

RETINKING SPORT FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS - CLUBWORKS PILOT

JANUARY - JUNE 2017



RETINKING SPORT FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS – CLUBWORKS PILOT IMPACT REPORT 2017

Background

In January 2017 London Sport and Women in Sport partnered to create a new offer for the ClubWorks programme. Over a six-month period selected clubs took part in a bespoke programme of activity, designed to help clubs engage women and girls in sport more effectively and provide positive experiences.

Below outline the sessions that were delivered and the outcomes that were achieved through each session:

Session	Focus	Outcome
Session 1: January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims of the programme • Challenges and success within club environments • Women in Sport research and how tools can be utilised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan of action per club for the upcoming month • Understanding of the pilot, the club's role and involvement • Clubs have an overview of Women in Sport, available resources • Understanding of challenges clubs face?
Session 2: February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing Understanding Women's Lives research (2013) and application examples • Activities to explore methods for activation within individual club environments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better understanding of using a value led approach to engaging women and girls • Plan of action per club for the upcoming month • Best practice examples shared
Session 3: March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-to-One session in club environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up from sessions 1 and 2 • Identification of areas of support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan of action per club for the upcoming month • Better understanding of individual club context
Session 4: April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing What Sways Women to Play Sport? 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better understanding of utilising role models and influencers to engage women and girls • Plan of action per club for the upcoming month
Session 5: May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-to-One session in club environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up from sessions 2 and 3 • Identification of areas of support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan of action per club for the upcoming month • Individual clubs received support in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective participant consultation • Social Media • Sustainability planning
Session 6: June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections • Pilot evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan of action per club for the upcoming month

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of club experience through the pilot • Overview of journey travel identified per club
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The overarching programme aims were as follows:

- For all partners to gain a greater understanding of the successes and challenges London clubs face in engaging women and girls in activity
- For Women in Sport to share research and embed learning across all clubs involved in the programme
- To develop realistic action plans with all clubs to direct and support the application of research
- To test new ways of working in a range of environments across London
- To find out what women and girls want from clubs in the capital and how provision can be more effectively aligned
- To develop and share case studies of clubs showcasing good practice as a result of the programme.

The following section will examine the how effective Women in Sport were at achieving these.

Evaluation and learnings

For all partners to gain a greater understanding of the successes and challenges London clubs face in engaging women and girls in activity

Women in Sport and London Sport aimed to gather insight into the challenges different settings in London were facing. Through information, conversation and the video case study this has been achieved.

Working closely with this small number of clubs has highlighted a number of challenges for those operating in London. The range of organisations represented within this pilot suggested that these challenges are different for each setting and a club centered approach is essential to overcoming them.

There was already some excellent practice going on in these clubs and a good level of awareness around the differences between male and female sports provision. For example, one club was very aware of having the 'right' deliverer for sessions however they were less sure of how to find out what that looked like. For Women in Sport this was a key learning, understanding the level of knowledge and standard of existing provision and tailoring a programme of support to raise that.

For Women in Sport to share research and embed learning across all clubs involved in the programme

We held two workshop style sessions that focused on Women in Sport's research reports, Understanding Women's Lives and What Sways Women to Play Sport. All clubs attended the workshops and engaged with it to differing degrees. For example all of the clubs have now consulted in a variety of ways with women and girls to understand motivations and values as highlighted in Understanding Women's Lives.

The clubs felt having the insight summarised for them was useful, but they would have liked deeper knowledge for different target groups given to them, for example, the dominant values for certain age

groups or cultural backgrounds. Although this is a valid suggestion the reality is that insight is nuanced to each group, so encouraging the clubs to gather their own insight is a much better approach for them to take.

The clubs felt that more case studies and examples of how other clubs are applying the insight would be useful and give more ideas for practical application. But it was recognised that the theoretical knowledge was particularly valuable when applying for funding.

It was suggested that groups could be engaged in the topic ahead of the workshop to make the conversation richer, they also suggested that a refresh of the insight during each session would help to keep it front of mind and focus their thinking.

One club that was particularly male dominated commented that it was challenging to share the insight as there was a feeling that the others in the club did not understand the issues, making it difficult to embed the learnings. They felt that case studies, practical examples or having more attendees per organisation would help to make a stronger case.

In other clubs, the individual attending the session was also the lead within the club and therefore did not need to bring others along on the journey with them. It is therefore important to give consideration to the culture of the wider club. There is potentially a need to engage with wider members, or to support an individual with tools to internally advocate.

To develop realistic action plans with all clubs to direct and support the application of research

The action plans were a key tool to the continuity of the project, and the clubs liked the approach of focusing on one topic at a time, which they felt helped with clarifying their outcomes.

It was evident that some clubs were taking action between sessions. The hockey club for example, went through a steady journey, consulting with their teams to identify how their approach needed to adapt, recruiting resource to be able to achieve that and in the final session looking at how they could share their successes in their communications.

There were some challenges for other clubs where they needed to adjust their action plan as time progressed and would have liked support to be able to do that. Women in Sport resource was available between sessions however over the six months there were only two contacts out of sessions. The attendees said they forgot that they could contact the Women in Sport team for further support and advice. It is therefore important for future projects that attendees are regularly reminded of this option, and potentially examples given of how this support could be used.

It was also noted that if action plans weren't completed in the sessions then clubs didn't prioritise this afterwards.

