

Seaton Village is located on the outskirts of Workington, in West Cumbria. The village has a population of 5,000 residents and a newly refurbished village hall with fresh, user-friendly facilities to serve the local community.

Background

Health statistics show residents in West Cumbria have low levels of physical activity. A fifth of Seaton's population is made up of Pensioner Households (over 65 years of age) which is approximately 5% more than the national average.

Fit 4 Life is a not-for-profit social enterprise based in West Cumbria which developed out of 'The Heart Workshop' charity in October 2004.

The Heart Workshop set up and ran healthy living initiatives for local people, especially those with Heart Disease. Fit 4 Life has expanded the service so more people can benefit.

In February 2014 Fit 4 Life worked with Age UK West Cumbria to set up a 6 week Healthy Living Course at Seaton Village Hall. The project aimed to involve people over 65 and to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Mike Thompson, Seaton Village Hall Caretaker takes a proactive approach to healthy activities at the hall:

"We do have an ageing population that our hall caters for, but ageing has changed. It's the young-older person now (anything from 60 to 95 years of age) who wants to be active and can see the benefits of socialising and trying to look after themselves".

"The Committee here are committed to involving the community and these healthy living classes have brought in new hall users."



Current exercise class at Seaton Village Hall

Mike himself has seen the benefit of how both his paid and voluntary work at the hall has helped him recover from a major stroke.

The hall has been renovated with funding from charities and local fundraising events aimed at older people, families, and young people.

The Project

Fit 4 Life offered a six-week Healthy Living Course covering topics such as: healthy eating, why dieting can be bad, and how to be more active. As the course was funded the Neighbourhood Care Independence (NCI) Project, it was free for participants.

The group were also given taster sessions for different types of exercise class including: gentle circuit training, light aerobics, and chair-based exercises.

There was also a session about how to exercise safely and efficiently at home using household items instead of exercise equipment.



Social event at Seaton Village Hall

What has been achieved?

15 people took part in the free six week course at the hall. Many of them enjoyed the taster exercise sessions so much they decided to continue doing a weekly exercise class and are happy to pay to attend.

Classes are now held every Friday 1pm to 2pm and are still going strong, more than a year down the line. Comments from those who attend:

“It’s something really beneficial. We grumble, we natter, and we get along with the exercises.”

“I’m sorted now till next week, I feel so much better after the session and I can do a couple of daily stretches to keep me going”.

The Learning

- Taster sessions at low or no cost are a good way to get people involved and can lead to increased income for the Hall.

ACT champions community and rural issues

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- Healthy lifestyle messages can be difficult so having fun while providing friendly diet advice and activity is an easier way to get the message across.
- Classes can bring new people into the hall and encourage them to take part in other activities.
- Using Fit for Life really worked for us as they know how to do activities safely and to promote healthy ideas in a fun way.
- Volunteering and helping out is a good way to maintain your own health and wellbeing!

Fit 4 Life believe that fitness is for everyone. Just because you're 'not the sporty type', 'not as young as you used to be', or suffering from ill health, doesn't mean you can't enjoy the benefits of some gentle exercise in a friendly and supportive environment.

Contact Details

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