

Sport NI

Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council have been running a 12- week Glow Sports Programme for young girls aged 8-13. The initiative of the programme is to inspire girls to be more active in a fun and creative way. It includes physical activity sessions as well as educational workshops and fun activities. Some of educational workshops have shown the girls elements of first aid, self- defence and focused on mental health. The physical activities, delivered by Every Body Active 2020 coach, Kirsty, have been a variety of Glow Netball/Dodgeball and Dance. There are many benefits of using the Glow factor, it can be exciting and different but it also can eliminate self-consciousness and some barriers that young girls may feel when participating sport.

Female Sports Forum Active, Fit and Sporty Awards

The Active, Fit and Sporty framework specifically targets the development of female focused campaigns, projects and programmes in four key areas of;

- Media
- Leadership
- Role Models
- Research and Evaluation

The Active, Fit and Sporty Awards celebrated the work that has been done in these areas. Our guests included Minister for Communities Deirdre Hargey MLA, Erin McConnell (triathlete and Female Sports Forum Ambassador), Bethany Firth (4-time Paralympic medallist), Leah McCourt (MMA Champion and first female to headline Bellator Europe) and Hannah Shields (explorer).

Award Winners:

- Champion School Award- St. Louise's College, Belfast
- Rising Star Award- Rachel McCune (ITF Taekwondo)
- Male Ally Award- Adekanmi Abayomi (EMSONI)
- Research Award- Grainne Donnelly (female pelvic health)
- Community Sport Champion Award- WISPA
- NGB Champion Award- RYA NI
- Leadership Award- Rebecca Hillis (Killicomaine Junior High School)
- Inspiring Young Person Award- Chloe Jones (Youth Sport Trust)
- Media Award- Electric Ireland (IFA)
- Role Model Award- Katie Mullan (Hockey Ireland)

Participation Survey 2019 Insight Report

Sport Northern Ireland as the leading public body for the development of sport in Northern Ireland are passionate about maximising the power of sport to change lives. The Women and Girls: Active, Fit and Sporty strategic framework, was launched in 2016 which aimed to work strategically with a wide range of partners and stakeholders to raise the profile of women and girls in sport and physical activity.

In planning for the future, Sport Northern Ireland with our Active, Fit and Sporty partners undertook a consultation process focusing on women and girls in sport and physical activity. We wanted to know how best we as an organisation, in conjunction with our partners, and the wider public could encourage more females to take part and flourish in all aspects of sport whether this be as; a participant, volunteer, coach or leader, high performing athlete or an employee working in the area of sport or physical activity.

A total of 1,102 participants completed the survey, with 96% of respondents being female and the largest number of responses came from people aged between 35 and 44 at 32%.

From the findings of this survey the following recommendations have been made to assist the future planning for those engaged in the provision of opportunities for women and girls sport and/or physical activity:

- More Mental health wellbeing/Body Image Interventions
- More visible role models at all levels of participation
- Sports Clubs at social and recreational level
- Development of inclusive and accessible facilities

Female Sports Forum

The Female Sports Forum has had a very busy couple of months. We have delivered two nutrition workshops with underage squad players, and one body image workshop with the same target audience.

We have also delivered social media workshops across Northern Ireland- on cultural change and on the skills needed to use the platforms efficiently. Improvement of websites and social media platforms is essential to increase the visibility of role models and opportunities for participation. Feedback showed that tailoring these workshops to individual organisations needs really improved the capacity for learning in one session.

Committee and board training has also been carried out regionally; with the aim to increase female representation on committees and boards. Feedback showed that this was very beneficial and it created a safe space for learning to take place.

The Female Sports Forum also hosted their first Ambassador Training with 10 athletes and their mentors attending. The athletes came from a range of sports, including, Angling, Climbing, Camogie and Weightlifting. Workshops included a leadership and resilience session and a social media session. Triathlete Erin McConnell and the IFAs Women's Domestic Football Manager and ex-international player Gail Redmond spoke about balancing life around sport and preparing to transition out of sport respectively.

Our Leadership Programme has seen 3 groups complete training. We have had a Sport Leaders UK Level 2 and Level 3 group, which aimed to improve coaching skills and confidence in women beginning their coaching careers. A group of governing body representatives also completed a Leadership Development Programme which aimed to improve the confidence of females already working within governing bodies and to create a network of women in Ulster. One participant told us that this is the best course she has ever done and another said the tutors were very inspirational.

Throughout March we will be running Come and Try Events regionally in Northern Ireland to encourage females to explore other options to get involved in physical activity.