“you tend to forget some of the learnings and struggle to find the time to do it outside of session”

Future sessions could therefore include time to update the action plans at the end.

To test new ways of working in a range of environments across London

The six clubs selected to take part in the pilot were very diverse both in terms of their setting and their target demographic, from traditional sports clubs through community groups to commercial sports leagues. This allowed a great deal of learning for London Sport and Women in Sport however the clubs felt that this meant it was hard to take transferable learnings from the sessions as the context was too different.

In terms of testing a new approach, the short time scales created a challenge for the clubs. The action plans helped them to consider what was achievable, however there was a feeling of little progress until the final reflection session where it was evident some momentum was gathering. Frenford club reported back that in the final month they had entered three new teams into the Youth Games and had two new adult boot camps starting for parents, this had happened 6 months into the project demonstrating the time required to develop an approach and then create action as a result.

To find out what women and girls want from clubs in the capital and how provision can be more effectively aligned

All of the clubs saw the value in consulting with their audience, and commented that they would continue to do so after the pilot had come to an end. They recognised that it was time consuming, but clubs discovered face to face was the most effective way of getting engagement.

Dao Lu responded to the insight they had gathered that demonstrated their members wanted more of a social element to the sessions. A volunteer was appointed to facilitate this and then used to continue that consultation process feeding back to the decision makers on key topics or issues.

Women in Sport and London Sport didn't have a mechanism in place to capture the insight that clubs were collecting, so are not able to feed this into any bigger picture learning. This is because of the bespoke nature each club adapted to consult with their women and girls would have been challenging to consolidate. A possible solution to this would be to suggest or offer templates for clubs to adopt giving a consistent data set when amalgamated.

To develop and share case studies of clubs showcasing good practice as a result of the programme

The clubs all liked the idea of both contributing to a case study and learning from them. They have all engaged in the filming for a video case study being managed by London Sport. This is due to be released at the beginning of August 2017.

The clubs also felt there was more to be done to facilitate good practice sharing between the clubs and suggested a forum to discuss ideas among clubs virtually. Weekly email updates prompted by Women in Sport was felt to be a good facilitation method.

The clubs also commented that a template that clubs complete would be helpful to share their successes across the Clubworks network.

Other feedback from the clubs;

It was felt that being able to say they were involved in a Women in Sport project enabled them to demonstrate to their team that they were committed to supporting women and providing equal opportunities to take part.

OUTCOMES

Across the clubs there have been a range of outcomes (detailed below), from increases in participation and the formation of new teams to better engagement of volunteers and workforce and importantly clubs moving to a woman and girl centred approach with strong and regular consultation of their audience.

Frenford Club

- Increase from three to 12 participants in girls football and being able to enter them into Youth Games
- Increase from one to two girls basketball sessions with aspirations to enter them into local competition
- Increase from one adult boot camp to two sessions engaging 10 -15 participants each.
- Awareness of the importance of marketing and understanding what girls want from their sessions

Bexleyheath and Belvedere Hockey Club

From a starting point of low moral and risk of removing teams from league structure due to low numbers, an aging team and poor club committee engagement to:

- Structured and stable club structure for 2017-18 season, including a female club captain and three enthusiastic team captains.
- Momentum and ambition both in terms of performance and to grow participation in the club.
- Eight new players
- The attendee has become the Club Captain to ensure that she can continue to make positive changes to women and girls provision

Motivate Hounslow

- Deeper understanding of the need to consult with your audience and engage a number of influencers to achieve behaviour change in girls participation.
- Developed realistic expectations around the numbers of girls participating and the time it takes to grow those.
- Developed a successful partnership with a college who are running gym sessions with ten girls attending and an aspiration to engage girls from health and beauty courses and Asian women.

Dao Lu

- Reassured that their approach is appropriate and confident in future ability to deliver to women
- Awareness of research and how to access it
- Consultation mechanism for members through social volunteer

Play Netball

- Focused marketing strategy which speaks to key values
- Recruited two new volunteers (social organisers)
- Confidence in consulting with participants and developing a relationship with them
- Confident in leveraging influencers to engage women in netball – turned around difficult relationships with unreliable umpires.

Summary and Recommendations

Overall the pilot has been successful, with all of the project aims met to some degree. As demonstrated in the outcomes above there has been an increase in participation by women and girls in the clubs and a change in approach taken by the clubs to engaging women and girls.

All the clubs were positive about their involvement and five out of the six clubs recruited had good engagement across the six months. There was an appreciation for the value in being involved in a female focused project as it helped demonstrate an organisational commitment to gender diversity.

The resource required to deliver these outcomes however has been significant and with these learnings a 'lighter touch' approach could be trialled to achieve a greater return on investment for both the clubs and partners.

The importance of clubs consulting with their women and girls has been evident and for most of the clubs this has been an action they can take with a tangible outcome. This element is important to keep in any future iterations of this pilot.

It was also clear that a good understanding of Women in Sports research along with examples of how to apply it was important to clubs being able to action the learnings. There were a number of suggestions of tools that could be created to support this, including; consultation tools, case study templates, networking and practice sharing forums which could be taken forward into future projects.

"I really enjoyed being part of the project and looked forward to the monthly meetings. I feel like it helped us develop so much and kick started us to branch out. Such a shame that it has to come to an end but if you run anything that we could be involved in in the future please let me know. We'd like to continue our relationship with Women in Sport" Play Netball – Clubworks Club