

Young Women, Physical
Activity &
Competitive Sport

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Research Project:
**Young Women, Physical Activity &
Competitive Sport**

Report Commissioned by
Staffordshire Youth and Community Service

Delivered by
Wider Impact Consultancy
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1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

With particular regard to the situation in Staffordshire, the aim of the research has been to respond to anecdotal evidence and articles in national media that the involvement of young women in physical activity and sport is in decline.

1.2 Objectives

The key objectives of the commission have been to:

- form an understanding of the involvement of young women aged 13 to 19 in physical activity in the national context
- gain a greater understanding of the particular issues facing young women in Staffordshire
- learn from partners and other agencies with respect to successful engagement of young women in sport and physical activity
- to produce a report evaluating the current position and suggesting the way forward

1.3 Our Approach

We have used a number of research approaches, which have included detailed desk research and intensive field research to gain an in-depth understanding of the facts, that include making informed recommendations on the way forward.

1.4 Our Findings

Based on research, findings are presented under a number of key headings:

1. The national situation
2. The situation in Staffordshire
3. Lessons learnt
4. The way forward

National

It is apparent that young people **are** becoming less active; and this is particularly so in relation to young girls / women. Outcomes are including an unfit and unhealthy society, with the cost of a lack of physical activity in England alone estimated at **£8.2billion** each year. As concerning is a rise in resultant obesity levels, which if they continue at current rates, could cost the UK **£46billion** by 2050.

Staffordshire

Girl's involvement in physical activity being in decline is **no different** in Staffordshire than the picture nationally. Indeed the problem seems to be more pronounced in Staffordshire. For example, in Stoke in Trent, just **29%** of adults take part in 30 minutes of physical activity, compared with an English average of **36%**. In Staffordshire **32.6%** of children are classified as overweight or obese, compared with an English average of **20.4%** for boys and **17%** for girls.

It is particularly noticeable that there are a number of key issues to address in relation to Asian girls / young women. Due mainly to cultural beliefs and restraints, Asian young women's access to physical activity is noticeably more problematic than that of non-Asian / Muslim young women.

Research is also indicating that bisexuality and transsexuality are underrepresented in sport research and policy. Whilst there is a basic awareness among stakeholders that there are issues relating to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people that have to do with participation, discrimination and homophobia in sport, there is a lack of expertise to do what is required to address them.

It is also apparent that children victim to child poverty and social exclusion can lack the resources and capability to access facilities others may take for granted.

Lessons Learnt

A number of key issues have been noted that will inform the way forward:

1. It is apparent that on the whole, the majority of girls / young women in Staffordshire (as they are nationally), are less positive about 'sport' than physical activity, and are more concerned about **choice**, having '**fun**', **being with friends**, and **enjoying sport**, rather than competition.
2. There is also a noticeable lack of appropriate visual and written / promotional information relating to the benefits of exercise, physical activity and healthy living in general; with particular regard to information targeted specifically at Staffordshire girls / young women of all faiths and backgrounds.
3. Whilst sporting stars such as Jessica Ennis may be the 'faces of the Olympics', research indicates that the use of such case studies may not have a significant positive effect on girls and young women, who appear to see them as '*remote stars*' and who, for a number of reasons, they feel they are unlikely to emulate.
4. There is room for improvement for key stakeholders to:
 - a. Work strategically and locally in partnership.
 - b. Agree objectives that include improving the participation of girls / young women in **physical activity**; and tackle key related issues such as **excessive weight** and **obesity**.

1.5 Recommendations

The following strategic recommendations are tendered:

1. Staffordshire Youth and Community Service share the findings of this report with all key stakeholders, which should include statutory agencies / departments, and representatives of appropriate clubs, organisations and the private [fitness] sector.
2. Key stakeholders should meet and agree to share an **urgent** commitment to **work in partnership** to share and pool resources and expertise to:
 - a. Improve the participation of girls / young women in physical activity
 - b. Tackle key related issues such as excessive weight and obesity


3. Strategies should include a recognition that girls / young women's involvement in physical activity will, on the whole, be enhanced by the involvement of friends and peers, and should be:
 - a. Fun
 - b. Not always competitive
 - c. Accessible
 - d. Affordable
 - e. Locally marketed / publicised
4. Multi-agency systems should be in place to support and direct those girls / young women who display evidence of sporting talent, or a desire to become involved in [competitive] sporting activities to specialist agencies, clubs and trainers / mentors; ensuring that their enjoyment and successes in sport can be fulfilled and recognised.
5. There should be a commitment to ensure that no groups or individuals are marginalised due to age, gender, race, culture, sexuality or economic situation.
6. Further Staffordshire research is carried out to gain a more in-depth understanding of the needs and aspirations of potentially marginalised groups or individuals, with aims that include enhancing their accessibility to physical activities / sport.

1.6 Conclusion

To do nothing is clearly not an option, as in addition to failing to support today's young people, inactivity of the young risks the health and well-being of future generations; and the public purse as organisations such as the NHS pick up the [£46billion] bill treating associated illness and consequences such as an unfit and obese society.

2.0 Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the many individuals and agencies, who have assisted in the production of this report, who include:

- girls / young women living and residing in Staffordshire during the research period
- current and potential stakeholder members / representatives
- research associate **Daniel Ortiz**, **Core Consultancy & Research** 
- researcher **Elizabeth Day** (Staffordshire University / Intern, Wider Impact Consultancy)
- researched authors / organisations

3.0 Terms of Reference

3.1 Introduction

The aim of the research has been to respond to a statement by the commissioner that, *'anecdotal evidence and articles in national media that the involvement of young women in physical activity and sport is in decline. Staffordshire Youth and Community Service (SYCS) provides holistic services to young people that include physically challenging activities in order to promote physical and mental health, and encourage socialisation through teamwork and competition. It is our belief that physical activity and sport are crucial to young peoples' development and, by not delivering these activities equally across genders, our service delivery is potentially at odds with equalities legislation'*.

3.2 Project Brief

The objectives of the commission are to:

- form an understanding of the involvement of young women aged 13 to 19 in physical activity in the national context
- gain a greater understanding of the particular issues facing young women in Staffordshire
- learn from partners and other agencies with respect to successful engagement of young women in sport and physical activity
- to produce a report evaluating the current position and suggesting the way forward

4.0 Methodology

4.1 Introduction

It has been agreed with the commissioner that, as far as feasible, the focus of the research should be direct contact with the target group; Staffordshire based young women aged 13 to 19 years.

4.2 Desk Research

We have taken due note of recent relevant research that includes:

- **Staffordshire Childhood Healthy Weight Strategy**, 2011 – 2013
- **Stoke on Trent Health Profile**, 2011
- ***Why Do Children Take Part In, and Remain Involved in Sport? A Literature Review and Discussion of Implications for Sports Coaches***, International Journal of Coaching Science, Volume 1; No. 1, 2013
- ***Changing the Game for Girls***, Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation
- ***Creating a Nation of Active Women***, Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation, A Framework for Change
- ***Understanding Participation in Sport: What Determines Sports Participation Among 15-19 Year Old Women?*** Sport England, January 2006
- ***Exploring Opportunities and Barriers in Staffordshire for the Participation of High School Girls in Competitive Football***, Ross Edwards, Staffordshire University Faculty of Health, Sport & Exercise, April 2011
- ***It's Time, Future Forecasts for Women's Participation in Sport and Exercise***, Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation
- ***A Review of Sexual Orientation in Sport***, Sport Scotland Research Report No. 114, 2008

We have also taken due note of:

- **Staffordshire Youth and Community Service Informal Education Curriculum**, May 2011
- **Staffordshire Youth and Community Service Delivery Plan 2012 – 2013**
- **Staffordshire Youth and Community Service document, ‘Towards a Young Person’s Service Outcomes Measuring Framework’**
- **Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent document, ‘About Us’**
- **Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Annual Report 2011 – 2013**

4.3 Field Research

Field research has been detailed and varied, and as highlighted above has focussed on reaching as many young women as feasible from the target group. Research tools have included:

- **Questionnaires** – Featured at [Appendix A](#), we have utilised a short questionnaire, which has aimed to extract the maximum amount of information and data. The questionnaire was deliberately limited to two pages and offers a £25.00 ‘reward’ for completion in the form of a random prize draw.

Our experience in the use of such self-completion surveys has proved that a maximum of two pages, which ensures that interest is retained, and a potential reward is cost and time effective; and results in an impressive return rate. On the whole, questionnaires were randomly distributed by members of our research team and Youth Workers from the north, centre and south of the County of Staffordshire. Completed questionnaires were handed back to distributors, and forwarded to Wider Impact Consultancy in confidential envelopes for independent analysis.

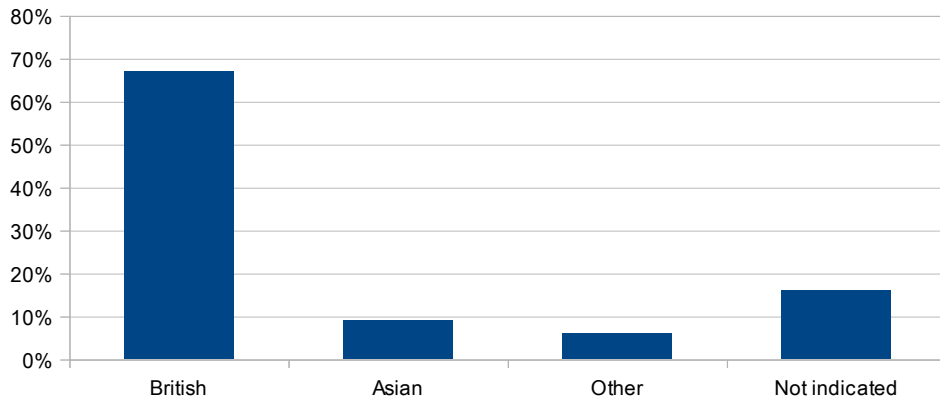
226 questionnaires were received for analysis:

- **5** were excluded due to the age of respondents being over 19 years
- **67%** British (includes Staffordshire University Students / members of Stafford Women’s Football team)

- **9%** Asian (includes Staffordshire University Students)
- **6%** members of Stafford Women's Football team
- **13%** Staffordshire University Students
- **6%** 'other' (e.g. EU ethnicity)
- **16%** not indicated
- **32%** North of the County
- **33%** Centre of the County
- **30%** South of the County

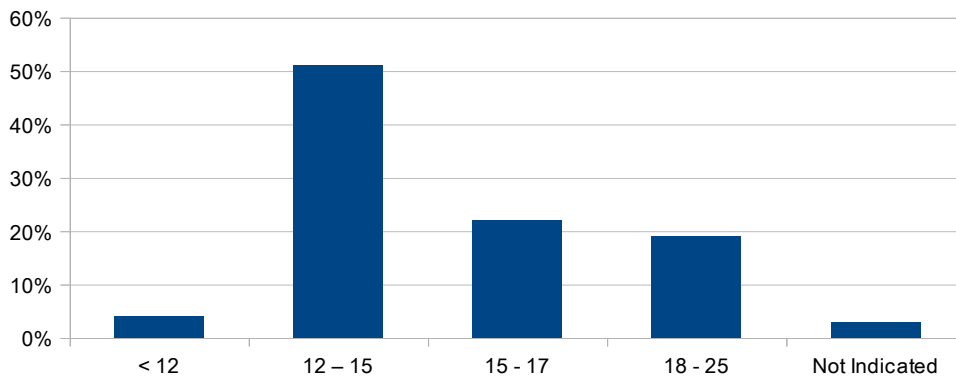
Graph 1 highlights respondent's ethnic backgrounds.

Graph 1 Analysed Questionnaires



Graph 2 highlights respondent's age groups.

Graph 2 Age Groups



We also targeted the questionnaire at a number of [10 male and female] Staffordshire Youth and Community Service Youth Workers to seek and compare their responses to those of the target group.

- **Workshops**

Five workshops were hosted and facilitated by Wider Impact Consultancy:

- Chesterton Youth Centre (North) – target group
- Lichfield Youth Centre (Central) – target group
- Burton on Trent Youth Centre (South) – Asian women only, aged 14 to 30 years
- Stafford Town Community Football Club (Girls and Ladies Section) – target group
- Staffordshire Youth and Community Service Youth Workers

As highlighted at [Appendix B](#), the key research tool at the workshops was the use of individually completed and collated *Post-It* notes in response to a number of set questions. Each workshop ended with a plenary session / discussion, which included open debate and exploring key issues raised by delegates.

- **Telephone Survey**

We have carried out a telephone survey, contacting **15** Staffordshire based organisations / clubs, utilising a structured set of questions highlighted at [Appendix C](#). Exercise / sport on offer from the organisations / clubs includes, tennis, boxing, martial arts, netball, outdoor pursuits, diving, skiing, Zumba, 'Caveman' training and body image.

- **Multi-Agency Meetings**

We have met on a one to one basis with representatives of a number of Staffordshire based organisations:

- Staffordshire Youth and Community Service – Managers / front-line Youth Workers
- Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent
- Sport England
- Staffordshire Football Association

- Chesterton Community Sports College
- Stafford Town Community Football Club
- **Observations**

Utilising our experience of carrying out observational studies, we have maintained an observational approach during all meetings, workshops, events and site meetings carried out in relation to the commission.

5.0 Desk Research

5.1 Introduction

Whilst there are numerous sources of research relating to young people and sport / physical activity (see **Section 5.4**), we have taken due note of recent relative research, which we feel adds direct value to the commission; with a focus on directing field research to challenge findings, and where appropriate, to fill in identified gaps. This has been particularly so in relation to Asian girls / young women.

5.2 Young People's Health & Well-Being

We have taken the opportunity to highlight key statistics and information from the **National Child Measuring Programme**. By year 6 (10 to 11 years):

- In England, **20.4%** of boys and **17.0%** of girls are classified as obese
- In Staffordshire as a whole, **32.6%** of children are classified as overweight or obese
- In Stoke-on-Trent, about **21.6%** of children are classified as obese

Research clearly highlights that obesity is almost entirely preventable, and is caused by an imbalance between energy intake and energy output. Recent rapid growth in childhood obesity has demonstrated that causes are due to behavioural and environmental factors.

The reasons for these changes in diet and activity levels are complex, with many differing factors playing a part. These include:

- Cultural and individual behaviour – as family patterns of eating, cooking and physical activity are determined by levels of knowledge, attitude and behavioural influences
- Food and environment – access to affordable local facilities for healthy food such as local shops, markets and eating places
- Built environment – poor access to exercise facilities such as leisure and sport facilities
- Psychological factors – such as poor mental well-being

Physical Activity Rates

During the past two decades there has been a marked reduction in the amount of physical activity in our daily lives. Sedentary lifestyles cost the NHS more than **£5 billion** every year.

Key Statistics (2011 / 2012) 30 adults participating 30 minutes a week in moderate intensity physical activity:

- England – **36%** adults
- England – **41%** men; **31%** women
- South Staffordshire – **32%** adults
- Stoke-on-Trent – **29%**

Source: Sport England Activity Tables; The Health & Social Care Information Centre

When asked for reasons why they do not get enough exercise the overwhelmingly common responses from young people, as highlighted in the **Staffordshire Children Healthy Weight 2011 – 2013 Strategy Report** are that young people are spending so much time on their computers / watching television / playing computer games. '*Not liking sport and exercise or being too lazy*', was also reported by a number of young people.

Being overweight in childhood has consequences for health on both the short and longer term. Once established, obesity is notoriously difficult to treat, so prevention and intervention are important (Public Health England).

Mental Health

The emotional and psychological effects of being overweight are often seen as the most immediate and most serious by children themselves. These include teasing and discrimination by peers; low self-esteem, anxiety and depression. In one study (Schwimmer et al, 2003); severely obese children rated their quality of life as low as children with cancer on chemotherapy.

Physical Health

Overweight and obese children are more likely to become obese adults, and have a higher risk of morbidity, disability and premature mortality in adulthood.

