



FITPLACES

THE HAGUE

Encouraging people to do more physical exercises to reduce weight and have better health.

What are the objectives of the project?

The objectives are to keep the people in good physical shape for good health and to inform people about health.

Timeline

Project runs from 2012 until 2014.

Background

The project is based on the fact that exercising is good for mental and physical health. Older adults who participate in any amount of physical activity gain some health benefits, including maintaining good physical and cognitive function. Some physical activity is better than none¹. Therefore, keeping active is key to maintaining good health.



Who is responsible for the project's implementation?

The project is implemented by the City of The Hague, Department of Sport.

How does the project work?

The city set up four open air places with sets of fitness equipment. The sites are chosen on the basis of their accessibility and how many people visit them. The city provides information on how to use the equipment through plaques near the equipment and information booklets with instructions and exercises available at the town hall. In addition, a fitness instructor is on hand at certain times to help and advise people. Groups of older people can receive training from an instructor too. The city plans to set up two new places.



¹ <http://www.bhfactive.org.uk/userfiles/Documents/transitionolderadults.pdf>.

What are the results of the project?

In a survey, 26% of people aged over 55 years felt that their activity had increased by using the sites. 85% of them believed that using the site complements their daily activities. Also, those who visited the parks and used the equipment did so regularly. The park is also visited by young and middle-aged people.

Was the project evaluated and were there any follow-up activities?

The first project was evaluated and the results were positive. The older users enjoyed being active in the open air, made contact with other people and felt fitter.

What lessons did you learn?

It is important to think about the location of the sites. They need to be visible, accessible and located near homes for the elderly, senior day-care centres etc. Older people need to be taken to the parks and shown where the equipment is and how to use it. This encourages them to use it regularly. Fitplaces should be set up in neighbourhoods with a low concentration of young people as the older people can be intimidated by them.

How is the project funded and what resources (financial and human) are dedicated to its delivery?

The Fitplaces cost €100 000 to set up. These costs were covered by The Hague's departments responsible for sports and elderly care, and by the city district (€60 000), the utility housing enterprise (€25 000) and by a local foundation (€15 000).

The next phase of Fitplaces will be financed by the city of The Hague (once more through the departments responsible for sports and elderly care and the city district) and the local foundation.

Who is the contact person for the project?

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If you have an example of a good practice that you would like to include in the database, please send an email to caroline.greene@eurocities.eu.



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