



# Making Life Better – Improving Health & Wellbeing for Adults

## 10 June 2015

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*Quality Care - for you, with you*



# Introduction:



- Fit 4 U targets adults with physical and/or sensory disabilities.
- Provides tailored physical activity and leisure opportunities.
- Overall aim of improving participants health and wellbeing.



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# Presentation Outline:



- Background
- Aim & Objectives
- Project Overview - Process
- Project Evaluation - Successes
- Challenges
- Learning



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# Background:



**Established Sept 2006 –  
Funded by Big Lottery (18  
months)**

- Based with Armagh & Dungannon Health Action Zone - 3 Resource Centres

**April 2008 – Mar 2009**

Sustained with partnership funding from SHSCT, Armagh City & District Council and Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council

**April 2009 to Present –  
change in remit and  
geographical area**

- Currently funded by the PHA, Fit 4 U model was extended across all localities in SHSCT & expanded to engage individuals from community as well as those attending local centres



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# Background:



- Fit 4 U evolved & developed over 6 years, from a small lottery funded project, engaging 50 people from 3 centres in Armagh/Dungannon.
- To a SHSCT wide, Public Health Agency, funded programme, engaging currently 192 people from the community and local Day Centres.
- Within last 4 years, significant work towards creating a more sustainable structure and future for Fit 4 U, with the development of four local constituted Fit 4 U Clubs, led by people with disabilities.

Map of NI showing the Southern Health and Social Care Trust



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## Project Aim:



To seek to empower people with physical / sensory disabilities to improve their health through participation in a range of physical activity and leisure opportunities, which promote independence and citizenship.



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# Project Principles:



- Health and Well-being improvement for all;
- Personal and public involvement;
- Empowerment for service users;
- Promoting independence;
- Support the development and inclusion of Volunteers
- Partnership working



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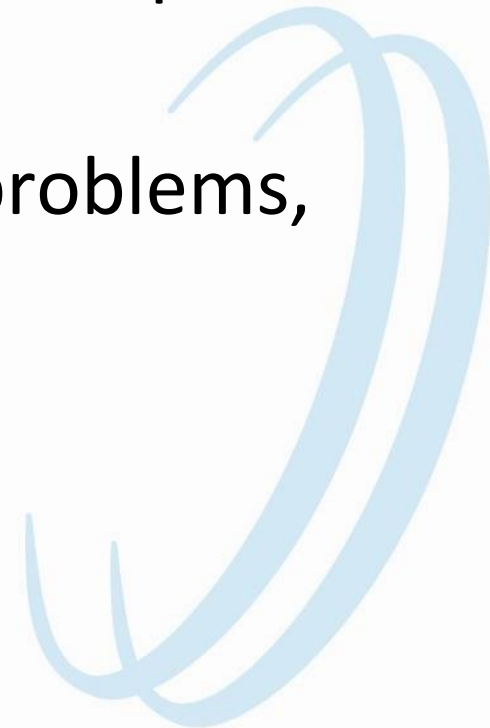
# Project Need:



- People with physical/sensory disabilities tend to lead more sedentary lifestyles because of a range of physical, economic, social and personal barriers.
- At increased risk of obesity, heart problems, poor mental health



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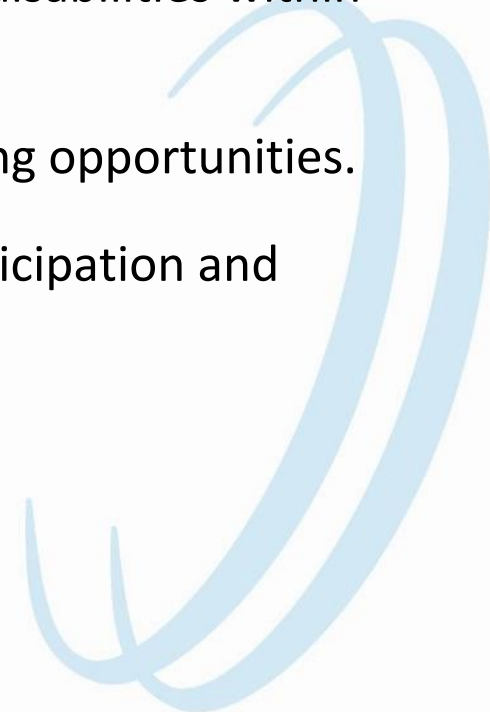