Although many of the most serious consequences may not become apparent until adulthood, the effects of obesity – for example, raised blood pressure, fatty changes to the arterial linings and hormonal and chemical changes, such as raised cholesterol and metabolic syndrome, can be identified in children and adolescents.

Other health risks of childhood obesity include Type 2 diabetes, early puberty, eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia, skin infections and asthma and other respiratory problems. Some musculoskeletal disorders are also more common, including Slipped Capital Femoral Epiphysis (SCFE) and Tibia Vara (Blount disease).

5.3 Related Research

It has become clear that on the whole recent research has reached a consensus in relation to key issues linked to young women and sport and exercise. The following sections summarise findings and recommendations.

5.4 Report – *Why Do Children Take Part In, and Remain Involved in Sport? A Literature Review and Discussion of Implications for Sports Coaches*

The review highlights that taking part in sport and other physical activity from an early age is important if children are to develop a foundation for lifelong physical engagement in healthy sporting experiences. This review found that children's participation in sport is mediated by five primary social-cultural factors:

- perception of competence
- fun and enjoyment
- parents
- learning new skills
- friends and peers

Recommendations

In short, the research summarises that if children are to remain involved in sport, it is vital that coaches' behaviours and practices match the needs of young participants. Coaches should use more positive than negative behaviours, and emphasise:

- fun and enjoyment
- teamwork and effort over winning and competition

In order to achieve positive outcomes, a **social environment** is needed that reflects children's motivations for taking part in, and remaining involved in sport and physical activities.

5.5 Report – *Changing the Game for Girls*

The research project is described as the largest of its kind ever carried out in the UK, and explores the views of girls (and boys) about physical activity, which included sport and PE, and the influence of schools, families and friends. Most significantly, it aims to find out what can be done to help more girls get and stay active.

General Findings

- the UK has a problem with levels of activity, fitness and obesity
- although the figures vary, this applies to people of all ages, social backgrounds, ethnic origins and gender
- the problem is particularly critical among girls – just over one in ten girls at age 14 currently meets official guidelines for physical activity
- girls commonly feel that they want to be and enjoy being active, and recognise the benefits
- whilst girls are overall positive about sport and physical activity, they are less positive than boys, and see being 'sporty' as unfeminine
- girls are more than likely to be motivated by social and health benefits of taking part, in comparison to boys, who on the whole are motivated by being part of a team, and representing a team
- girls are more concerned about choice, having 'fun', being with friends, and enjoying sport, rather than competition and representing the school
- they are also concerned about the attitudes of teachers, of boys and poor quality facilities. They would like to be asked for their views and see that reflected in provision

Key barriers

- lack of support from parents
- insufficient choice of activity
- no-one to be active with
- available space dominated by boys
- parents set more stringent rules about playing outside for girls
- higher expectation that girls will help out around the house

Attitudinal barriers

- lack of confidence in skills
- only the talented are really encouraged
- self-consciousness about being seen exercising, and '*getting hot and sweaty*'
- being '*sporty*' is still not seen as being aspirational for girls
- sport and physical activity is not seen as important as academic work
- few role models for girls

Recommendations (include)

- education authorities and schools should recognise the way in which current provision is failing girls and develop policies and strategies specifically to redress this choice in physical activity to be provided wherever possible
- overall participation should be recognised as well as successes at competitive sport
- a culture that celebrates active girls should be proactively encouraged
- opportunities should be taken to discuss issues around body confidence and appropriate '*masculine*' and '*feminine*' norms
- specific barriers in terms of facilities or clothing that discourages girls participation should be addressed where possible

5.6 Report – *Creating a Nation of Active Women*

General Findings

- women's health and fitness is not a minority issue. It is a national issue – at over **30m**, over half of the UK population is female
- the lack of physical activity in England alone costs some **£8.2billion** each year
- if obesity continues to rise nationally at current rates, it could cost the UK **£46billion** by 2050
- in 20 years it is predicted that **7** out of **10** women will be overweight

Key facts

- only **36%** of women enjoy the competitiveness of sport, compared to 61% of men
- for men, the most popular sport is a competitive team sport, football, played by 13%, compared to just 1% of women, for whom football is the 12th most popular activity, equal with Pilates

Key barriers

- **55%** of women would exercise more if local facilities were of better quality
- **64%** of women would exercise more if there were more facilities in their local area, and they were cheaper
- **64%** of women would exercise more if they had a friend to be active with
- **61%** of women would exercise more if there were more opportunities for families to exercise together

Attitudinal barriers

- women's choice of whether or not to spend their time playing sport and exercise is driven by a set of conscious motivators, such as:
 - time and control
 - enjoyment
 - socialising
 - family
- underlying motivators also exist that are influenced by a prevailing culture that takes effect from women's most formative years
- nearly half of 25 to 34 year olds feel under pressure to be thin than healthy

- **68%** of women feel that the media sets an unrealistic standard of 'beauty'
- **23%** of women say that PE at school put them off sport for life
- **75%** of girls do not feel it is cool to play sport, or important to be good at it
- **30%** of girls do not like their PE kit
- **40%** feel self-conscious about their bodies in PE kit
- **26%** of women were never encouraged to play sport, and hate the way they look when they are physically active

Key Recommendations

- to make physical activity an integral part of daily life for the majority of women, society needs to enable, encourage and celebrate fit and healthy women
- society needs to teach women and girls that it is attractive to be active and that the most important physical priority is to be healthy rather than thin

5.7 Report – *Understanding Participation in Sport: What Determines Sports Participation Among 15-19 Year Old Women?*

The research was based on those who '**always**', '**sometimes**' and '**never**' participate in sport. Findings are therefore structured around the different levels of participation.

Three areas of impact researched:

- Life History (see **Table 1**)
- Environment (see **Table 2**)
- Life Transitions (see **Table 3**)

Table 1 Life History

Levels of Participation	Respondents Views
Always	Early positive experiences of sport, and reported regular participation from an early age. Had participated in more sport as they have got older.
Sometimes	Mixed views about whether these early experiences impacted on how they currently felt about sport. Reduction in their levels of sports participation due to a lack of facilities and recent lifestyle changes.
Never	Generally had positive early memories of sport and physical activity. Did less sport as they got older, mainly because sport was no longer compulsory. They had less time, felt self-conscious, and they were part of social groups who did not participate in sport.

Table 2 Environment

Levels of Participation	Respondent' Views
Always	Many of this group did not view their local environment as particularly crucial and were generally positive about the area where they lived.
Sometimes	Mixed views regarding their local environment. They were generally positive about transport locally, but reported limited facilities and opportunities to get involved.
Never	This group were generally positive about the area where they lived, but less positive about the facilities and opportunities to get involved in sport. However, they believed that even where sporting facilities were available, they were more influenced by other factors, such as lack of time, or having friends who do not participate in sport.

Table 3 Life Transitions

Levels of Participation	Respondent' Views
Always	Although this group felt that life transitions within education, or from education to employment had a negative impact on their participation, many said that 'growing up' had a positive impact and meant that people needed to be self-motivated to get involved in sport.
Sometimes	Life transitions had a negative impact on their levels of sport participation. Other life circumstances had a detrimental impact on sport, such as moving house and personal or relationship problems.
Never	Transitions in life had a negative impact on their levels of sports participation. This was due to having less time, less energy and social groups changing. Some also described being more self-conscious.

The report also highlights the impact of psychosocial issues, which are highlighted in **Table 4**.

Table 4 Psychological & Social Issues

Psychological & Social Issues	Respondent's Views		
	Always	Sometimes	Never
Image of sport and role models	Positive images	Positive image of sport, but few had role models	Positive image of sport, but few had role models. Divide between image of sport and other hobbies.
Awareness of sporting opportunities	Wide awareness	Limited awareness	Generally unaware. Lack of motivation to seek information.
Role of friends	Part of sport related social groups – considered a strong influence.	Few felt social life hindered as they had active and inactive friends.	Inactive friends and social life hindered participation. Open to positive impacts from friends.
Role of family	The majority live in 'active' households, with role models and encouragement.	Whilst most lived with some active family members, friends were deemed more important.	Most lived in inactive households. Family influences on sports participation were less important than friends.
Self perceptions and sporting ability	Whilst awareness of link between exercise, weight and appearance, few cited this as a motivation for doing sport. Most rarely felt self-conscious when participating in sport.	Issues of weight and appearance important, with some suggesting they take part to lose weight. Rarely felt self-conscious when participating in sport.	Many anxious about their appearance, and this was a major reason for their non-participation in sport.
Personal choice	Not a big hassle. Genuine enjoyment in sport, social advantages and health benefits.	Personal choice very important. Too much 'hassle' associated with filling in forms / paying fees etc.	Very little effort to get involved. Other priorities.

Recommendations

- encourage sports participation within family and friendship groups
- provide 'women only' sessions
- high profile advertising and promotional campaigns to change and improve the image of sport
- positive support to young women during key transitions in their lives
- promote sports facilities to be more appealing and less complicated for young women, i.e. clarity over costs, membership issues.

5.8 Report – Exploring Opportunities and Barriers in Staffordshire for the Participation of High School Girls in Competitive Football

The research carried out by a Staffordshire University Student in partnership with Staffordshire Football Association, identifies a number of motives and barriers for secondary school girl's participation in football clubs. In order of priority, the most common motives are reported as:

- love of the game
- keeping fit
- fun
- learn new skills

In order of priority, the most common barriers are reported as:

- lack of time
- not knowing where to play
- lack of transport
- lack of skill

The most common incentives to become involved are reported as:

- if more friends were playing
- more free time
- more clubs closer to home

The report makes a number of recommendations:

1. More flexible coaching sessions
2. Better promotion – e.g. posters, leaflets, school talks / presentations
3. Related social networking sites – linked to football clubs
4. Stronger links with schools – partnership working
5. Delivery of football / sport in a more non-competitive environment

5.9 Report – *It's Time, Future Forecasts for Women's Participation in Sport and Exercise*

The report details the status and reasons for women's critically low levels of physical activity, in order to create a debate to lead to a [first] national strategy to increase women's participation.

Key findings

- **24%** of men do sufficient exercise to benefit their health, compared to **19%** of women
- twice as many men play organised competitive sport as women
- **13%** of men take part in football, compared with **1%** for women
- **17%** of 16 -24s play team sports, although this falls to **10%** from the age of 25
- girls activity levels begin to fall from the age of 10 years
- by the age of 15 years, **50%** do not achieve the target activity rates
- black and ethnic minority groups are less active
- **87%** of Asian women and **86%** of African and Caribbean females do no regular activity, compared to **81%** of white or mixed race groups

Attitudinal barriers

- sport is seen by some [women] as unfeminine, and girls earliest experiences of sport are off-putting
- nearly a quarter of women say that PE at school put them off sport
- 2 out of 5 girls feel self-conscious about their bodies in PE lessons
- almost 2 in 5 women believe there is too much emphasis on 'sport' in today's society
- girls are raised to think that it is more important to be attractive than active
- many women are inhibited from exercising because of low body confidence
- **86%** of respondents said that they would exercise more if they thought their **health** was at risk
- the **drivers** of women's participation fall into 4 categories:
 - age and lifestyle
 - affluence and education
 - time use
 - individual motivation

Key recommendations

- success in raising women's participation in physical activity is dependent on fundamentally changing the behaviour of girls and women
- this will require changing the vast array of influences that shape and determine the behaviour of girls and women themselves
- this will require real commitment from the full range of stakeholders
- the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games provided a once in a lifetime opportunity to create a step-change in women's participation

5.10 Report - A Review of Sexual Orientation in Sport

The purpose of the study was to review and critique the literature on sexual orientation in sport in order to inform equality impact assessments, support the implementation of the Sports Council equality schemes and inform the advice given by these agencies on developing sports participation among those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual (LGBT), and on tackling homophobia in sport.

Key findings (include)

- bisexuality and transsexuality are underrepresented in sport research and policy
- whilst there is a basic awareness among stakeholders that there are issues relating to LGBT people that have to do with participation, discrimination and homophobia in sport, there is a lack of expertise (and in some cases desire) to do what is required to address them
- a lack of data and evidence means that issues can be ignored or remain hidden
- equality issues around sexual orientation and gender identity are still seen differently from comparable issues on race, gender or disability and the underlying prejudices are different
- much of the prejudices and negativity around LGBT issues in sport can be traced back to the application of gender stereotypes and perceptions of masculinity and femininity
- young people are seen as key to effecting change because they often express more enlightened attitudes to diversity than older generations
- sport can be a powerful influence both on young people's own personal development and on their attitudes to others

Recommendations (include)

- more quantitative and qualitative research is required on the patterns of representation and experiences of bisexual sports people, coaches and other support roles
- practical and policy guidance to be provided on assuring inclusive support for LGBT people
- the development and dissemination of advice and guidance materials and systems for sports people dealing with sexual orientation issues

5.11 Child Poverty & Social Exclusion

According to the **Joseph Rowntree Foundation** and statistics published by the **Institute for Social and Economic Research**:

- there are **3.6m** children living in poverty in the UK today – that is **27%** of children, or more than one in four
- in the most deprived wards, between **50%** and **70%** of children are growing up in poverty
- child poverty blights childhoods. Growing up in poverty means being cold, going hungry and not being able to join in [physical] activities with friends
- whilst studies (e.g. *Play for Health: a Pilot Study Investigating the Distribution and Features of Publicly Provided Outdoor Play Areas in Glasgow*, Social and Public Health Sciences Unit) show that there are more play areas in deprived areas, their quality is generally poor, and can act as deterrents to using what otherwise might be health promotion activities
- under current Government policies, child poverty is projected to rise from 2012 / 13, with an expected **300,000** more children living in poverty by 2015 / 16

5.12 Policies and Strategies

We have taken note of the policies and strategies of two key Staffordshire based organisations:

- **Staffordshire Youth and Community Service**
- **Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent**

5.13 Staffordshire Youth and Community Service

Staffordshire Youth and Community Service Curriculum provides a framework for the delivery of informal education in Staffordshire and describes both the products and the processes which support this work.

The document states that *'Informal education is a key component of our Positive Activities work-stream and makes a significant contribution to a young person's personal and social development.'*

Two out of the nine priorities relates directly to sport / exercise:

- Staffordshire is a place where people live longer, healthier and fulfilling lives
- Staffordshire's communities can access, enjoy and benefit from a range of learning, recreational and cultural activities

A wide variety of informal educational opportunities are identified as having potential learning outcomes for young people, these include:

- **risk awareness:** the knowledge that risks can be identified and managed increases confidence about new or uncertain situations
- **personal and social development:** gearing activities for success allows for the development of self-confidence and self-esteem
- **citizenship:** learning how to support, lead and follow being a team player, developing social skills and a sense of community and responsibility
- **new ideas for health issues and physical exercise:** alternatives to ball sports and team games
- **connection with the natural environment:** a developed awareness of green issues
- **recreation: fun and enjoyment,** stress relief, purposeful leisure

The core values that underpin youth work in Staffordshire are fashioned by the 'Four Cornerstones' of youth work which are:

- education
- participation
- equality of opportunity
- empowerment

It is these values that influence the work of Staffordshire Youth and Community Service within the arena of informal education. The organisation's work with young people in Staffordshire strives to make learning experiential whilst ensuring that every opportunity is taken to introduce elements of **fun** and **enjoyment**.

The document states that, *'When delivering, all staff must adhere to Staffordshire County Council Policy and Procedures, including Safeguarding and Equality of Opportunity. All delivery must take into consideration a young person's ability to understand, (adapted resources where appropriate) culture, age, gender, language, religious beliefs and / or sexuality'*.

Life Skills and Life Choices, including Bullying and Health Promotion

The promotion of healthy lifestyles is growing in importance as many public health issues, such as obesity and its associated illnesses, are now beginning to have a severe and detrimental effect on the health and wellbeing of society. SYCS practitioners are well placed to run short programmes that promote healthy eating and a healthy outlook upon life. It is always possible to build in physical activity into any session being run for young people, be it in a Youth Centre or in a school.

