

WISPA
(Women in Sport and Physical Activity)

Directors' Report
For the Period Ended 31/03/23

The Directors present their report and financial statements for the period ended 31/03/23

Principal activity

The principal activity of the charity is to promote the participation of women in healthy recreation in the Belfast area.

Directors

The Directors who served during the period are as stated below:

Chair	Eileen Weir
Secretary	Niamh O'Neill
Directors	Emma Sheehy Iris McIlroy
Adviser	Tracy Mawhinney

Structure, Governance and Management

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated 24/10/06. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association.

Board of Trustees

The management committee are also the charity trustees for the purposes of charity law. All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity.

Objectives and Activities

The aim of the charity is to promote the participation of women in the Belfast area in healthy activity.

During this reporting period WISPA secured core funding from Public Health Agency and programme funding from National Lottery Community Fund NI which enabled the delivery of the MELT Project across Belfast and funding through Versus Arthritis for the 'Move to Improve' Project. Our F.A.B. Project was also extended into July 2022 with the support of the National Lottery Community Fund NI. Over the past year we have delivered 97 community based programmes in total, working with a range of community partners and organisations allowing us to work with 1,961 women who reside in the most socially deprived areas of Belfast. See monitoring information below.

Covid-19 and the cost of living crisis has made us continually look at our model of delivery and how we can use our networks and resources to have the best impact at community level. We are continuously thinking of innovative ways of working of how we deliver our work and communicate with the women involved.

- Number of opportunities provided = over 10,000
- Increase level of participation = 1,961 participants, of which 1,002 were returners who have used our service before and continue to exercise on a weekly basis. 959 were new to WISPA classes.
- 47% of the women said they are now more aware of the benefits of physical activity

and how it impacts on health and wellbeing

- 91% of the women questioned said they would continue to exercise after our programmes have ended and 9% said maybe.
- 75% of the women said the project had improved their mental health and well being
- 81% of the women said the project had improved their physical health and well being
- 29% of the women said the project had improved self-esteem and confidence

We are confident that we have made a positive impact on the majority of the women's health and wellbeing. This is demonstrated through the data received at our evaluation

Some of the comments we received from the women participating included:


- "This was a great experience. The programme impacted me differently than I thought it would as originally I used it to be introduced to triathlon and to increase my engagement in cardio activities. Since completing the programme I have improved in all 3 disciplines and completed my first 5k. I am more able to overcome the barriers that make me stop when I hit my discomfort zone. The programme was very well organised and I was able to attend with ease. Completing the programme has made me feel like I have accomplished something and I am very proud of that."
- "It provides an important women only space where they can exercise without judgement and with a great trainer."
- "These projects really help with mobility and mental health and allow me to meet other people. I love that it is so local."

Following the successful delivery of our programmes we recognise our position as a funded organisation and the pressure it brings to continue the momentum of delivery. For this reason, we are pro-active in identifying and sourcing future funding to ensure that we can continue to deliver our programmes into 2023-2024

We are confident that we have achieved our overall aim to provide increased opportunities for women to access local community based programmes designed to cater for their needs. Through engagement with WISPA we hope to encourage lifestyle changes which will impact on individual's health and wellbeing. We have developed strong partnerships with a wide range of community based groups/projects enabling us to better identify disengaged, sedentary women across the city.

Looking back on the past year we have faced a lot of transition in the organisation. Audrey Barr retired as Project Manager after 20+ years and Niamh O' Neill has stepped into her new role as Project Manager. We have also recruited new board members for WISPA which is very exciting and we hope that the project can continue to move forward going from strength to strength. Our financial performance has been in line with expectations. Total income has fallen, largely due to the end of our Lottery funding, and we have reduced costs and used some of our reserves to invest in programmes to ensure that we can continue to meet our objectives.

This report was approved by the Board on 14/6/23..... and signed on its behalf by

Signed 
Name: Eileen Weir - Chairperson/Director