Sport RCT

Case Study

Getting adults more active - Dark in the Park Pontypridd

We started Dark in the Park Pontypridd in January 2019 in partnership with Newydd Housing. The project aimed to increase usage of the park and provide a safe environment for running during the winter months. It initially targeted non-runners, but sessions attracted a mix of running abilities, from beginners to regular runners.

To make the project sustainable we asked volunteers to train as run leaders. 12 volunteers were trained initially, and they began delivering the sessions each week. Since 2019 we have trained an additional 6 volunteers to support the sessions.

The sessions are still running and take place every Wednesday in Ynysangharad War Memorial Park. Over 200 sessions have been delivered and in total, 240 different people have engaged with the sessions. The leaders structure the sessions with various groups for different abilities, ensuring that all runners have support and safety, and no one is left to run on their own. Many of the participants have progressed from non-runners to regular runners completing 5ks, 10ks and even half marathons. A lot of the group members regularly attend Pontypridd parkrun which takes place in the same park.

The group is about more than just running, it provides participants with an opportunity to get outdoors in a safe environment, enjoy some 'me time', discover a new passion, meet new people and get fit.

> *"I just love it. The ethos, the support, the inclusivity, the acceptance, the warm welcome, the individuals involved & the park. I attend most weeks."*
>
> *"I've made loads of new friends. I have confidence in my body that I didn't have before. It makes me feel so happy and is the highlight of my week. Every time I run, I am amazed how good it feels - the encouragement the leaders give really spurs me on."*

240 participants engaged

94% are now more active, more often

100% intend to continue taking part in physical activity

100% feel healthier

100% feel more confident

18 volunteers trained

100% feel happier

100% made new friends

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