Examples of **Life Skills or Life Choices** are listed as:

- sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- chlamydia
- healthy living
- eating Disorders
- vegetarian or vegan?

- different kinds of Drugs
- alcohol
- body piercing and tattooing
- carbon monoxide poisoning
- sun safety
- young people's health
- mental health
- self injury (self harm)
- suicide

Comment - We note that **fitness / physical activity** are not currently listed.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Four sections for each level of the award include **physical**: improving in an area of **sport, dance, or fitness activities**.

Youth Achievement Awards

The **Healthaware** toolkit for workers is a resource designed to support workers to develop **health** and **well-being** activities with young people which includes sample challenges and activities as well as recording sheets and signposting for further information.



5.14 Staffordshire Youth and Community Service Delivery Plan 2012 – 13

The overall vision for Staffordshire Youth and Community Service is to provide an integrated approach to providing accessible and effective services for young people aged 13-19 and up to 25 for young people with a learning disability or difficulty, that meet following outcomes:

- Staffordshire's economy prospers and grows, together with the jobs, skills, qualifications and aspirations to support it
- Staffordshire is a place where people can live safely – increasingly free from crime, the causes of crime and the fear of crime
- In Staffordshire's communities people are able to live independent and safe lives, supported where this is required

- Staffordshire is a place where people live longer, healthier and fulfilling lives
- Staffordshire's children and young people can get the best start in life and receive a good education so that they can make a positive contribution to their communities
- Staffordshire's communities can access, enjoy and benefit from a range of learning, recreational and cultural activities
- Staffordshire's people are involved in shaping the delivery of public services

5.15 Staffordshire Youth and Community Service document, 'Towards a Young Person's Service Outcomes Measuring Framework'

Practice Level Outcomes:

- demonstration of specific subject knowledge or a defined set of skills
- ability to progress, or identify ambitions and aspirations in order to access further opportunities
- ability to communicate or express feelings and opinions
- ability to work in a team or with others
- confidence, self-esteem or empowerment
- knowledge of equality and empathy for others
- resilience and ability to manage feelings
- levels of physical activity
- ability to develop relationships with peers, adults and the community as a whole

5.16 Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent (SASSOT) see www.sportsacrossstaffordshire.co.uk

SASSOT is a sub-regional multi-agency partnership made up of key partners who are committed to '*working together to champion participation, enjoyment and success through sport, physical education and active recreation across Staffordshire*'.

Comment – It is noted from the organisation's literature that 'working partners' do not include Staffordshire County Council / Staffordshire Youth and Community Service as a 'key partner'.

The organisation receives funding from Sport England, which has identified **46** priority **sports** to support. The organisation offers a number of initiatives, programmes and services, which have / are to include:

- **Sport Unlimited** – a national programme which aims at encouraging more young people to become involved in community sport outside of school
- **Physical Activity Development** – a Department of Health 'Be Active Be Healthy' Plan
- **Coach Scholarship Scheme** – financial support to partners to help train and develop more coaches
- **Education and workshops** – providing clubs, coaches and volunteers with generic training and continued development opportunities
- **Recruit into Coaching** – aiming to recruit and train 10,000 volunteer coaches from across the 70 most deprived areas in England
- **Step into Sport** – working with School Sport partnerships on the Step into Sport programme through Leadership Academies
- **Community Sports Coaches Scheme** – to create 3,000 paid, professional coaches nationally to work at local levels
- **SASSOT Sports Club Accreditation Scheme** – to develop welcoming, accessible and accredited sports clubs in partnership with National Governing Bodies of Sport
- **SASSOT Clubmark / QualityMark** – to increase the number of high quality accredited clubs throughout the sub-region
- **Accredited Club Database** – providing free and easy access to local clubs and sports / fitness facilities
- **Equality and Diversity** – proactive initiatives to ensure access to sport across the county regardless of individual circumstances or background
- **Access Across Staffordshire Funding Scheme** – grants being available to develop new projects
- **Knowledge Management and Communication** – plans and strategies that underpin the work of the partnership
- **Research** – free access to recent research and knowledge
- **Funding Advice and Support** – providing advice and support to partners and clubs
- **Sport – e newsletter** – issued on the last Friday of each month

- **Partner Roles and Responsibility Mapping**

Future Strategies (2011 – 2012 Annual Report)

Listed relevant future SASSOT strategies include:

- **Sports equality and diversity** – a commitment to working proactively to ensure sport across the County for everyone, regardless of their circumstances or background
- **Sportivate** – targeting 14 to 25 year olds who are ‘semi-sporty’, offering 6 to 8 weeks of ‘*new sporting activities*’
- **Physical activity development** – to work closely with Staffordshire Public Health and other key stakeholders to have an impact on the health and wellbeing of the population and reduce health inequalities
- **Workforce development** – Sport England funded ‘**Sport Makers**’ programme in partnership with Coalfields Regeneration Trust to attract additional investment to support workforce development
- **Coach development** – implementation of a Coaching Delivery Plan
- **Education and Training** – where possible the provision of free training, workshops and advice
- **Knowledge management** – the sourcing and provision of data / intelligence / toolkits that help to provide evidence, insight and understanding of sports participation

6.0 Field Research Findings

6.1 Introduction

As highlighted in **Section 4.3** we have utilised a number of research tools:

- questionnaires
- workshops
- telephone survey
- observations

6.2 Questionnaire (See **Appendix A**)

With an objective of gaining an understanding of the views and opinions of diverse groups of young women, where appropriate, we have carried out comparisons of responses from four distinct groups:

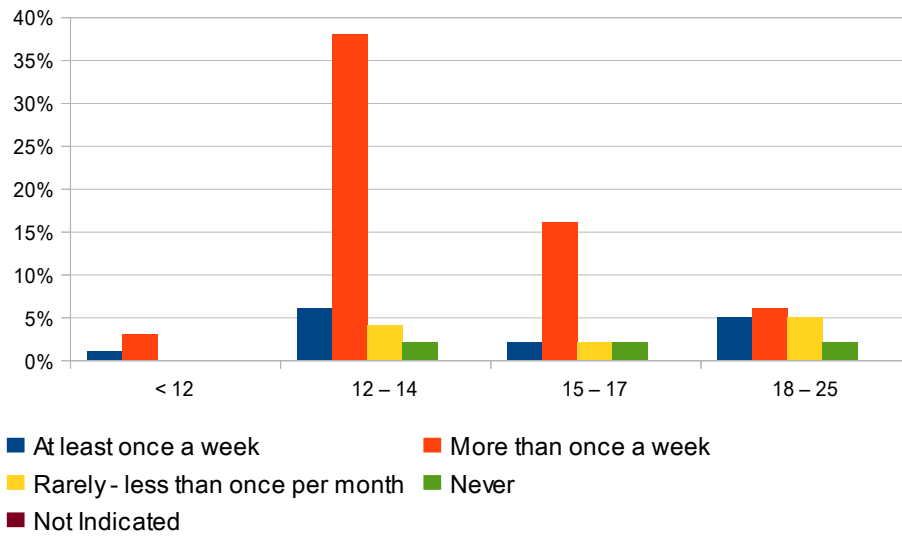
- all respondents
- Asian respondents
- Staffordshire University
- Stafford Women's Football Team

6.3 Frequency of Exercise

The following graphs highlight and compare respondent's feedback on frequency of exercise.

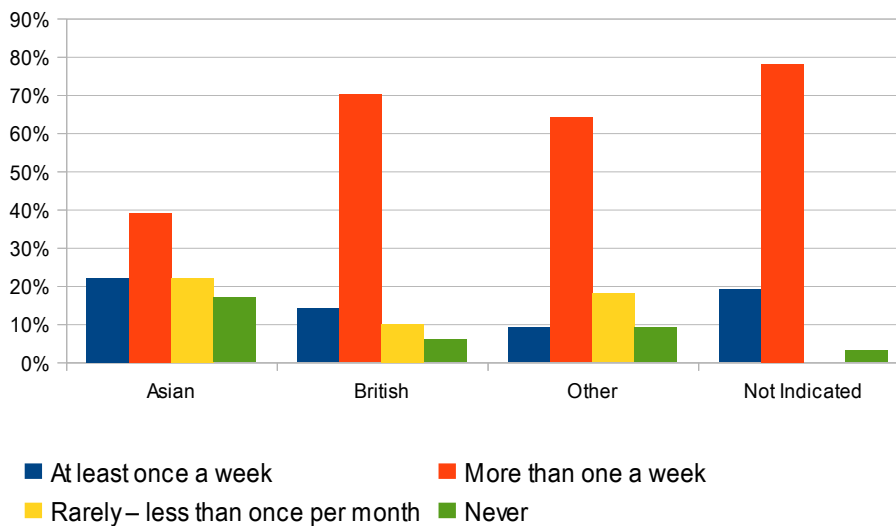
Graph 3 highlights frequency of exercise by age groups. It will be noted that frequency peaks at ages 12 to 14 years and dips significantly from the age of 15 years; with a significant dip from 18 years onwards.

Graph 3 Frequency of Exercise (All)



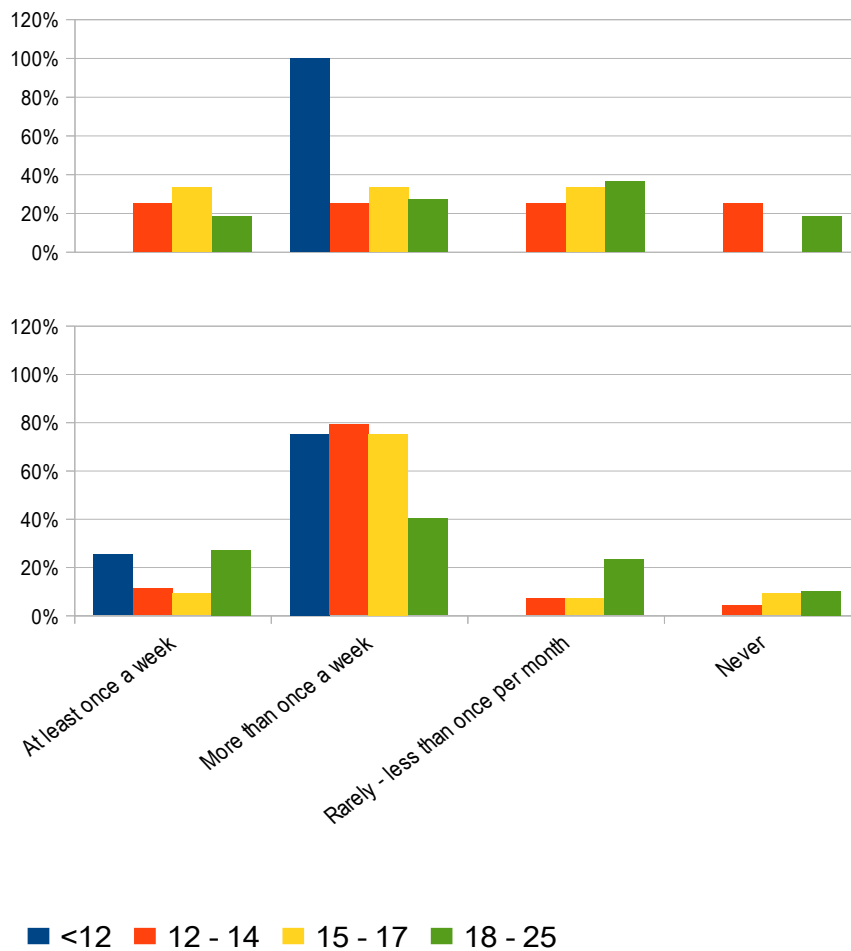
Graph 4 highlights frequency of age group by ethnicity. It will be noted that Asian respondents are apparently significantly less active than other respondents.

Graph 4 Frequency of Exercise (Ethnicity)



Graphs 5 and **6** compare frequency of exercise by Asian respondents only by age (upper graph), with frequency of exercise by age of all other respondents (lower graph). It will be noted that Asian respondent's frequency peaks at 12 years, and dips significantly from this age, whilst other respondent's peaks after this age and holds for a number of years following.

Graphs 5 / 6 Frequency of Exercise (Ethnicity / Age)



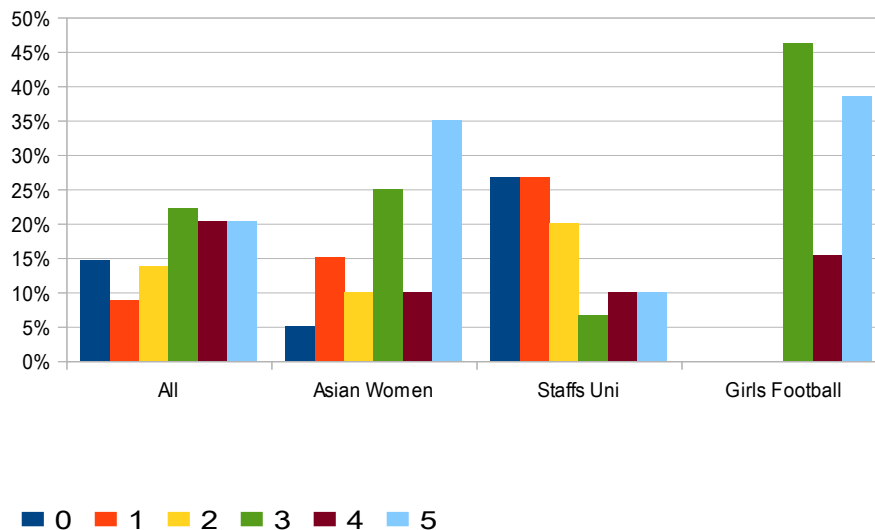
6.4 Opinions on Sport, Exercise, Keeping Fit, Looking Good

The following graphs highlight and compare respondent's feedback on their opinions regarding sport, exercise, keeping fit and looking good.

Graph 7 highlights the importance of '*Being good at sport*'. It will be noted that:

- respondents involved in women's football score significantly higher than others
- a noticeable number of Asian respondents score maximum rating (5)
- on the whole, 'all' respondents **do not** feel strongly about being good at '**sport**'

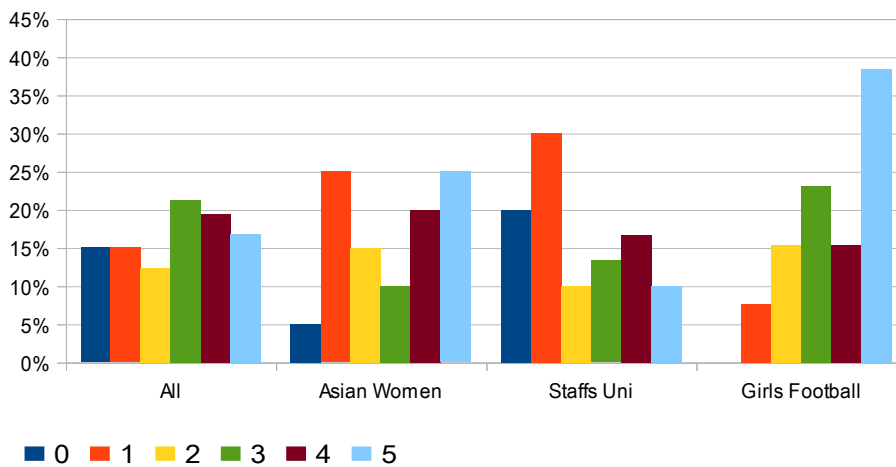
Graph 7 The Importance of 'Sport' (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



Graph 8 highlights the importance of '*Winning at sport*'. It will be noted that:

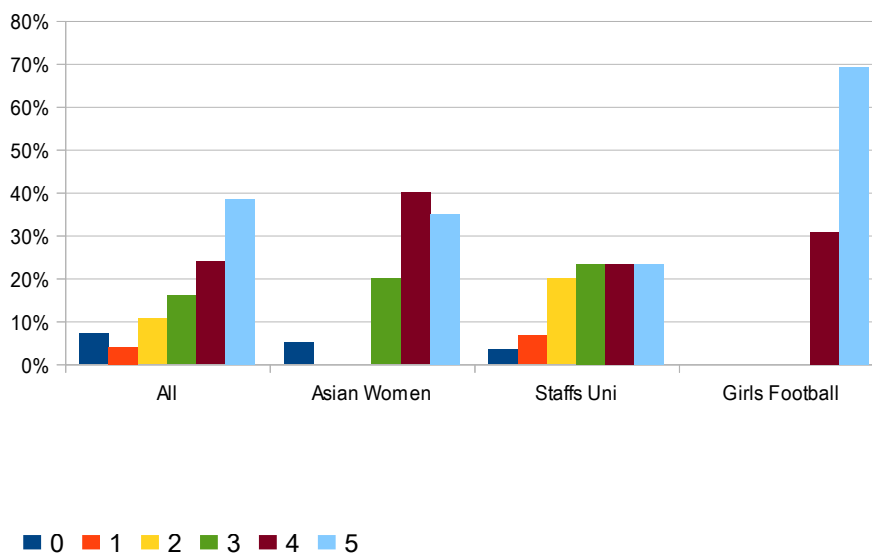
- 'winning' at sport is more important to respondent's involved in a competitive sporting activity
- on the whole, 'all' respondents **do not** feel strongly about '*winning at sport*'

Graph 8 The Importance of Winning at Sport (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



Graph 9 highlights respondent's enjoyment of being active. It will be noted that on the whole, apart from those involved in a competitive sport [football], respondents rate being 'active' as more important than participation in sport.

