

Get Set to Go Canoeing

Aim: To run canoeing taster sessions for people with mental health problems.

Project summary

Six weeks of canoeing sessions were set up to engage people who experience mental health issues in the sport. Eight different people took part in six canoe sessions during July and August 2016, each session was two hours. The seven male and one female participants were aged between 19 and 51 and activities included sit on kayaks, canoes and stand up paddle boards. Sessions took place at Tees Barrage White Water centre with support from Tees Active instructors.



Get Set to Go worked in partnership with:

- British Canoeing, which funded the project
- Tees Active, which provided instructors to lead the sessions
- Tees Barrage White Water Centre, which hosted the sessions

It has further developed its partnership with Tees Active to now run badminton, bowls and football sessions.

In addition, Get Set to Go has also delivered Mental Health Awareness Training sessions for staff at British Canoeing, Tees Active and Tees Barrage White Water Centre.

Get Set to **GO**

SPORT+
RECREATION
ALLIANCE



Impact

- Participants completed a questionnaire at the end of each session. Feedback from this revealed that they found the sessions had improved their physical wellbeing, with participants saying the sessions had improved their fitness, in particular their “upper body fitness and strength”.
- Participants also found the sessions good for their mental wellbeing. Feedback gathered included comments such as “it helps your mental health, confidence and fitness”, “it helps improve confidence” and “it’s fantastic medicine for people”. While being on the water left one of the participants feeling “tranquil...a good feeling”.

Key learnings

- Get Set to Go found that canoeing is a sport that everyone can get involved in and it can be as easy or hard as you want to make it. There are plenty of clubs to access and many provide equipment and pay as you go sessions. Canoeing offers something completely different and a chance to be out on the water. It’s fun and provides the opportunity to learn new skills and improve confidence. Not only is it good for physical health but it also is beneficial for mental health and wellbeing.

Future plans

- Get Set to Go has already fed into another taster session with a local canoeing club and hopes to attend further sessions when they start up again in the spring.

Key facts

Target audience	People who experience mental health issues
Setting	Tees Barrage International White Water Centre
Length of the project	July and August 2016
Funding	British Canoeing
Number of participants	8

Further information

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