

**THIS
GIRL
CAN**

**Go where
women are**

**Community Sport Activation Fund applicants –
please consider this insight and how it
applies to your project.**



**LOTTERY
FUNDED**



**SPORT
ENGLAND**

If your project is focussing on girls and women go where women are–

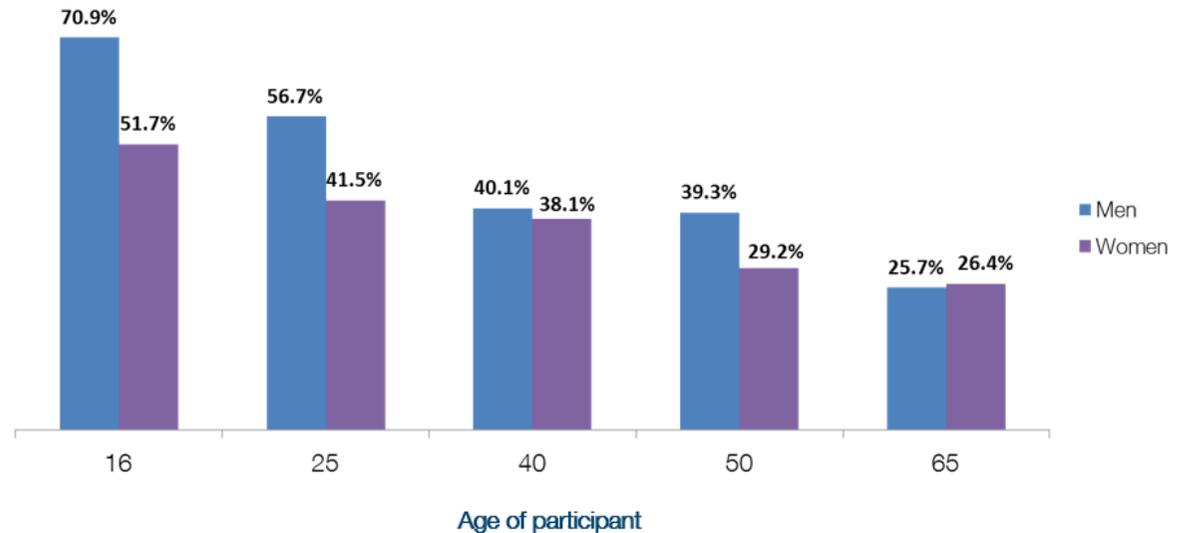
By go where women are we mean that we need to better understand how sport/activity can fit into women's lives, to allow sport to connect with women in an environment that suits them, rather than trying to change women to fit sport

This simple principle emerged from our project work and insight into women's participation – to understand women, their motivations towards sport/activity and the barriers they face in taking part

It's important because there are two million fewer women than men regularly playing sport

More men play sport than women at every age

Although participation is at its highest for women at the youngest age group, this is also where we see the largest gender gap.



and the opportunity is huge . . .