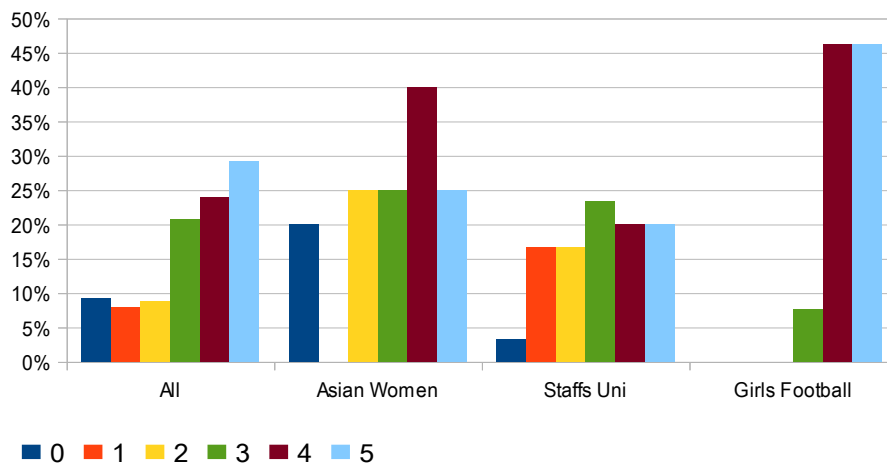
Graph 9 Enjoyment of Being Active (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



Graph 10 highlights respondent's enjoyment of exercise. It will be noted that:

- on the whole, respondents rate 'exercise' higher than 'sport'
- Asian respondents rate exercise lower than 'being active'

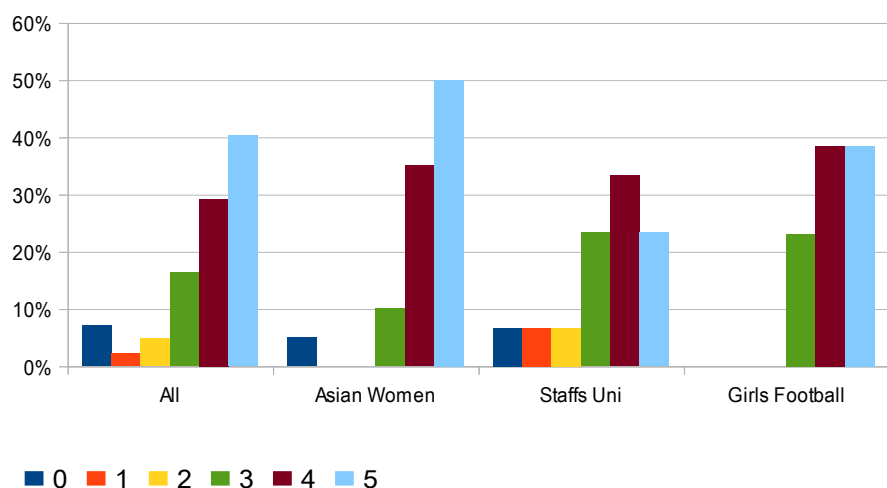
Graph 10 Enjoyment of Exercise (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



Graph 11 highlights the importance of being healthy. It will be noted that:

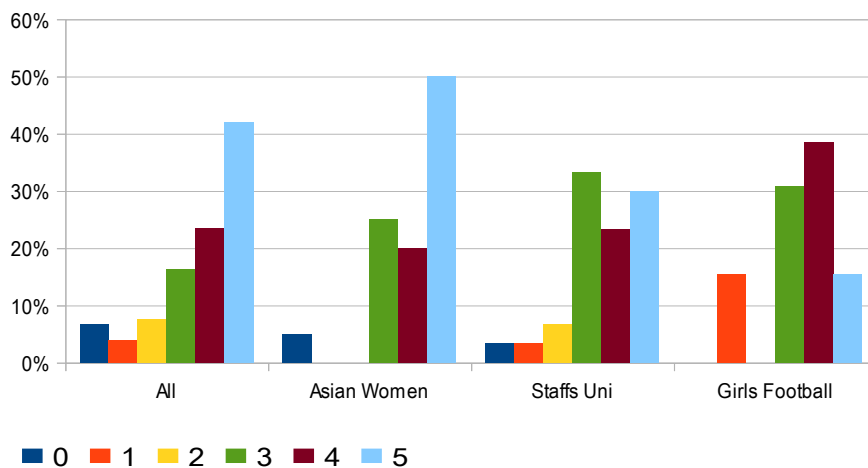
- on the whole, respondents rate being healthy as particularly important
- Asian respondents rate a desire to be healthy highly

Graph 11 Importance of Being Healthy (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



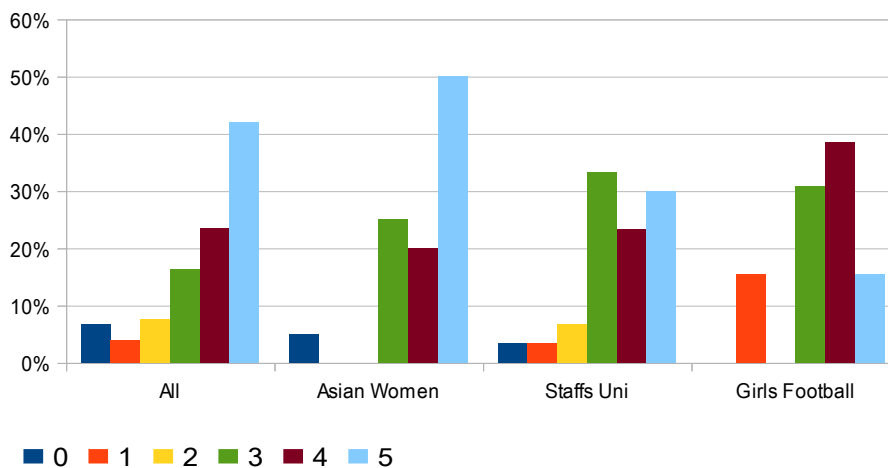
Graph 12 highlights the importance of 'looking good'. It will be noted that a significant number of Staffordshire University students and members of the women's football team are less concerned about 'looking good' as Asian respondents and respondents as a whole.

Graph 12 Importance of Looking Good (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



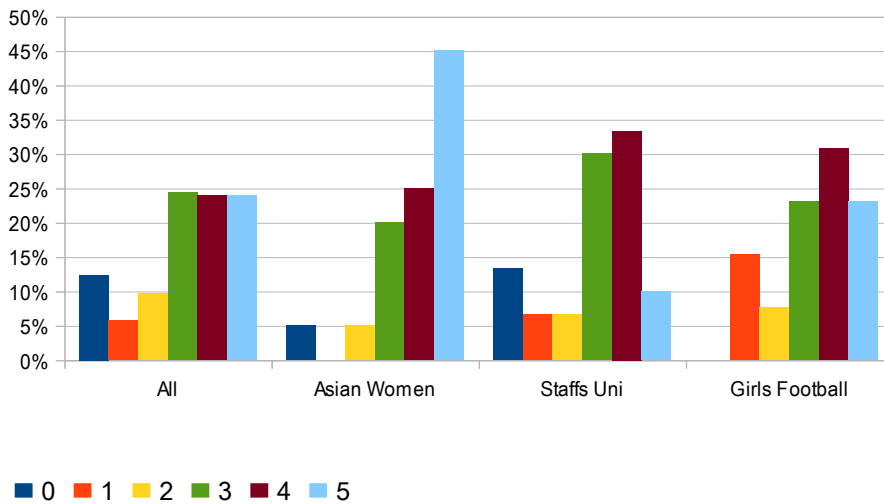
Graph 13 highlights how much respondents would like to know more about keeping fit and healthy. It will be noted that apart from respondents from the girls football team, 'looking good' is generally highly important to all respondents – particularly Asian girls.

Graph 13 The Importance of 'Looking Good' (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



Graph 14 highlights respondents who would like to know more about keeping fit and healthy. It will be noted that generally **less than 25%** of respondents would like to know more about keeping fit and healthy. However around **45%** of Asian girls would like to know more.

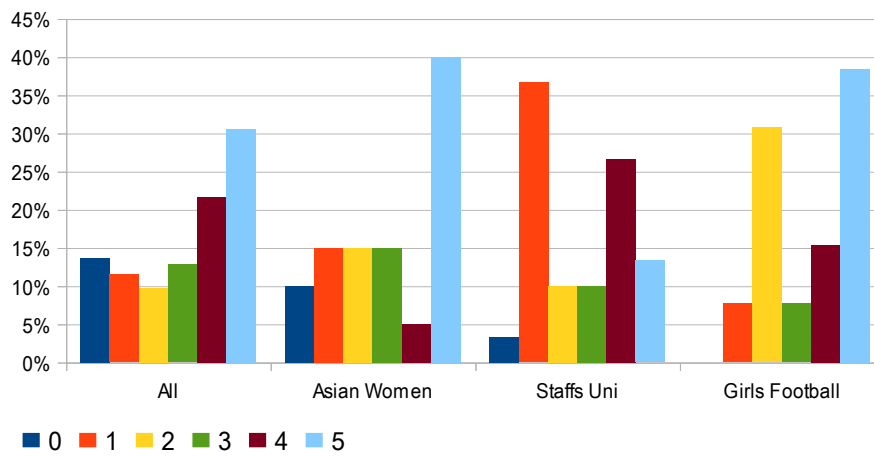
Graph 14 I Would Like to Know More About Keeping Fit and Healthy (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



6.5 What Could Be Better?

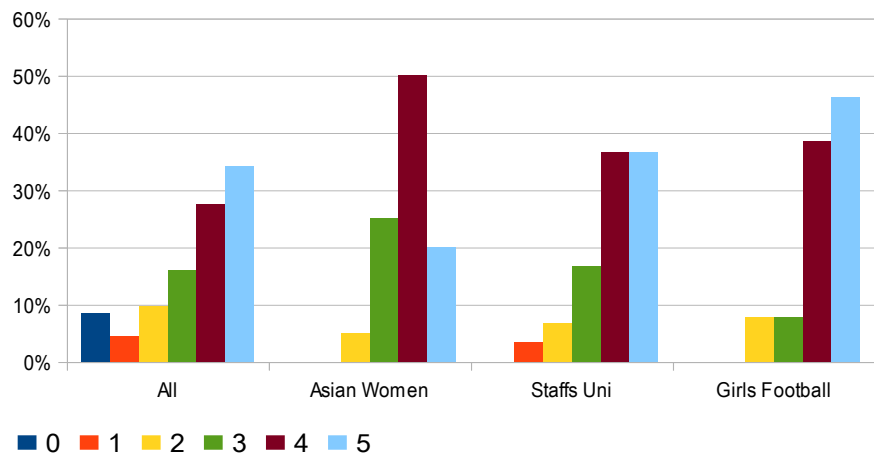
The following graphs highlight respondent's responses to questions aimed at gaining responses to a number of key issues. **Graph 15** highlights respondent's views on the statements that '*PE at school was fun and enjoyable*'. It will be noted that whilst a noticeable number found PE at school enjoyable – particularly Asian girls and those involved in competitive sport, a significant number of older [Staffordshire University students] scored this issue lower than others.

Graph 15 PE at School was Fun and Enjoyable



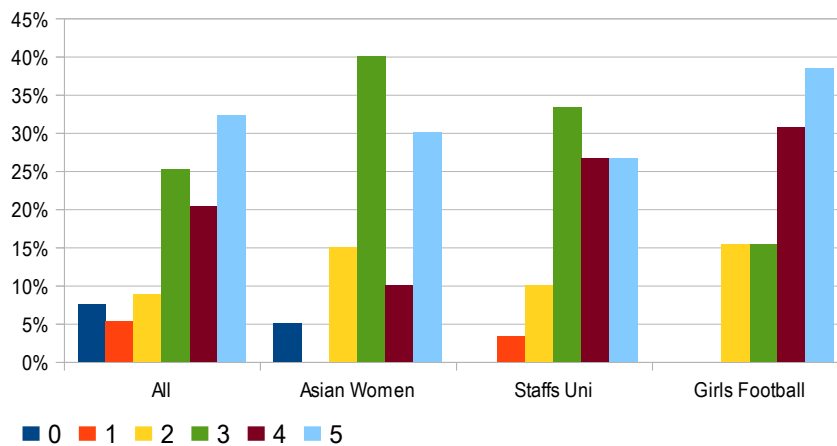
Graph 16 provides an insight to awareness of places outside school / college to keep fit and healthy. It seems apparent that there is generally awareness, although just over **30%** of all respondents and **20%** of Asian respondents demonstrate a high awareness.

Graph 16 Awareness of Where to Keep Fit and Healthy Outside School / College (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



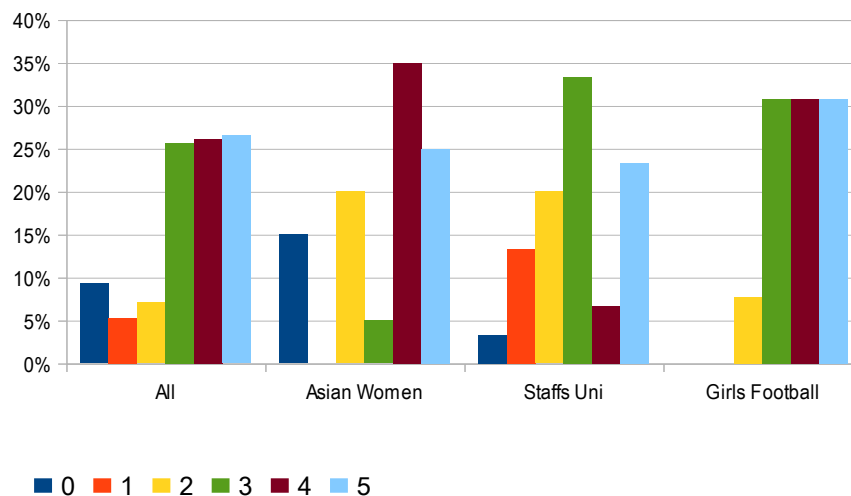
Graph 17 highlights respondent's views on accessibility to places to become involved in sport. It will be noted that on the whole respondents demonstrate high accessibility, apart from Asian respondents, who generally score lower in this area.

