

**WISPA
(Women in Sport and Physical Activity)**

**Directors' Report
For the Period Ended 31/03/24**

The Directors present their report and financial statements for the period ended 31/03/24

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
	Louise Irvine
	Nicki Ann Stanley
	Angela Hodkinson

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 sport and physical activity.

During this reporting period WISPA secured core funding from Public Health Agency and programme funding from National Lottery Community Fund NI, Halifax NI, Sported and Belfast Trust which enabled the delivery of our work across Belfast. Over the past year we have delivered 89 community based programmes in total, working with a range of community partners and organisations taking over 2,000 bookings from women who reside in the most socially deprived areas of Belfast. See monitoring information below. We are continuously thinking of innovative ways of delivering our work and communicating with the women involved.

- Number of opportunities provided = over 8,000
- Increase level of participation = 2,236 registrations, of which 1,591 were returners who have used our service before and continue to exercise on a weekly basis. 645 were new to WISPA classes.
- 45% of the women said they are now more aware of the benefits of physical activity and how it impacts on health and wellbeing.
- 90% of the women questioned said they would continue to exercise after our programmes have ended.
- 63% of the women said the project had improved their mental health and well being

- 45% of the women said the project had improved their physical health and well being
- 56% 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:

"Maria is so welcoming and makes you feel at ease from the start. There is no judgement of anyone's size, weight or ability which is fantastic. And if someone is struggling with a particular exercise Maria always has an alternative. She makes everyone feel included. I loved the mixture of spin, circuits and gym. I would definitely like to see this class continue as I feel my overall health and well-being has improved, and I have made some new friends."

"Love the yoga classes with WISPA – they are a slice of calmness and peace each Wednesday morning that I look forward to now."

"The WISPA coaches are so knowledgeable and great craic. I found the classes fantastic and would love to continue. They have fostered a new love for Pilates in me having never done it before so I really want to continue and improve on it."

"I wouldn't be able to afford to pay gym memberships cause of the cost of living. Because of the price of the classes I was able to attend. This has helped me immensely both physically and mentally. In turn, improving my family home."

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 2024-2025.

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.

Niamh O' Neill has continued her role as Project Manager and we have just recently employed a new member of staff to assist Niamh and the project. We also have plans to recruit more new board members and we hope that the project can continue to progress and move forward. Our financial performance has been in line with expectations. Total income has risen, largely due to increased activity, and we have reduced costs, generating a surplus that we will use to invest in programmes to ensure that we can continue to meet our objectives.

This report was approved by the Board on 4-7-24..... and signed on its behalf by

Signed Eileen Weir

Name: Eileen Weir – Chairperson/Director