive impact on attendees.

In summary:

- Fifty-nine attendances across the sessions
- Four participants with SEND
- Two participants now volunteering at Wiltshire Inclusive activities
- Thirty-one per cent of attendees from Quintile 1 communities
- All participants rated their experiences of the programme as eight out of 10, with 83% saying it's inspired them to be more physically active
- All of the participants listed at least one activity in the programme that they would like to try again or take up as a regular hobby

Testimonials and further outcomes, including constructive feedback on how to make the programme even better can be found in the report

## More information and next steps

The council's Sport & Physical Activity team's objective is to ensure everyone can be active, with a particular focus on audiences that face the greatest barriers to participation. Us Girls provides a welcoming and supportive space for young women to be active, and the team are keen to build on a positive first delivery project by bringing Us Girls to other Wiltshire communities. The team will be presenting to partners in December's Town and Parish Council meeting, with the aim of identifying new partnerships and opportunities to develop activities for women and girls in local areas across the county.

Having read the impact report, if you want more information on the programme, please don't hesitate to email [daniel.harvey@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:daniel.harvey@wiltshire.gov.uk).

For more information on other activities the council provides for young people across the county please visit [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/leisure-activities-for-young-people](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/leisure-activities-for-young-people)