Graph 17 Accessibility to Become Involved in Sport (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



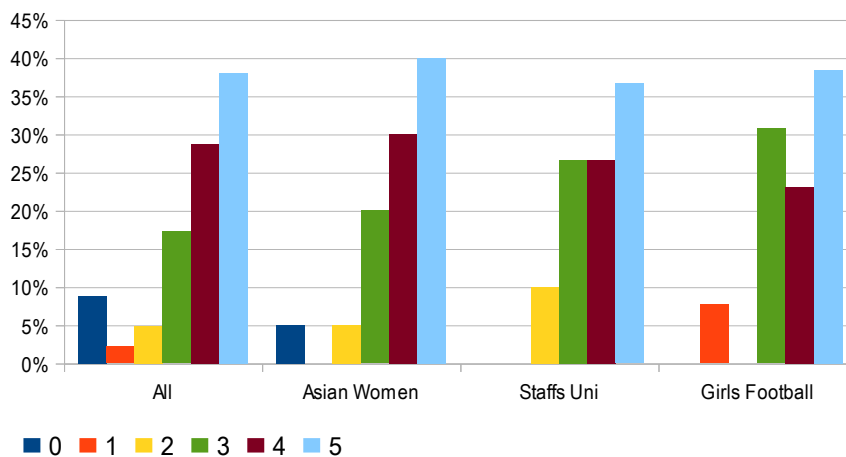
Graph 18 highlights respondent's willingness to utilise sporting venues if they were available. It will be noted that there is a general consensus that availability would encourage use.

Graph 18 Willingness to Utilise Sporting Venues – Subject to Availability (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



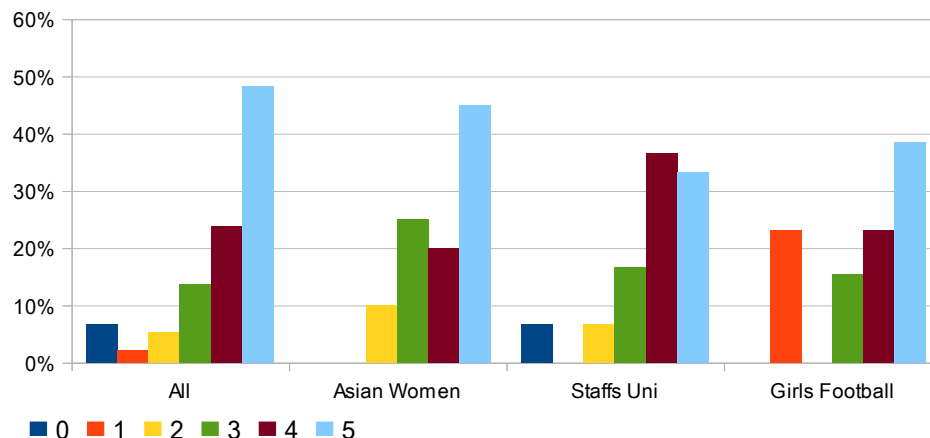
Graph 19 highlights respondents views on use of venues / activities if they were cheaper / more accessible – statement ‘*If access to places / activities was cheaper, I would use them*’. It will be noted that there is a general consensus that price could influence useage.

Graph 19 Statement - If Access to Places / Activities was Cheaper, I would Use Them



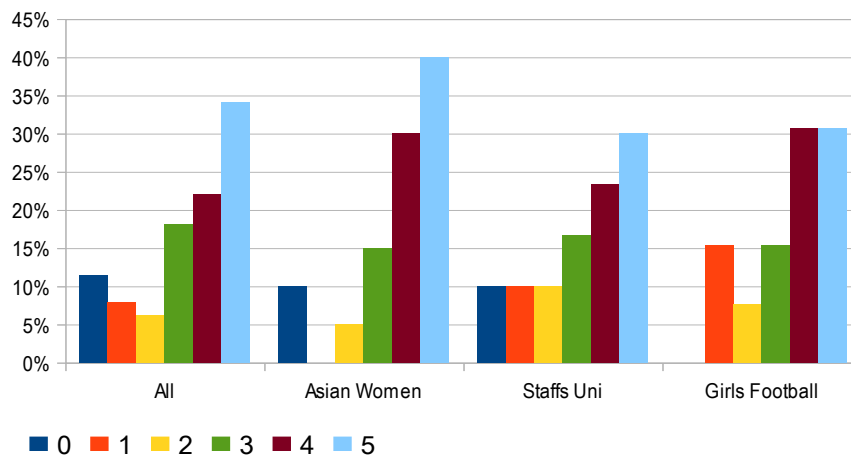
Graph 20 highlights responses to the statement, ‘*Places need to be clean and cater for girls (e.g. hair dryers / mirrors)*’. It will be noted that there is a general consensus that cleanliness and facilities could influence useage.

Graph 20 Statement - Places Need to be Clean and Cater for Girls (e.g. Hair Dryers / Mirrors) (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



Graph 21 highlights responses to the statement, *'Girls Only' places / activities would encourage me to exercise more*. It will be noted that there is a general consensus that *'girls only' venues / activities could influence respondents to exercise more*.

Graph 21 Statement – 'Girls Only Places / Activities Would Encourage Me to Exercise More'
(0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)

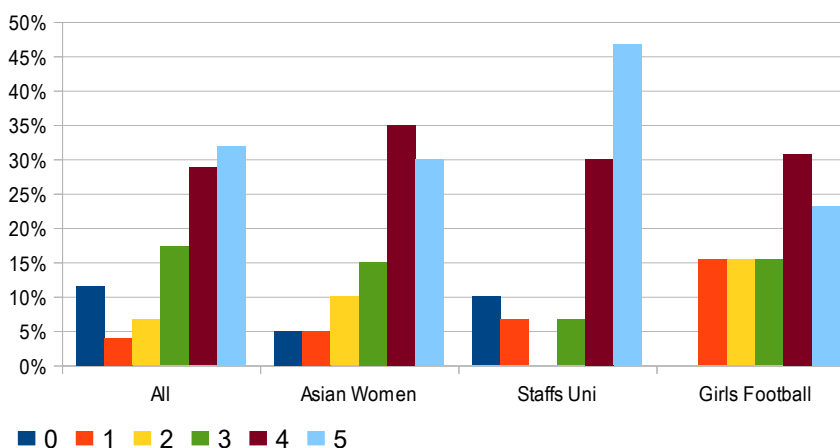


6.6 External Influences

The following graphs highlight respondent's views on external influences.

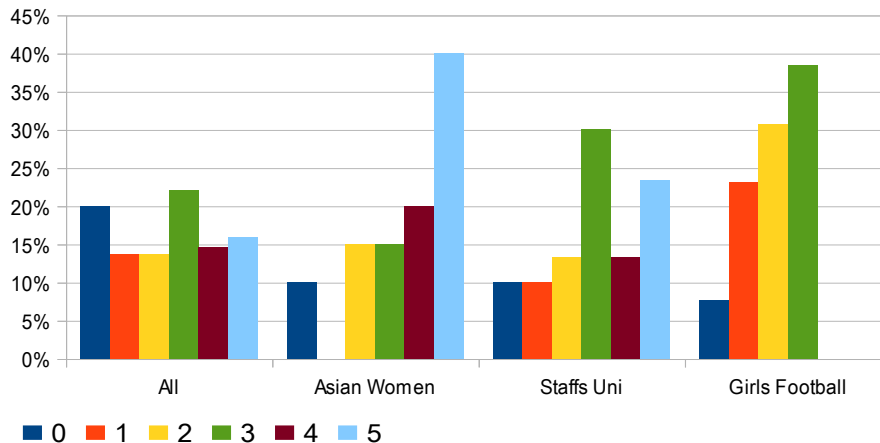
Graph 22 highlights respondents views on the statement, *'I would exercise more if my friends took part'*. It will be noted that there is a general consensus that involvement of friends would increase participation in exercise. The high scoring from Staffordshire University students, which may indicate the formation of campus based friendships with peers, is noticeable.

Graph 22 Statement – I would Exercise More if My Friends Took Part (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



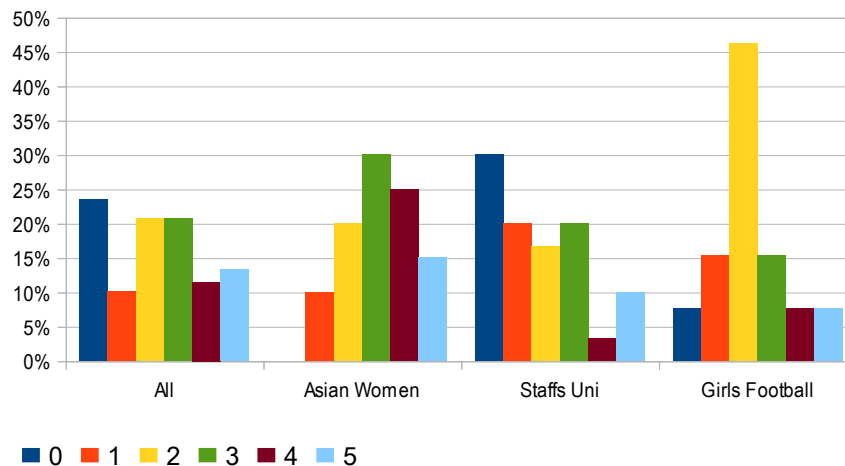
Graph 23 highlights responses to the statement, '*I would exercise more if my family took part*'. It will be noted that whilst the general response is low to this statement, the responses from Asian respondents is noticeably high at **40%**.

Graph 23 Statement – I would Exercise More if My Family Took Part (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



Graph 24 highlights responses to the statement, '*I would exercise more with support from teachers / youth workers*'. It will be noted that there is generally a low scoring to this statement, although those involved in sport [football] appear to demonstrate a more positive response to this statement.

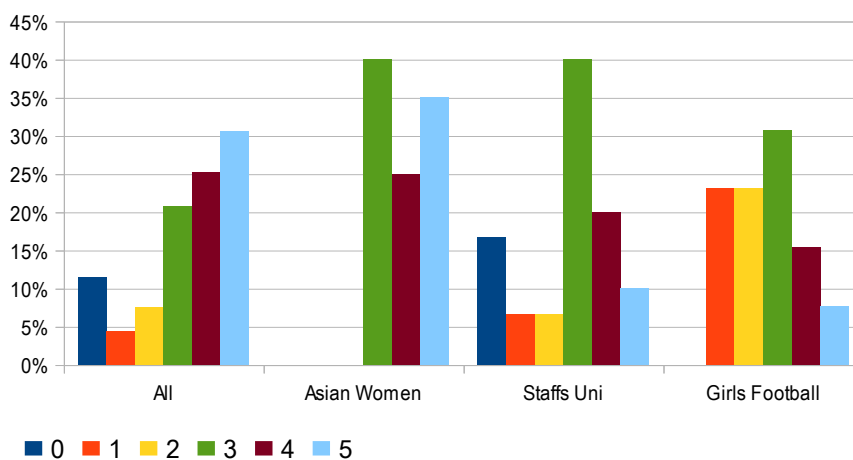
Graph 24 Statement – I would Exercise More With Support From Teachers / Youth Workers (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



Graph 25 highlights responses to the statement, 'Exercise and sport needs to be more *fun*'. It will be noted that:

- on the whole there is a positive response to the statement
- Asian respondents score the highest
- Staffordshire University students and those involved in sport [football] score the lowest, which may indicate that, in their lives, exercise and sport is already *'fun'*

Graph 25 Statement - Exercise and Sport Needs to be More 'Fun' (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



6.7 Most Well Known Sportswomen

The following were nominated as the most well known sportswomen by all respondents:

- **62%** Jessica Ennis (Athletics)
- **12%** Rebecca Adlington (Swimming)
- **11%** Beth Tweddle (Gymnastics)
- **11%** Dame Kelly Holmes (Athletics)
- **9.5%** Ellie Simmonds (Swimming)

The following were nominated by Asian only respondents:

- **44%** Helen Glover (Rowing)
- **30%** Jessica Ennis (Athletics)
- **26%** Heather Stanning (Rowing)

6.8 Workshops

Five workshops were hosted and facilitated by Wider Impact Consultancy:

- Chesterton Youth Centre (North) – target group
- Lichfield Youth Centre (Central) – target group
- Blurton Youth Centre (South) – Asian women only, aged 14 to 30 years
- Stafford Town Community Football Club (Girls and Ladies Section) – target group
- Staffordshire Youth and Community Service Youth Workers

The workshops held at Chesterton, Lichfield and Stafford Town Community Football Club were attended by the target group.

With an objective of gaining a specific insight into the needs, challenges and aspirations of Asian girls / women, the workshop was attended by Asian girls / women only, aged 13 to 30 years.

An average of **10** delegates attended each workshop held at Chesterton, Lichfield and Burton-on-Trent.

The [shorter] workshop held at Stafford Town Community Football Club was attended by **33** delegates.

8 Youth Workers and **1** Manager from across the County attended the Staffordshire Youth and Community Service Youth Workers workshop.

Appendix C provides a summary of workshop findings.

6.9 General Findings

It will be noted that on the whole, the target group appear to indicate:

- **Motives** for taking part in sport / exercise include:
 - having 'fun'
 - socialising / meeting friends
 - keeping fit
 - keeping healthy
- **Barriers** include:
 - time
 - not looking good – e.g. clothing, getting sweaty – concern about peers (**mainly other girls** and peers) mocking / bullying
 - hard work / getting out of breath / tired
 - competitive nature of 'sport'
 - domination by boys / males
 - not achieving anything [sport]
 - cost – particularly as young people become 'adults' – from 16 years
 - accessibility
 - lack of awareness of facilities / clubs etc.
- **Incentives** include:
 - flexible availability of exercise / facilities that are generally non-competitive, and traditionally 'female' activities such as group fitness sessions e.g. Zumba, swimming, netball, hockey, tennis, rounders, trampoline
 - casual dress codes
 - access to cheaper facilities
 - involvement of friends
 - more 'fun' – less 'hard work'

6.10 Asian Girls / Women

Whilst we noted similar responses in comparison to the other groups, we noted a number of significant factors in relation to the Asian workshop:

- **culture** plays a significant role when accessing sport / social meetings:
 - whilst in full-time education it is generally acceptable for young Asian girls to mix with boys
 - this is far less acceptable after Asian girls leave secondary school – a prime motive is to prevent any indication of promiscuous conduct / behaviour within their local communities / circles, which may harm / damage marriage opportunities
 - there is however an understanding that exercise is a positive factor, and **concern** about being unfit, unhealthy and overweight
 - it is more than likely that males will be reluctant to take on child care, which can prevent females easily accessing facilities
- **suggested incentives for post secondary school girls / women include:**
 - female only activities – **NOT** Asian only
 - activities that include family members – daughters and mothers
 - dance – in various formats
 - 'fun', rather than competitive activities
 - crèches

6.11 Stafford Town Community Football Club

Due to our attending an evening training session, which was attended by a number of age groups and the potential to miss out on gaining the views of those present due to their time constraints, it was not practical to facilitate a full workshop. It was agreed that it would be more practical for members to answer two questions utilising 'Post-it' notes:

1. *How did you find out about this club?*
2. *What do you enjoy the most?*

We also took the opportunity to briefly interview members on a one to one basis.