# Objectives



- To continue to develop partnerships with SHSCT, Councils and community/voluntary partners across SHSCT area, which improve physical activity opportunities for people with physical / sensory disabilities
- Co-ordinate and promote safe and accessible physical activity opportunities for people with physical and/or sensory disabilities within a range of settings and monitor and evaluate.
- To link with existing services and utilise external funding opportunities.
- To promote independent living through increased participation and opportunity for diversity



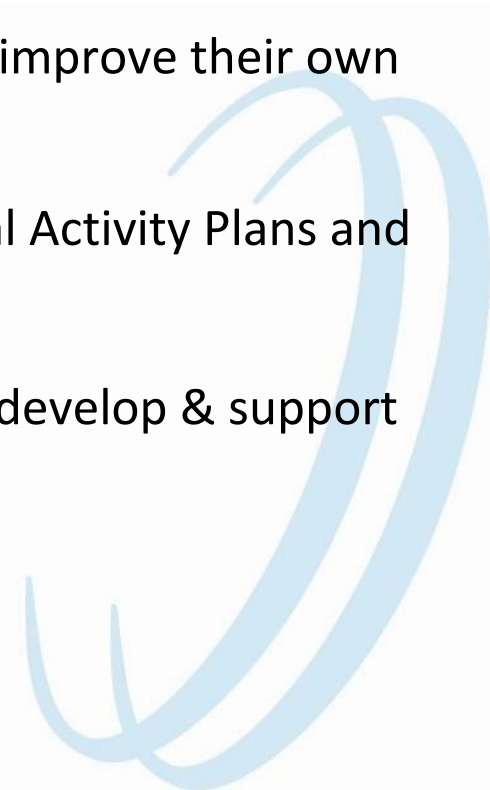
# Objectives



- To encourage community integration through participation at public leisure facilities and in mainstream activities
- To use a person centred approach to meet the needs of both service users and local communities
- To empower people with physical/sensory disabilities to improve their own health & well-being
- To support implementation of the Southern Area Physical Activity Plans and meet local & regional targets for health
- To involve volunteers in supporting Fit 4 U activities and develop & support community based opportunities for volunteering.



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# Fit 4 U Volunteers



- Volunteers are vital to the success of the project and integral to the delivery model
- Trust registered Fit 4 U volunteers, many long serving and committed to enhance the quality of life of others.
- Opportunity to gain experience and develop new skills in working with adults with physical and/or sensory disabilities.
- Opportunity to make a positive difference and worthwhile contribution to a person's life.
- Training opportunities and out of pocket expenses.



# Fit 4 U Volunteers



- Fit 4 Volunteers from the 5 Trust areas meet annually with the Fit 4 U Co-ordinator to share experiences and ideas



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# Activities – held during the day mostly in local leisure centres:

**fit4U**  
active lifestyles



Core exercise programmes e.g. boxercise, fitness suite, group physical activities



Inclusive sports e.g. boccia, new age kurling



Other sports & activities e.g. archery, badminton, golf, walking



Southern Area / Regional Events:

e.g. Southern Area Boccia Competition, Southern Area Archery Competition, Disability Sports NI Boccia



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# Activities:

**fit4U**  
active lifestyles



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# Activities:

**fit4u**  
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# Project Overview:



## Project Process:

- Individual referred to Fit 4 U via a range of health and community partners, as well as self referral
- Co-ordinator liaises with coaches/facilities to meet individual needs
- Advice of health professionals sought if appropriate.



