



Case study of establishing a new club- Aireborough Community TTC

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Work to establish a new club began in April 2015 as part of the Leeds Priority Zone project. An audit of existing clubs in the city highlighted the need for a more extensive offer especially in north west Leeds. Research and insight in conjunction with the local authority highlighted that the excellent social demographics and the lack of other council sports facilities locally should ensure the sustainability of a new club in this area. The existing facilities at the Aireborough council leisure centre also had capacity to offer Table Tennis and saw this as an opportunity to grow their customer base.

The Leeds Priority Zone budget was used to supply six new tables to the Leisure Centre and two further tables were sourced from the Leeds League. Barriers, bats and balls were also purchased with the agreement to establish two new sessions- A Wednesday evening open coached session to be funded through the Priority Zone and a Friday lunchtime over 50's session to be incorporated in the existing council 'Active Lives' programme. A preferential hall hire rate was negotiated in return for supplying the new equipment. The new sessions were advertised via the council Facebook page, in local publications and flyers in local supermarkets etc.

Although the growth of core participants was slow (especially the Friday lunchtime one) numbers were sufficient to continue and eventually a position has been reached where both sessions are usually full to capacity. The Friday lunchtime Active Life session is now regularly attracting over 30 players. I believe a key element to this was keeping the 'coached offer' as an option. Regular questionnaires were given out to participants asking what they wanted from the sessions which led to the sessions being divided into those that just wanted a recreational play opportunity and those wanting to gain new skills.

Links to local schools were also established through three Satellite sessions at local secondary schools and also

a Primary School offer including free taster sessions and a Butterfly Skills Festival . A productive link has also been established with the local methodist church who have become part of the Bat and Chat programme which has led to several new players attending the Aireborough sessions. They have also offered the use of the church hall to host local league matches for free. We also used an annual Ping! Leeds event in nearby Otley to give out club flyers which had a positive impact on attracting new members.

The club is now self sufficient from a funding perspective and has registered to be a Premier Club. They have a fully functioning committee and are entering teams in the Leeds League . A small grants application is also being submitted to help support the next phase of development which will include linking with a GP referral scheme and an initiative with a local Scout and Guide group.



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