It is noted that:

- word of mouth and social / social media contacts are the most effective recruitment tool
- socialising and meeting friends is the biggest incentive for remaining at the club
- keeping fit and healthy is significantly important

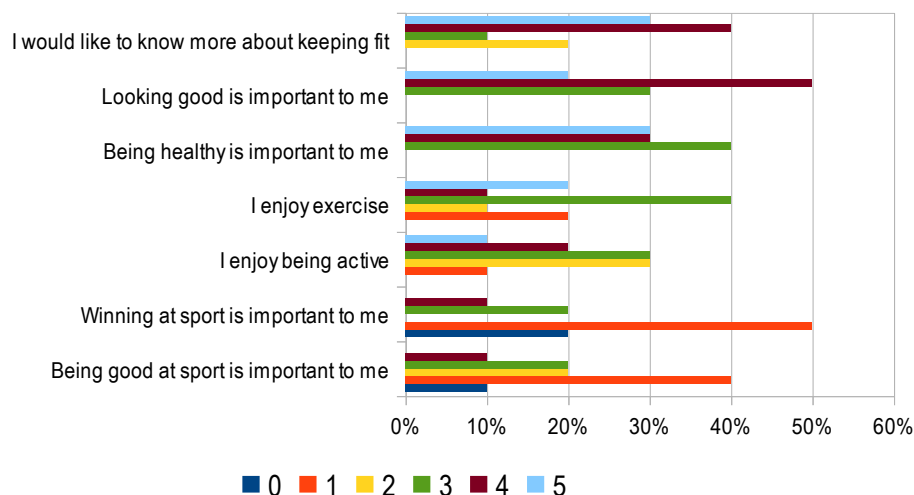
6.12 Youth Workers

Our key objectives for meeting with Youth Workers, and to arrange for them to complete the questionnaire ([Appendix A](#)) were to:

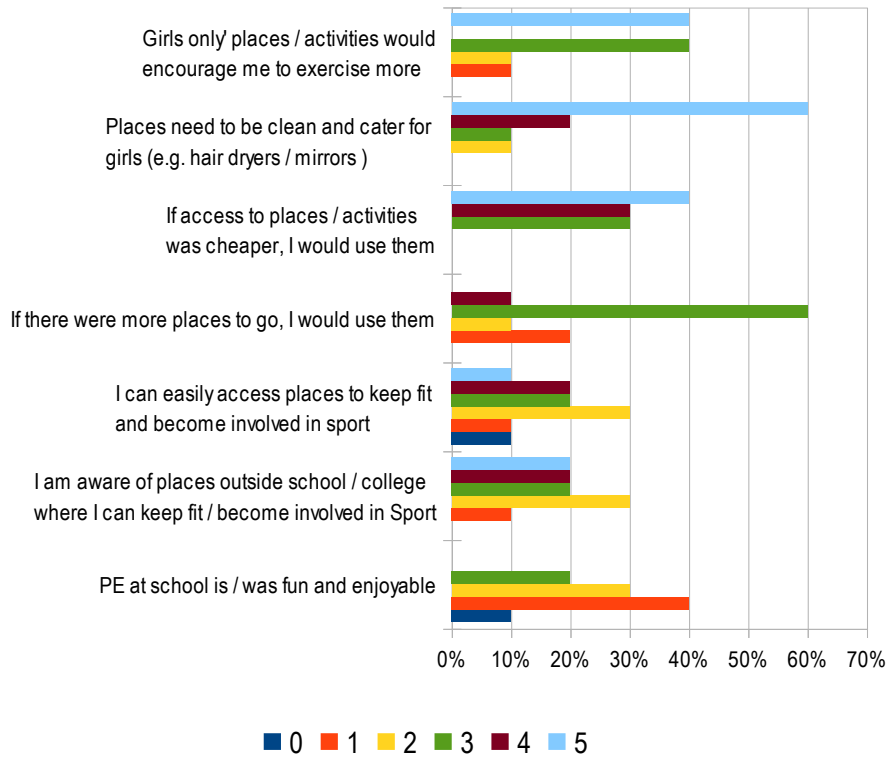
- obtain their views / learn from their experience / skills
- explore any variances in their views / opinions and with those of the target group

Based on analysed questionnaires and workshop outcomes (see [Appendix C](#)), it is apparent that on the whole the Youth Workers have a good understanding of the key issues linked to girl's / young women's involvement in exercise / sport. [Graph 26](#), [Graph 27](#) and [Graph 28](#) highlight Youth Worker's responses to the questionnaire.

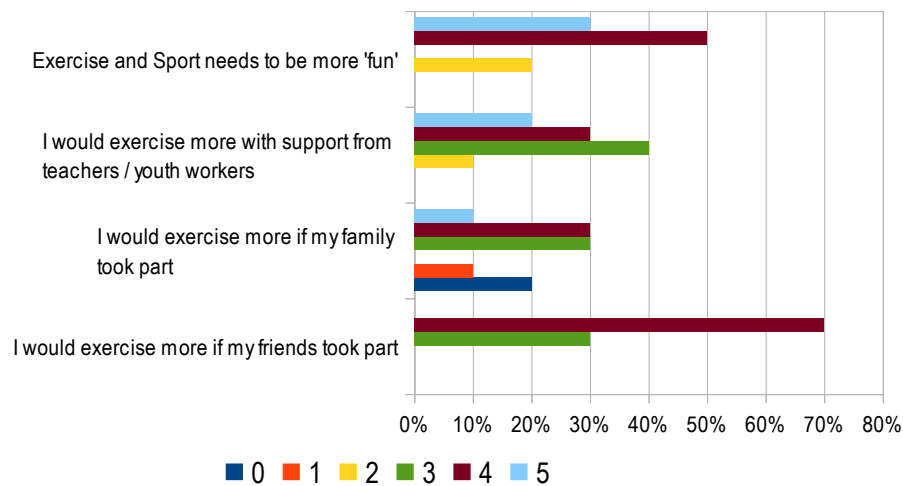
Graph 26 Youth Worker's Views on Girl's Likely Responses to the Questionnaire (Section 1) (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



Graph 27 Youth Worker's Views on Girls Likely Responses to the Questionnaire (Section 2) (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



Graph 28 Youth Worker's Views on Girls Likely Responses to the Questionnaire (Section 3) (0 no views. 1 low / 5 high)



It is particularly noticeable that the Youth Workers are aware of:

- the current inactivity of young girls [young people] is a '*ticking time bomb*', which will further exacerbate current key medical issues linked to:
 - obesity
 - wider health related problems
 - [financial] strains on NHS services
- the need to take action
- current financial restraints, which is demonstrated by realistic suggested short / medium and long term solutions and strategies, such as:

Immediate

- multi-agency agreement and partnership working to tackle the problem
- improved local planning
- delivering what girls / young women want
- wider range of available cheaper / more affordable / accessible exercise / sporting female friendly options
- wide ranging awareness / promotion of activities and options currently available

Medium Term (within 1 year)

- investment
- targeted budgets
- staff / peer training
- peer involvement / delivery of services
- responding to client needs / aspirations – keeping things 'fun'
- targeting of appropriate activities
- affordable [local] venues
- community activities / sport

Longer Term (within 5 years)

- clear, embedded, multi-agency policies / strategies
- investment – e.g. financial support for local initiatives
- improved poor perceptions of sport / exercise
- effective evaluation / performance monitoring
- Government support

6.13 Telephone Survey Staffordshire Exercise / Sport Based Organisations / Clubs

As highlighted in **Appendix C**, utilising a structured set of questions, we have carried out a telephone survey of **15** Staffordshire exercise / sport based organisations / clubs. It will be noted that:

- a significant number are attracting [adult] female members
- few appear to be offering reduced rates, or concessions for young people (under 16 years)
- a number deliver flexible dress code policies to cater for the specific needs of Muslim females
- **none** are apparently aware of websites such as <http://www.activeplacespower.com/>; an interactive Sport England website / tool, for mapping and reporting community sports development.

6.14 Multi-Agency Meetings

We noted a general consensus on a number of key issues:

- something has to be done to tackle two key issues, which are currently affecting a significant number of young people – **inactivity** and **excess weight / obesity**
- whilst there are numerous examples of good practice / initiatives, there is room for improvement in relation to:
 - joined up working – **multi-agency strategies** and **partnership working**
 - **communication** between agencies
 - **multi-agency awareness** of what is currently on offer to young people / girls
- a need to understand and take note of the needs and aspirations of girls / young women in relation to physical activity / exercise and sport, with particular regard to evidence that
 - overall the girls / young women are more interested in becoming involved in appropriate exercise / healthy living activities than '*competitive sport*'
 - a significant number of girls / young women have negative image / perceptions of sport and exercise
 - they are looking for affordable and accessible exercise / sporting options

- there is a lack of positive and innovative promotion at **local level** of the **health** and **social** benefits of exercise / sport

6.15 Observations

It has been useful to view Staffordshire based locations / environments where girls and young women meet and socialise (such as Youth Clubs), with aims that include understanding how they may act as incentives or barriers in relation to encouragement to become involved in exercise / sport. The following is a summary of our findings:

- there is a noticeable lack of visual and written / promotional information relating to:
 - the benefits of exercise, physical activity and healthy living in general
 - visual and written / promotional information targeted specifically at girls / young women
 - how to access / find places, venues and clubs etc. that specialise in delivering exercise, physical activity and healthy living
- Staffordshire Youth and Community Services front-line Youth Workers in general appear to lack the skills, experience, knowledge and / or qualifications to:
 - deliver basic activities such as dance and Zumba
 - refer girls / young women to clubs / agencies that deliver such activities
 - refer interested girls / young women to clubs / agencies that specialise in 'pure' sporting activities such as football, swimming and athletics
- girls and young women attending 'pure' sporting activities, such as football, appear to be enjoying the social side of the activity as much as the input of physical effort, expertise, and the experience of 'winning' / being successful
- young girls / women who attend High Schools generally appear to be particularly vulnerable to peer pressure, and are conscious of their appearance and how others (boys **and** girls) may judge them
- young girls / women who attend 'pure' sporting activities such as football appear to be less vulnerable to peer pressure

- the majority of girls / young women we met / observed, appear to be aware of the benefits of keeping fit and healthy
- overall the girls / young women we met / observed are more interested in becoming involved in appropriate exercise / healthy living activities than '*competitive sport*'
- the majority of Asian / Muslim girls / young women we met / observed, appear to be extremely keen to become involved in culturally appropriate exercise / healthy living activities
- a significant number of Asian / Muslim girls / young women appear to be unaware where to access appropriate exercise / fitness / healthy living facilities / initiatives
- whilst Asian girls / women welcome 'female only' facilities, they see no reason why such [female only] facilities cannot be open to wider [female] community members, and not necessarily aimed at Asian / Muslim women only. It has been suggested that such an initiative would assist in supporting community integration
- news features, such as recent BBC national news reports that are focusing on girls / women's inactivity and associated obesity could have a negative impact on girls / young women.

It is apparent that such reports are tending to promote 'sport' as a '*one stop*' panacea; highlighting sporting stars such as Jessica Ennis as role models, and how their almost unachievable [Olympic] successes are '*instant solutions*'.

Research is highlighting that this is clearly a complex subject; and risks being aimed at confused girls / young women; many of whom:

- have a negative image / perceptions of sport and exercise
- doubt that they could ever achieve such success / levels of fitness
- are more interested in becoming involved in appropriate exercise / healthy living activities than '*competitive sport*'
- have poor local access to appropriate facilities

7.0 Summary of Findings

7.1 Introduction

In line with a key aim of the commission to a statement by the commissioner that, *'anecdotal evidence and articles in national media that the involvement of young women in physical activity and sport is in decline'*, we are able to provide:

- an understanding of the involvement of young women aged 13 to 19 in physical activity in the national context
- a greater understanding of the particular issues facing young women in Staffordshire
- lessons from partners and other agencies with respect to successful engagement of young women in sport and physical activity

7.2 Physical Activity / Involvement in Sport in a National Context

It is apparent that young people **are** becoming less active and this is particularly so in relation to young girls / women. For example, by the age of 14, **50%** of girls are not achieving national physical activity guidelines.

Outcomes not surprisingly include an unfit and unhealthy society, with the cost of a lack of physical activity in England alone is estimated at **£8.2billion** each year. As concerning is a rise in resultant obesity levels, which if they rise at current rates could cost the UK **£46billion** by 2050.

All is not bad news however, as research has identified that on the whole, girls / young women want to be, and enjoy being active, and recognise the benefits. They are however, on the whole less positive about 'sport' than physical activity, and many see being 'sporty' as unfeminine.

For example, only **36%** of women enjoy the competitiveness of sport, compared with **61%** of men. Girls are more than likely to be motivated by **social** and **health benefits** of taking part, in comparison to boys, who on the whole are motivated by being part of a team, and representing a team.

Key **drivers** to increase girl's / young women's activity levels are a recognition that girls are more concerned about **choice**, having **fun**, **being with friends**, and **enjoying sport**, rather than competition and representing their school.

7.3 Asian Girls / Young Women

There is a noticeable lack of national research to inform an understanding of the involvement of Asian girls / young women in physical activity in the national context, which we have aimed to address within Staffordshire at **Sections 6.0 / 7.6**.

7.4 Sexual Orientation

Research is indicating bisexuality and transsexuality are underrepresented in sport research and policy. Whilst there is a basic awareness among stakeholders that there are issues relating to LGBT people that have to do with participation, discrimination and homophobia in sport, there is a lack of expertise to do what is required to address them. A lack of data and evidence means that such issues can be ignored or remain hidden.

7.5 Child Poverty & Social Exclusion

It is apparent that issues linked to [child] poverty and social exclusion are having a detrimental effect on young peoples' access to physical activity. Studies such as *Play for Health: a Pilot Study Investigating the Distribution and Features of Publicly Provided Outdoor Play Areas in Glasgow*, Social and Public Health Sciences Unit show that whilst there are more play areas in deprived areas, their quality is generally poor, and can act as deterrents to using what otherwise might be health promotion activities.

7.6 The Situation in Staffordshire

Research has indicated that on the whole, girl's involvement in physical activity being in decline is no different in Staffordshire than the picture nationally. Indeed the problem seems to be more pronounced in Staffordshire. For example, in Stoke-on-Trent just **29%** of adults take part in 30 minutes of physical activity, compared with an English average of **36%**. In Staffordshire **32.6%** of children are classified as overweight or obese, compared with an English average of **20.4%** for boys and **17%** for girls.

Qualitative research has endorsed quantitative evidence; with local [Staffordshire] evidence for example that frequency of exercise / physical activity peaks at the ages of 12 to 14 years, and dips significantly from 18 years onwards. On the whole, Staffordshire respondents also rate being active as more important than winning at [competitive] sport, and rate being healthy as particularly important.

This is not to say that young girls / women in Staffordshire do not enjoy and participate in competitive sport. There are impressive examples of girls / young women taking part in competitive sport such as those we met and surveyed at Stafford Town Community Football Club and Staffordshire University.

It is however apparent that on the whole, the majority of girls / young women in Staffordshire, as they are nationally, are less positive about 'sport' than physical activity, and are more concerned about **choice**, having **fun**, **being with friends**, and **enjoying sport**, rather than competition.

7.7 Staffordshire Asian Girls / Young Women

It is particularly noticeable that the situation with Asian girls / young women differs from the wider sample of research respondents.

For example, Asian girl's physical activity peaks at 12 years, and dips significantly from this age. Asian girls / young women rate being healthy more highly than others. Asian girls / young women's involvement in physical activity is however influenced by cultural beliefs and restraints, which are particularly apparent once they leave main-stream education. As a result, **Asian young women's access to physical activity is noticeably more problematic than that of non-Asian / Muslim young women.**

7.8 Sub-Regional Strategies

We note Staffordshire Youth and Community Service policies and strategies that make reference to the importance of *'Making Staffordshire a place where people can live longer, healthier and fulfilling lives'*. Whilst supporting documents make general references to the importance of physical activity, it is noted that examples of **skills** listed

in the '**Life Skills and Life Choices**' document, do not make specific references to **fitness** or **physical activity**.

We have also listed future strategies planned to be delivered by **Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent (SASSOT)**. It is of interest to note that whilst Staffordshire County Council is listed as a key partner agency, no mention is made of **Staffordshire Youth and Community Service** as a key partner / stakeholder in the delivery of such strategies.

Whilst front-line Staffordshire Youth Workers currently do not on the whole possess the skills, experience and qualifications to deliver the physical activities that girls / young women are looking for, they clearly understand the key issues involved, and have an impressive understanding of how to improve local delivery and develop current and future [multi-agency] strategies.

There is a multi-agency consensus of opinion that '**something has to be done quickly**' to tackle **inactivity** and **excess weight / obesity** amongst girls / young women in Staffordshire. Whilst there are numerous examples of good practice / initiatives, there is clearly room for improvement in relation to **joined up working** between all agencies / stakeholders.