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# Current Structure:



- **Strategic Steering Group**
- **Fit 4 U Project Officer**
  - ◆ Co-ordinates weekly Fit 4 U activities across 5 Councils.
- **4 constituted Fit 4 U Clubs**

Supported by Fit 4 U Project Officer and SHSCT Community Development Officers

- ◆ **Fit 4 U Dungannon**
- ◆ **Fit 4 U Armagh**
- ◆ **Fit 4 U Craigavon & Banbridge**
- ◆ **Fit 4 U Newry & Mourne**



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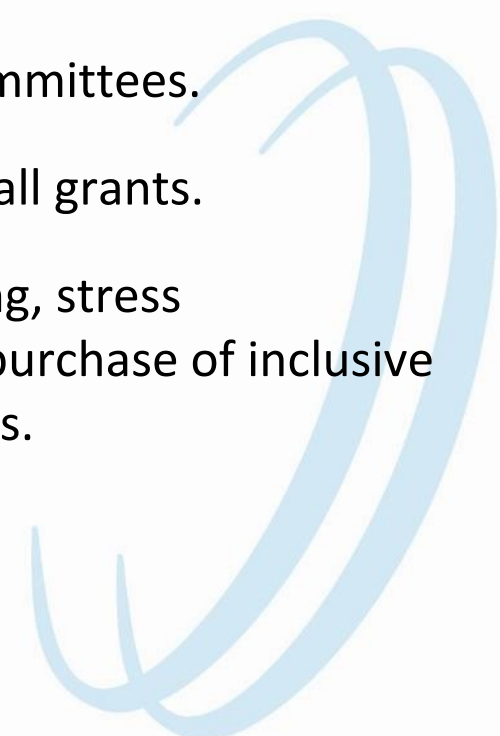
# Development: Fit 4 U Clubs



- Four Fit 4 U Clubs, led by people with disabilities constituted – May 2012
- People with disabilities hold office bearer positions within committees.
- Clubs supported by SHSCT Fit 4 U Co-ordinator & Community Development Workers within SHSCT
- Advisors from Council, SHSCT and community also on committees.
- Each Fit 4 U Club has successfully secured funding via small grants.
- Additional activities via Clubs - tai chi, yoga, healthy eating, stress management, teambuilding, transport to sports events, purchase of inclusive sports equipment and networking events with other clubs.
- Training and support for office bearers is on-going.



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# Project Evaluation:



- End of Programme Evaluation Questionnaires / Verbal Feedback
- External Evaluation of Fit 4 U Project - March 2013
  - ◆ Successful - highly valued by participants, wider families and carers
  - ◆ Positive impact on physical, mental and social health – inter-related
  - ◆ Participants comfortable in groups which involve only people with a disability
  - ◆ Most participants did not use leisure centres before Fit 4 U
  - ◆ Role of Project Officer viewed as critical to the success of Project
  - ◆ Concerns Fit 4 U would not exist if statutory support and input of Project Officer not available.
- RQIA Inspection 2008 - Cited as example of good practice of service user involvement & engagement through RQIA inspection process in 2008.



# Project Evaluation:



## Recognition:

### **HSC Quality Awards Nomination 2012**

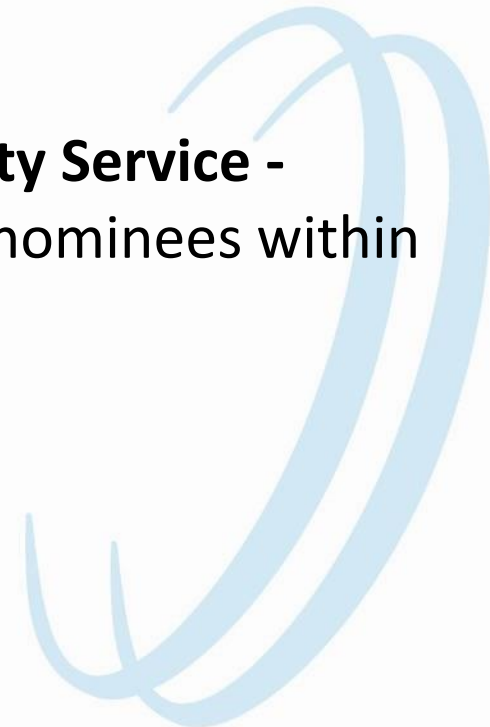
Fit 4 U selected within top 6 projects in Northern Ireland.

### **SHSCT Excellence Award Nomination - Community Service -**

Volunteers nominated - shortlisted to final three nominees within award category.



