

## Active Castle Point Network Update

The Active Castle Point network was formed in early 2007. The network brings together a number of partners to look at delivery of services and to encourage local people to become more physically active. A number of partners attend to represent the borough as a whole and act as conduits for information to and from the network. To launch the network information days were arranged in the borough for groups to:

- find out more about the network
- provide a baseline of what services were currently being offered
- suggest ideas for physical activities they would like to see introduced

In 2008 Active Castle Point received £31,000 funding from SportEngland for delivery of projects which would see an increase in the physical activity of local residents. The funding was distributed to local groups to deliver the following:

- **Bikeability Courses**

*These are practical cycling courses for families providing 6 hours of tuition including road safety. Courses delivered through Canvey Schools Partnership and Deanes School.*

- **Increased Coaching**

*Coaching courses delivered through SEEVIC to upskill individuals who will then be able to lead physical activity sessions*

- **Activity Fairs & Vouchers**

*Groups were invited to be part of the Activity Fairs held across the borough and participate in the voucher scheme which allowed individuals to try a new activity free of charge. Clubs were reimbursed for each voucher returned. Groups attending Activity Fairs were awarded a small amount of money to cover their costs.*

- **Get Back Into...**

*This is a tried and tested format to encourage individuals to return to a sport or activity which they may have given up. Sessions were run on Cricket, Bowls and Line Dancing. Clubs were allocated money to cover*

*costs of extra coaching time, venue hire and publicity costs with the aim of integrating individuals into their mainstream sessions.*

- **Sport for People with Disabilities**

*Funding was given to Castle Point Sports Club for the Disabled to pay for extra equipment which encouraged more people with a disability to participate in their swimming sessions.*

- **Tea Dances**

*Afternoon tea dances were arranged at Smallgains Hall on Canvey Island particularly aimed at older people. The sessions were offered for 12 weeks free of charge with the costs being met from the funding. The dances proved a success with participants forming a new club to continue the sessions at a cost of £2 per person per week.*

During 2008/9 the Active Castle Point Network also;

- monitored the participation in Rugby Development delivered by Southend Rugby Football Club through the Schools Sports Partnership
- supported the MEND Programme aimed at families with overweight and obese children to educate them in good nutrition and encourage greater physical activity
- organised an event to encourage people to volunteer in sport
- encouraged sports clubs to access funding from Grassroots and other funding streams


One aspect which became clear to the network is that without a Sports Development Officer in the borough there is a real need for someone to co-ordinate physical activity opportunities and to create new openings. With funding from SportEssex and NHS South East Essex, Castle Point Association of Voluntary Services have been able to employ an Active Living Co-ordinator to raise awareness, promote opportunities and create extra provision for physical activity in the borough. Since coming into post in April 2009 the following projects/groups have been supported:

- Tea Dance attendees have formed a new group to continue service

- Running Sisters (for women beginners) has been implemented in partnership with Benfleet Running Club and proved successful
- Walk Tall has been assisted with promotion of new walks
- Essex FA have been assisted with their plans to introduce Futsal in Castle Point
- Funding has been secured to run Bodycare Fit for Life sessions across Castle Point for people aged over 55.
- Seated exercise has been introduced into an older people's sheltered accommodation unit (6 week course)
- Community Weight Loss Challenge has been encouraged to promote physical activity as part of participants' weight loss plan
- Readercise sessions in Canvey and Hadleigh Libraries to recognise Older People's Day

New sessions and ideas are constantly being investigated. Amongst these are plans to target non-sporty 16-19 year old females with Bollywood Dance sessions at SEEVIC.

The network continues to raise awareness of the benefits of being physically active. Individuals do not have to belong to a sports club or visit the gym to reach the recommended level of activity to maintain good health. Physical activity, is body movement produced by the skeletal muscles that results in an increase in energy expenditure. For most people physical activity needs to be of a moderate intensity to make the heart and lungs work harder, making an individual breathe slightly faster and feel slightly warmer than normal. Active Castle Point is continually reinforcing the message that thirty minutes, three times a week (3x30) is what we need to do to live an active life.

Look out for the  logo for groups and projects which are involved with and supported by the network.

- **Want to know about the possibilities for becoming more active?**

- **Want to know how your club can benefit from being involved with the Community Sports Network?**

Contact Karen Lawrie, Active Living Co-ordinator on 01268 638416 or email [karen.lawrie@castlepointavs.org.uk](mailto:karen.lawrie@castlepointavs.org.uk).