There is also a noticeable lack of visual and written / promotional information relating to the benefits of exercise, physical activity and healthy living in general; with particular regard to information targeted specifically at Staffordshire girls / young women of **all** faiths or backgrounds.

Whilst sporting stars such as Jessica Ennis may be the 'faces of the Olympics', research indicates that the use of such case studies may not have a significant positive effect on girls and young women, who appear to see them as 'remote stars' and who, for a number of reasons, they feel they are unlikely to emulate.

8.0 Recommendations

8.1 Introduction

Based on research findings, the following strategic recommendations are tendered:

1. Staffordshire Youth and Community Service share the findings of this report with all key stakeholders, which should include statutory agencies / departments, and representatives of appropriate clubs, organisations and the private [fitness] sector.
2. Key stakeholders should meet and agree to share an **urgent** commitment to **work in partnership** to share and pool resources and expertise to:
 - a. improve the participation of girls / young women in physical activity
 - b. tackle key related issues such as excessive weight and obesity
3. Strategies should include a recognition that girls / young women's involvement in physical activity will, on the whole, be enhanced by the involvement of friends and peers, and should be:
 - a. fun
 - b. not always competitive
 - c. accessible
 - d. affordable
 - e. locally marketed / publicised
4. Multi-agency systems should be in place to support and direct those girls / young women who display evidence of sporting talent, or a desire to become involved in [competitive] sporting activities to specialist agencies, clubs and trainers / mentors; ensuring that their enjoyment and successes in sport can be fulfilled and recognised.
5. There should be a commitment to ensure that no groups or individuals are marginalised due to age, gender, race, culture, sexuality or economic situation.
6. Further Staffordshire research is carried out to gain a more in-depth understanding of the needs and aspirations of potentially marginalised groups or individuals, with aims that include enhancing their accessibility to physical activities / sport.

9.0 Conclusions

9.1 Introduction

It is apparent that anecdotal evidence and articles in national media that the involvement of young women in physical activity and sport is in decline **is a fact** and relates to the situation in Staffordshire. This should give rise to concern, as research is indicating that immediate and long-term effects include alarming financial, social costs and associated wider impacts, linked directly to poor fitness, poor health and excessive weight / obesity.

9.2 Key Areas of Concern

We have identified a number of national and locally based areas of concern that include;

- girls / young women are particularly vulnerable to becoming less active / participate less in sport, and risk associated health problems such as obesity – for example, by the age of 14 years, **50%** of girls do not achieve national guidelines
- if obesity continues to rise at current rates, it could cost the UK **£46billion** by 2050
- in Stoke-on-Trent just **29%** of adults take part in 30 minutes of physical activity, compared with an English average of **36%**
- in Staffordshire **32.6%** of children are classified as overweight or obese, compared with an English average of **20.4%** of boys and **17%** of girls

9.3 The Way Forward

To do nothing is clearly **not an option**, and strategies should include improved **multi-agency partnership working** that includes a commitment to:

- improve the participation of girls / young women in physical activity
- tackle key related issues such as excessive weight and obesity

There should be an understanding that the majority of girls / young women in Staffordshire are generally not motivated by involvement in competitive sport and 'winning'; rather a desire to be fit and healthy, and a preference for involvement in physical activity to be **fun**, carried out with **friends** and **peers**, and be **accessible** and **affordable**.

There should also be an understanding that '*one size does not fit all*'. For example, Asian / Muslim girls / young women are influenced by their culture and religion. Whilst those Asian girls / women surveyed are perhaps more concerned about their fitness, health and well being than others, they are also as, if not more concerned than the wider group about access to physical activities, fitness and well-being facilities.

It has been suggested that 'Asian only fitness / swimming' sessions should not necessarily be the preserve of Asian / Muslim girls / women only. There is no apparent reason why such [female only] facilities cannot jointly be made available to wider female community / family members.

Note should also be taken to key issues such as sexual orientation in sport, as research has highlighted for example that bisexuality and transsexuality are underrepresented in sport research and policy.

9.4 Sport Participation

Whilst it is clear that that the majority of girls / young women in Staffordshire are generally not motivated by involvement in competitive sport and 'winning'; it is also clear that a significant number are. As the legacy of the Olympics has demonstrated, it is important that continued support and direction is targeted at those who have a desire to develop their interests and abilities; to ensure that Staffordshire is a place where all can achieve their full potential.

9.5 Sustainability

There are a number of issues to be addressed, which as highlighted at **Section 8.0**, should include key stakeholders agreeing to share an **urgent** commitment to **work in partnership**, to share and pool resources and expertise, to improve the participation of girls / young women in physical activity and tackle short and long-term key related issues, such as excessive weight and obesity.



WIN £25.00 Cash!

Thank you for taking the time to complete this short questionnaire, aimed at young women living in Staffordshire. Our objective is to gain an understanding of **YOUR** views on physical activity and involvement in Sport. All those submitting a completed questionnaire will have the opportunity to win a **£25.00 Cash Prize**.

Personal Information

Name

Ethnic Origin **Age**

Postcode

Employment Status (e.g. Student / Employed / Unemployed)

Registered disabled Yes No

Section 1 – How often you exercise?

At least once a week

More than once a week

Rarely – less than once a month

Never

How would you rate the following?
(1 is low – 5 is high) (0 – no views)

Being good at Sport is important to me 0 1 2 3 4 5

Winning at Sport is important to me 0 1 2 3 4 5

I enjoy being active 0 1 2 3 4 5

I enjoy exercise 0 1 2 3 4 5

Being healthy is important to me 0 1 2 3 4 5

Looking good is important to me 0 1 2 3 4 5

I would like to know more about keeping fit and healthy 0 1 2 3 4 5

Section 2 - How would you rate the following (1 is low – 5 is high) (0 – no views)

PE at school is / was fun and enjoyable	0 1 2 3 4 5
I am aware of places outside school / college where I can keep fit / become involved in Sport	0 1 2 3 4 5
I can easily access places to keep fit and become involved in Sport	0 1 2 3 4 5
If there were more places to go, I would use them	0 1 2 3 4 5
If access to places / activities was cheaper, I would use them	0 1 2 3 4 5
Places need to be clean and cater for girls (e.g. hair dryers / mirrors)	0 1 2 3 4 5
'Girls Only' places / activities would encourage me to exercise more	0 1 2 3 4 5

Section 3 How would you rate the following (1 is low – 5 is high) (0 – no views)

I would exercise more if my friends took part	0 1 2 3 4 5
I would exercise more if my family took part	0 1 2 3 4 5
I would exercise more with support from teachers / youth workers	0 1 2 3 4 5
Exercise and Sport needs to be more ' <i>fun</i> '	0 1 2 3 4 5

Section 4 Please name 2 Sportswomen

-
-

Anything else you wish to add / 'Wish List'? (Please continue on a separate piece of paper if necessary)

For further information, please contact **Edwin Lewis** at Wider Impact Consultancy on **0845 165 0491**, or email **edwin@widerimpact.com**

Appendix B

Chesterton (North) Workshop

Q1. What is the best thing about getting involved in exercise / sport?

- Fun / enjoyment (x6)
- Keeping fit (x5)
- Keeping healthy (x2)
- Getting involved

Q2. What is the worst thing?

- Takes up time (x3)
- Makes you tired (x3)
- Injuries (x2)

Q3. What form of exercise / sport interests you the most?

- Dance / Zumba (x7)
- Football (x5)
- Athletics / Cross country (x5)
- Swimming (x2)
- Basketball (x2)
- Netball (x2)
- Trampolining
- Table tennis
- All sports

Q4. What could be done to encouraging you to participate more in sport?

- Hockey (x4)
- Swimming (x2)
- Badminton
- Football
- Dance

Wish list

- More P.E. lessons (x3)
- Jessica Ennis as coach (x2)
- If Steven Gerard came
- David Beckham to teach us to play football
- Justin Bieber watching us play sport
- More fit lads

Lichfield (Central) Workshop

Q1 *What is the best thing about getting involved in exercise / sport?*

- Keeping fit and healthy (x5)
- Meeting new people who share the same interest as me (x2)
- Enjoyable / fun (x2)
- You look good at the end

Q2 *What is the worst thing?*

- Looking unattractive and inadequate compared to some in looks and ability (x2)
- Losing (x2)
- Getting out of breath
- Not liking the sport
- You have to do work
- Being dominated by boys
- The often competitive edge between boys and girls
- Stereotypes

Q3 *What form of exercise / sport interests you the most?*

- Fitness DVDs / Zumba /dance (x3)
- Gymnastics (x2)
- Netball (x2)
- Hockey
- Rugby
- Football
- Swimming
- Running
- Rounders - i.e. competitive

Q4 *What form of exercise interests you the least?*

- Football (x3)
- Swimming (x3)
- Rugby
- Hockey
- Yoga
- Running
- Trampolining

Q5 *What could be done to encouraging YOU to participate more in exercise / sport?*

- Cheaper activities aimed solely at women (x2)
- Competitions (x2)
- Getting something at the end of it
- Knowing what is on offer
- No pressure to be the best

- Make it music, all with singing
- Wider available & more specific
- No dress code

Wish list

- Cheap places for young people to go to (x3)
- Prizes
- Wear what you want
- Take my dog
- Meet famous people to exercise with or do sport
- Acrobatics

Burton on Trent (South) Workshop – Asian Girls / Women Only

Q1 *What is the best thing about getting involved in exercise / sport?*

- Keeping fit and healthy (x3)
- Meeting new friends
- Socialising
- Achievements
- Losing weight

Q2 *What is the worst thing?*

- Getting tired / after effects / pain (x3)
- Sweating
- Getting smelly
- Not achieving anything

Q3 *What form of exercise / sport interests you the most? (Under 16 years)*

- Tennis (x3)
- Rounders (x2)
- Badminton
- Acrobatics
- Rugby

Q3 *What form of exercise / sport interests you the most? (post 16 years)*

- Swimming (x3)
- Dance (x 2)
- Cycling (x2)
- Indoor games (e.g. Table Tennis)

- Treadmills
- Badminton
- Volleyball
- Weights
- Spinning
- On the ball exercises

Q4 *What form of exercise interests you the least?*

- Contact sports / exercise (x3)
- Golf
- Running
- Rowing

Q5 *What could be done to encouraging YOU to participate more in exercise / sport?*

- Crèche for women with children (x4)
- Family involved
- Having company
- Friends involved
- Fun
- Taking place in local areas

Wish List

- Facilities for ladies only (x5)
- Netball team
- Rounders team
- More girl's football teams
- Swimming

Stafford Girls Community Football Club

Q1. *How did you find out about this Club?*

- Friends (x15)
- School (x5)
- Ex-managers (x2)
- Internet (x3)
- Ex-players and friends
- Doing kick ups while watching a match
- Family members

Q2 *What do you enjoy most?*

- Social aspect / friends (x13)
- Keeping fit (x10)
- Fun / enjoyment (x7)
- Welcoming atmosphere (x4)
- Girls only (x2)
- The sport (x2)
- Team work

Youth Workers / Managers Workshop

Q1 *What are the challenges in encouraging more young women to participate in exercise / sport?*

- Cost of some sports if taken up can be expensive (x5)
- Suitable facilities (x3)
- Breaking routine meeting friends just to chat instead of engaging in an activity (x3)
- Promotion(x2)
- Limited women's sports resources i.e. Volleyball, netball (x2)
- Limited amount of provision (x2)
- Changing attitudes within friendship groups to engage in exercise / sport (x2)
- Lack of esteem & confidence (x2)
- Develop aspirations / motivations to find places that offer exercise / sport (x2)
- Offering gender specific opportunities
- Male majority dictates activity
- Not wanting to exercise with men
- Stereotype & culture challenges
- Stereotypes & self esteem
- Stereotypes: attitudes around exercise / sport from school
- Gender stereotyping in programme planning
- Role models not participating in sport
- Males like to watch / film / laugh
- Lack of interest
- Physiological changes in young women
- Some young women prefer not to be sweaty
- Limited women youth workers that do exercise / sport
- How do we capture the whole cohort?
- Sport seen as elitist
- Opposing outlook
- Lack of opportunity
- Staff don't want to do sport
- Training for workers
- Young people relying on parents to take them to provision
- Move away from football - more choice
- Educate the value / benefit of participation
- Suitable times and venues

Q2 What needs to be done now (Immediate)?

- Female friendly options (x3)
- Cheaper options for exercise / sport (x3)
- Promote the activity (x3)
- Better local planning (x2)
- Get schools involved (x2)
- Wider range of sport more attractive to women (x2)
- More young women trained in women friendly sport or exercise to music (x2)
- More exercise and physical activity offered at youth clubs (x2)
- Financially accessible venues (i.e. Leisure centre)
- More affordable provision within walking distance
- Partnership working on engagement of young women
- Raised awareness in schools / youth provision of consequences of not participating in exercise / sport
- Raise awareness with parents / carers
- Get involved as soon as possible
- Link with leisure services
- Analyse demand

Q3 What needs to be done within 1 year?

- All participating voluntarily. Vision & guideline / partnership working
- Team of people target on sports
- Training opportunity
- Inter county competition
- Yearly open days / multi agency projects in schools from year 7
- Young women leading on delivery of sports / exercise
- Develop more female clubs / times
- Keep up with trends / make it fun
- Sessions for those of similar age
- Staffs clubs young people do sports for girls
- Increase in women friendly sports / exercise in plans, priorities
- Targeted activities specifically for young women
- Schools offer more sports education
- Budget for physical activity
- Invest
- More affordable venues
- Use community resource
- Respond to young people directed research
- More community sports on offer

Q4 What needs to be done within 5 years?

- Improve financial support for local initiatives
- Investment in primary / junior sport education activities
- Cost
- More funding for established organisations
- Clear policy working together leading (teaching) young people
- Embedded in policy / strategy requirement
- Improve perceptions / image of sport & exercise
- A review process to show results of any increase in participation

- Advertise space for classes at reduced cost... if can't do self
- Government need to promote healthy living more
- Trend / cool
- Change culture
- Compete with other services

Q5 What are the consequences of doing nothing?

- Obesity (x6)
- Further health inequalities / consequences (x4)
- Young women having low self-esteem and negative thoughts of self (x3)
- Health problems related to smoking / drinking / overweight (x3)
- Young women not realising the link between improving own self esteem & body image with sport / physical activity (x2)
- Cycle of under activity (x2)
- Strains on the NHS
- Fat unfit 40 year olds
- Mortality rates
- Increase in suicide rates
- Acceptance of current culture

Wish list

- Professionally trained workers remit is around this area (x2)
- Take over the Astro turf at Knutton and reopen the leisure centre to young people
- Team of people with remit / area
- Fully equipped gyms & sports hall at all centres
- Free entry to leisure centres
- Subsidised access to leisure facilities
- Funding
- Better / cheaper
- Local organisations recognise and address cost implications
- To train young women in sports. Sports makers / leaders
- Affordable leisure facilities
- Information for young people to understand the link between sport / physical activity & raised self esteem
- Sport to be perceived differently & sold differently

Appendix C

Telephone Survey – Private Companies

Company Osborne's Tennis Coaching

Telephone Number: 07926 262882

Address: 55 Forest Road, Burton-on-Trent, DE13 9TW

1) What sports / exercise do you offer young women – support / guidance etc.?

Guidance from the basics e.g. being able to hit the ball over the net to playing a full set of tennis.

2) What facilities and safety / security do you have? Why?

Rents out courts on Shobnall Leisure Complex (£5.00 ph) – courts have fences around them, assures that there are lockers inside complex and a car park opposite the courts.

3) How much does it cost? Payment method? Do you offer age discounts?

Court nine (£5.00ph) same amount to pay for students (£5.00ph) for lessons

Accepts cash and cheques

Come in a group and would give discounts to the price – would be cheaper

4) What do you do that makes you different from similar clubs when encouraging young women to get involved? Successful or not? – Why?

Teaches 4 different sections – power, technique, resistance and performance

Carries these out flexibly depending on your skill level – also shows how to prevent injuries – foot positioning and racket handling

5) What do you offer young women of a particular religious belief e.g. Muslim?