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# Project Outcomes:



- **Health Improvement** - evidenced in evaluations
- **Partnership Development** - with Councils, Health, Community
- **Activities Development** - weekly activities & additional club activities
- **Training** - for coaches, volunteers & people with disabilities
- **Service user empowerment** – via evaluation, Strategic Steering Group & most recently in the development of constituted clubs.
- **Volunteer Involvement** - 7 volunteers
- **Additional Funding** - through small grants for local Fit 4 U Clubs
- **Leisure Providers** - increased awareness of needs of disabled users
- **Improved access to inclusive activities** - adapted, tailored activities
- **Promotion of social inclusion** - community integration at public venues

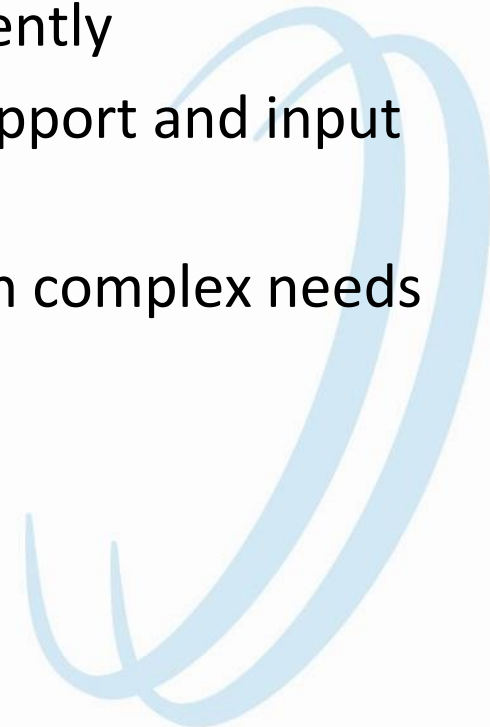


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# Challenges:

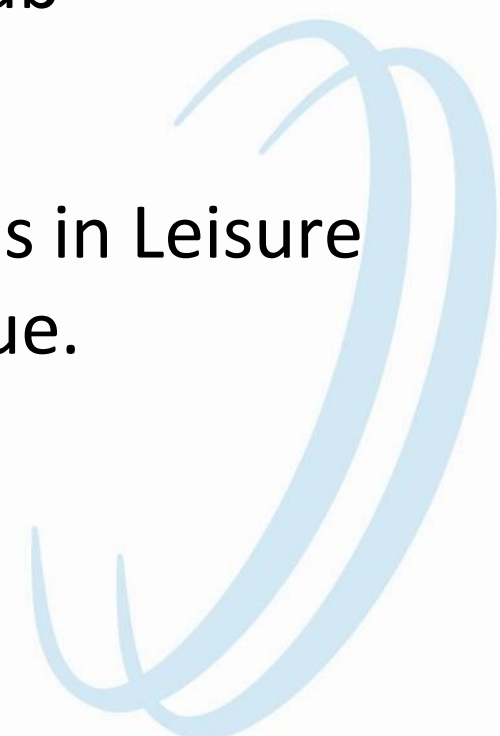


- Funding uncertainties – difficult to plan
- Change in partners/structure of Day Care and structure of Fit 4 U Project
- Implementing Fit 4 U Project across all localities in SHSCT area
- Capacity of Fit 4 U Clubs to continue independently
- Concerns Fit 4 U would not exist if statutory support and input of Project Officer not available
- Supporting ongoing programmes for those with complex needs



## Future Plans:

- Continued support and empowerment of people with disabilities, via Fit 4 U Clubs.
- Capacity Building Training – Fit 4 U Club committees
- Weekly programme of Fit 4 U activities in Leisure Centres across 5 Council areas continue.





# Just to finish ... participant Quotes

## External Evaluation - Case Studies



“The mix of physical, social and mental benefits linked to Fit 4 U has had a major impact upon life and wellbeing and confidence has improved notably.”

“Despite sight loss Fit 4 U has provided opportunities to try everything from climbing to archery to off the road driving.”

“Fit 4 U has delivered ‘big time’. As well as getting up and out of the house, enjoy being on the same playing field as other participants. Physiotherapist has confirmed that chair-based exercises have helped physically.”

“As well as providing a point of focus and the motivation and opportunity to get out of the house, Fit 4 U has provided a sense of perspective, as you meet people with different levels of disability.”



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