No problems for Muslim beliefs – can wear trousers to hide their legs, as long as it's comfortable – focus on footwear. Mixed doubles games with Asians – no problem.

6) Are you aware of websites such as <http://www.activeplacespower.com/> to make your services more accessible to young women?

Not aware of such websites

Company Tamworth Boxing Academy

Telephone Number: 01827 31111

Address: Previous; Sandy Way, B77 4DS – Tamworth
New; Orchard Street, B79 7RH – Tamworth

1) What sports / exercise do you offer young women – support / guidance etc.?

Just boxing – 2 levels, fitness / long-term competitiveness

In the next couple of months introducing a fitness suite that will consist of weights and gym equipment

2) What facilities and safety/ security do you have? Why?

The club have lockers

Do have showers but there is no hot water available at the moment

3) How much does it cost? Payment method? Do you offer age discounts?

£3.00 per session, £10.00 per week, £30.00 per month, £80.00 every 3 months, £150.00 every 6 months, £250.00 every year – bigger the bulk package, the bigger the discount.

4) What do you do that makes you different from similar clubs when encouraging young women to get involved? Successful or not? – Why?

Offer session every day for men's group – mix and match the days / times (*women currently train with the lads*)

5) What do you offer young women of a particular religious belief e.g. Muslim?

Are allowed to wear jogging bottoms / tracksuit bottoms to cover legs

Changing rooms are communal – so would have to change at home

6) Are you aware of websites such as <http://www.activeplacespower.com/> to make your services more accessible to young women?

Not aware of such websites

Company Burton Kickboxing Academy

Telephone Number: 07903 299012

Address: Different venues across Burton area – times and venues on the website.

1) What sports / exercise do you offer young women – support / guidance etc.?

Offering just kickboxing

3 different instructors – 1 male and 2 female to give support

Experienced Kick Boxers also teach the beginners with tips and hints

2) What facilities and safety / security do you have? Why?

All venues have changing rooms and toilets

Venue has lockers. In 6 years of teaching, nothing has been stolen

3) How much does it cost? Payment method? Do you offer age discounts?

£6.00 per class (2 hours)

Use cash/ cheque

Pay as you go scheme. Pay monthly scheme

£160.00 per month

£50.00 of unlimited training – pay at the end of the month

4) What do you do that makes you different from similar clubs when encouraging young women to get involved? Successful or not? – Why?

2 female instructors who are world class champions and very experienced of delivering mixed classes of abilities, sex and ages.

5) What do you offer young women of a particular religious belief e.g. Muslim?

Private cubicle changing rooms or toilets that can be used

Can wear loose trousers to cover up legs

6) Are you aware of websites such as <http://www.activeplacespower.com/> to make your services more accessible to young women?

Not aware of such websites

Company John Jepson Black Belt Academy

Telephone Number: 01283 244760

Address: Union Street, Burton-upon-Trent

1) What sports / exercise do you offer young women – support / guidance etc.?

Offer Kick Boxing and Karate

What they get out of it decides which is best for clients

Fitness, co-ordination, self-defence, stamina and discipline

2) What facilities and safety / security do you have? Why?

Do not have any showers – licensing reasons

Do not have any lockers

Small academy, so ensures not too far away from belongings

3) How much does it cost? Payment method? Do you offer age discounts?

Lessons last 45 minutes

Can pay in block books 9 weeks / months)

Monthly direct debit

Pricing differs £6.00 average

4) What do you do that makes you different from similar clubs when encouraging young women to get involved? Successful or not? – Why?

Can book an appointment for a tour of the academy to see whether suitable or not

Free trial available

5) What do you offer young women of a particular religious belief e.g. Muslim?

Changing rooms in a cubical format for changing clothes

Full length trousers are available

6) Are you aware of websites such as <http://www.activeplacespower.com/> to make your services more accessible to young women?

Not aware of such websites

Company Chase District Netball Club

Telephone Number: 01543 450281

Address: Cannock Chase Leisure Centre, WS11 2AL

1) What sports / exercise do you offer young women – support / guidance etc.?

Back to Netball – for older women (more relaxed)

The Coach and the umpire have worked together for eight years

Have an under 16's club

Older women's club – 20's - 30's

Get put into a team whilst training

2) What facilities and safety / security do you have? Why?

Cannock Chase leisure rooms available for use

3) How much does it cost? Payment method? Do you offer age discounts?

£3.00 per session

Pay by cash

Can also pay weekly in cash

4) What do you do that makes you different from similar clubs when encouraging young women to get involved? Successful or not? – Why?

Enjoyment

Organised

Motivational

Full courts lessons every week

Very relaxed league in the summer in order to break in the new players

New team in every year

Good reputation

5) What do you offer young women of a particular religious belief e.g. Muslim?

Full length trousers can be worn

Black leggings can also be worn

6) Are you aware of websites such as <http://www.activeplacespower.com/> to make your services more accessible to young women?

Not heard of such websites

Company Jissen Ryu Jujitsu

Telephone Number: 01889 801819

Address: 5 Bilberry Close, Rugeley, WS15 2SH

1) What sports / exercise do you offer young women – support / guidance etc.?

No experience at all is needed

Teach Jujitsu, Kung Fu and Karate as mixed classes

Also Pressure Point work

Suitable for women, beginners and those of a lesser strength

2) What facilities and safety / security do you have? Why?

No showers are available / No lockers are available but belongings can be kept within close range.

All instructors have first aid certificates / Venues are risk assessed

3) How much does it cost? Payment method? Do you offer age discounts?

Free session

Sessions last 2 hours

Accept cash or debit

Not tied in

£10.00 week, or £40.00 per month / Up to 6 hours training per week

There are three classes on each week.

4) What do you do that makes you different from similar clubs when encouraging young women to get involved? Successful or not? – Why?

Can tour around and see what can be offered / Instruction in self-defence and laws

All instructors hold teaching qualifications

5) What do you offer young women of a particular religious belief e.g. Muslim?

Full length trousers can be used

Changing available in lockable toilet cubicles

Can cater for needs to a degree

6) Are you aware of websites such as <http://www.activeplacespower.com/> to make your services more accessible to young women?

Not aware of such websites

Company Washland Women Runners

Telephone Number: 01283 508191

Address: 31 Lichfield Street, Burton, DE14 3RH

Shobnall Leisure Complex

Peelcroft Club

1) What sports / exercise do you offer young women – support / guidance etc.?

Peelcroft do a total beginner club every April – can make new friends

Beginners course at Shobnall for ladies

2) What facilities and safety / security do you have? Why?

Shobnall has shower facilities and locker rooms

Peelcroft has neither

3) How much does it cost? Payment method? Do you offer age discounts?

£1.00 per session

Pay by cash

No contracts necessary

4) What do you do that makes you different from similar clubs when encouraging young women to get involved? Successful or not? – Why?

Take different routes

Have trained people running at the front, back and within the group so no one is left out and to ensure that safety measures are met

Currently 200 members

Socialise outside of club

5) What do you offer young women of a particular religious belief e.g. Muslim?

Full length trousers are suitable / dress as you find comfortable / suitable footwear

Changing rooms and showers are cubicles

6) Are you aware of websites such as <http://www.activeplacespower.com/> to make your services more accessible to young women?

Not aware of such websites

Company Scuba and Outdoor Pursuits Centre

Telephone Number: 01782 616453

Address: 102 Hassell Street, Newcastle
Chesterton Pool

1) What sports / exercise do you offer young women – support/ guidance etc.?

Diving

Offer discover scuba sessions such as 'try dive'

Guidance on kit and courses - then to the pool to 'try and dive'

2) What facilities and safety / security do you have? Why?

No lockers available – can leave belongings by the side of the pool

Showers are available

Ladies toilets

3) How much does it cost? Payment method? Do you offer age discounts?

Credit card or cash

Open water course lasts 6 weeks & 2 days at Stoney Coves

Costs £249.00 for the training, and £99.00 for the surf and materials

4) What do you do that makes you different from similar clubs when encouraging young women to get involved? Successful or not? – Why?

Make new friends

Once you are qualified, professionally dive to 18m in open water

5) What do you offer young women of a particular religious belief e.g. Muslim?

Communal showers

Can wear leggings with bathing suit

6) Are you aware of websites such as <http://www.activeplacespower.com/> to make your services more accessible to young women?

Not heard of such websites

Company LA Diving & Marine Services

Telephone Number: 01785 917917

Address: Pillaton Hall Farm, Penkridge ST19 5RZ

1) What sports / exercise do you offer young women – support / guidance etc.?

Mixed diving lessons of men and women

Only male instructor

Course can be tailored depending on ability and willingness to learn

2) What facilities and safety / security do you have? Why?

Lockers available

Showers available

Car park available

3) How much does it cost? Payment method? Do you offer age discounts?

'Try dive' £10.00

£320.00 for 5 weeks: 1 hr pool and 1 hr classroom + 1 pool session per week and 4 dives -
£50.00 deposit

Can pay rest in full / instalments on card / cash

4) What do you do that makes you different from similar clubs when encouraging young women to get involved? Successful or not? – Why?

Very flexible – lessons Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

Tour beforehand and pick medical forms to save time

Lessons can be tailored – anytime in the week

5) What do you offer young women of a particular religious belief e.g. Muslim?

Leggings and tracksuit bottoms can be worn in the pool – advised to always bring a T-shirt

6) Are you aware of websites such as <http://www.activeplacespower.com/> to make your services more accessible to young women?

Not heard of such websites

Company Stoke Ski Centre

Telephone Number: 01782 204159

Address: Festival Way, ST1 5PU

1) What sports / exercise do you offer young women – support / guidance etc.?

Skiing and snowboarding available

Learn about control, speed and direction

Lessons are done in groups but group numbers can vary – private lessons £30.00

2) What facilities and safety / security do you have? Why?

Toilets are available

No showers available

No lockers available

Can leave valuables behind counter

3) How much does it cost? Payment method? Do you offer age discounts?

Beginners (Level1) £2.00 (non members); membership fee

Can obtain a discount on the website. Block bookings are cheaper than pay as you go. Can pay by cash or card

4) What do you do that makes you different from similar clubs when encouraging young women to get involved? Successful or not? – Why?

Levels 1, 3 and 5 ski / snowboard together

Levels 2, 4 and 6 ski / snowboard together

Time of lessons vary depending on skill

Once all levels have been passed £10.00 (member) or £15.00 (non member) to practice what has been learned

5) What do you offer young women of a particular religious belief e.g. Muslim?

Recommended to wear long trousers

6) Are you aware of websites such as <http://www.activeplacespower.com/> to make your services more accessible to young women?

No apparent awareness of such websites

Company Mia Stonebridge Zumba

Telephone Number: 07944 655009

Address: Various Stafford locations

1) What sports / exercise do you offer young women – support / guidance etc.?

Zumba – Latin inspired dance

1 class for people of all / mixed abilities for Zumba and focusing on moving and dancing

2) What facilities and safety / security do you have? Why?

Takes place in community centres across Stafford

No lockers

No showers

Toilets available

3) How much does it cost? Payment method? Do you offer age discounts?

Each session costs £4.25

Sessions last 55 minutes

Pay by cash only

Pay as you go

4) What do you do that makes you different from similar clubs when encouraging young women to get involved? Successful or not? – Why?

Fantastic exercise

Cater for all abilities of Zumba. Enjoyable whilst toning up

5) What do you offer young women of a particular religious belief e.g. Muslim?

Allowed to wear long trousers to cover legs

No men are taking part in the classes at the moment

6) Are you aware of websites such as <http://www.activeplacespower.com/> to make your services more accessible to young women?

Not aware of such websites

Company Caveman Training

Telephone Number: 07794 868187

Address: King Street, Newcastle, ST4 3EF

1) What sports / exercise do you offer young women – support / guidance etc.?

High intensity circuit training that involves weights and heavy lifting

Free induction

2) What facilities and safety / security do you have? Why?

No changing rooms

No showers

Toilets available

No lockers – but can leave belongings at the side of the class

3) How much does it cost? Payment method? Do you offer age discounts?

Sessions last 30 minutes

On line payments and bookings

Pay as you go that is paid using a card

Prices differ – see website

4) What do you do that makes you different from similar clubs when encouraging young women to get involved? Successful or not? – Why?

Currently 3000 people attending – very popular workout

Only training like this in the country

5) What do you offer young women of a particular religious belief e.g. Muslim?

Allowed to wear full length trousers i.e. tracksuit bottoms or jogging bottoms

6) Are you aware of websites such as <http://www.activeplacespower.com/> to make your services more accessible to young women?

Not aware of such websites

Company Body Image UK

Telephone Number: 07725 188378

Address: Holly Lane, WS6 6BD

1) What sports / exercise do you offer young women – support / guidance etc.?

Pole dancing, Aerial Silks, adult ballet and aerobics Style Pole and Aerial hoop.

Built like and aerobics class and shown 2 basic routines then add what you learn / want

2) What facilities and safety / security do you have? Why?

Toilets available

Small changing room (cubicle) available

Can bring belongings into the room as there are no lockers

3) How much does it cost? Payment method? Do you offer age discounts?

Group - £10.00 ph – 1 pole each, shared instructor

One to one - £25.00 ph – 1 pole each instructor to yourself

Private group - £12.00 ph

Pay as you go with cash / card

Book 4 up front – one session free

4) What do you do that makes you different from similar clubs when encouraging young women to get involved? Successful or not? – Why?

Open 5 days per week – soon to be 6

Can have group or one to one or private group sessions

Really easy to follow

5) What do you offer young women of a particular religious belief e.g. Muslim?

Can wear trousers for the first 8 weeks of pole or throughout with aerobics

Pole – shorts after 8 weeks to progress – Health & Safety reasons

6) Are you aware of websites such as <http://www.activeplacespower.com/> to make your services more accessible to young women?

Not aware of such websites

Name of the Company: Zumba Fitness

Telephone Number: 07977 829199

Address: Cannock & Walsall area

1) What sports / exercise do you offer young women – support / guidance etc.?

Regular Zumba, Zumbatomics – including children

Gold – beginner and older people, Zumba toning –weights and Aqua Zumba. Latin dancing incorporating international music.

2) What facilities and safety / security do you have? Why?

Avon Business Centre

No lockers or showers

Toilets available

3) How much does it cost? Payment method? Do you offer age discounts?

Classes last 1 hour

£4.50 – ‘pay as you go’

Offers available

4) What do you do that makes you different from similar clubs when encouraging young women to get involved? Successful or not? – Why?

Easy to follow

All over body work out

Very popular

Intense workout

All levels of fitness in the same class

All about the music and ‘happy’ feel good work out

Lots of personality in the class and opportunities to make new friends

5) What do you offer young women of a particular religious belief e.g. Muslim?

All colours and nationalities are in the classes

Predominantly ladies, but do get some men in classes

Allowed to wear full length trousers

6) Are you aware of websites such as <http://www.activeplacespower.com/> to make your services more accessible to young women?

No apparent awareness of such websites

Name of the Company: Gust Swim School Ltd

Telephone Number: 01785 817534

Address: Whitebridge, Estates, ST15 8LQ, Barlaston

1) What sports / exercise do you offer young women – support / guidance etc.?

Swimming lesson

Teacher comes into the pool with you

Can give extra lessons if not progressing well

2) What facilities and safety / security do you have? Why?

Changing rooms available

Showers available

No lockers

In a luxury home (private)

3) How much does it cost? Payment method? Do you offer age discounts?

Pay over the phone by card

Pay up front for each lesson

Lessons cost £18.00 for 30 minutes

4) What do you do that makes you different from similar clubs when encouraging young women to get involved? Successful or not? – Why?

Currently teaching in 14 schools

5) What do you offer young women of a particular religious belief e.g. Muslim?

Can wear trousers / leggings but it will be harder to swim

6) Are you aware of websites such as <http://www.activeplacespower.com/> to make your services more accessible to young women?

Not aware of such websites

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Independent Analysis. Strategic Reviews

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