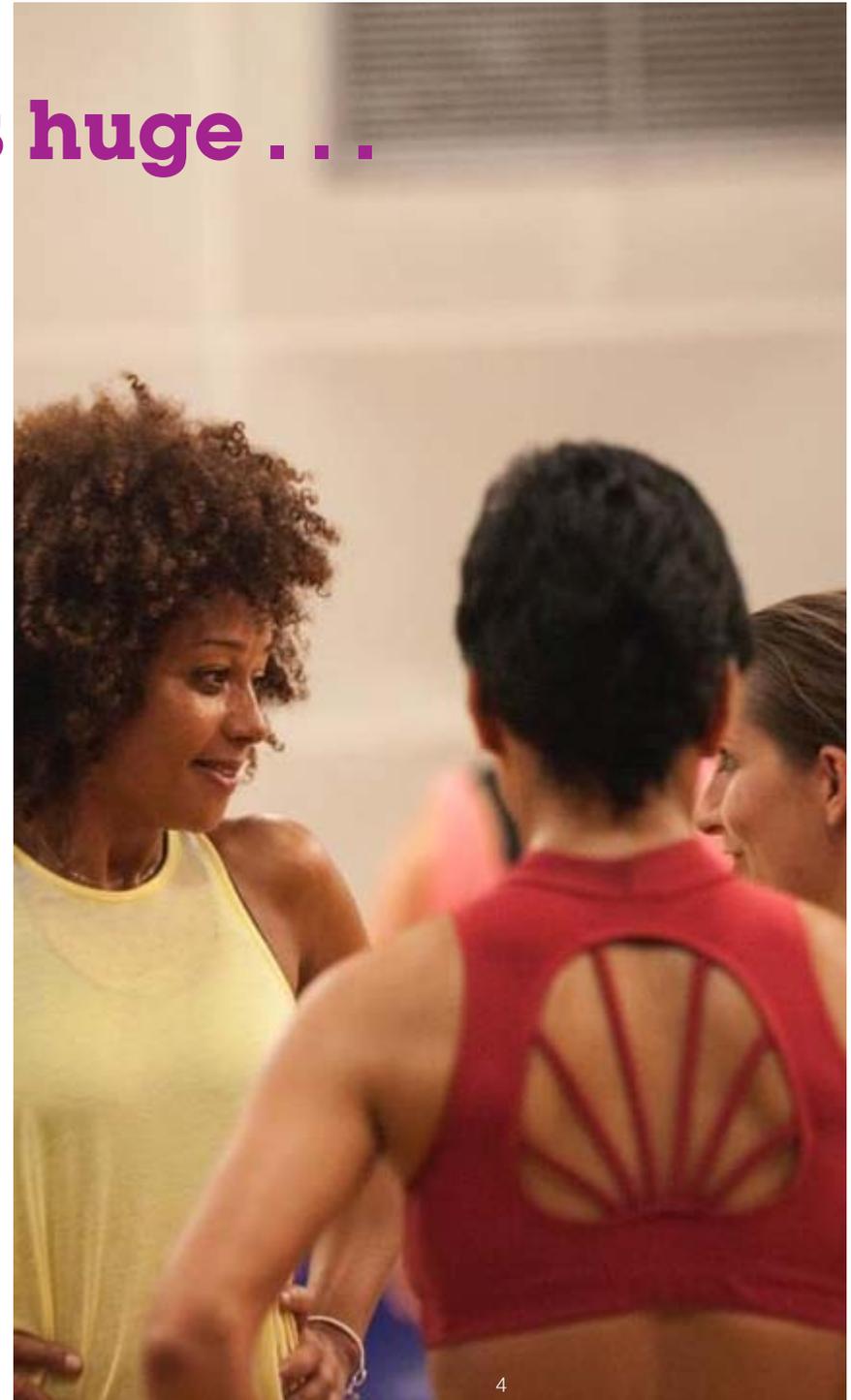
When asked **13 million women**
say they would like to participate more in
sport and physical activity



Almost **6 million** of
those are **NOT** currently active

But what is stopping them . . .
This is what this pack explores

Women (16+) sports participation (millions) –
Active People Survey, results for 12 months to April 2014



Contents:

1. Understanding motivations and barriers

2. How to engage with women ?

3. Examples of what works

1. Understanding motivations and barriers



Understand your audience – this is key

- **Understand what motivates women**
- **Understand the barriers women face**
- **Think what this means for what you do**



What motivates women to take part?



They may take part if they get support



Enjoying the social aspects is key



Needing a sense of achievement



Sources: Oliver Boo (I will if you will focus groups), Active Women year 1 and yr 2 evaluations (IFF) and others including, ChildWise, MORI, GfK NOP, SIRC, WIS and StreetGames.

Real life projects highlight these motivations



This Girl Can campaign

“I’m self-conscious going to a gym but seeing others like me helps.”

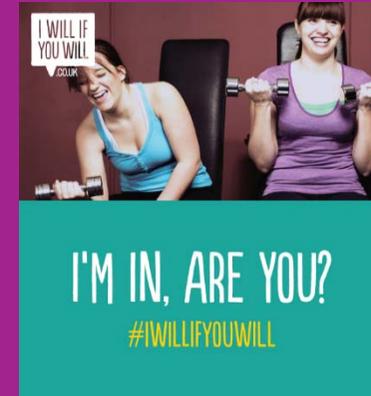
Enjoying the social aspects are key



Our review of youth participation

“Something that fits in with my life, so quick classes and knowing I will look good in six weeks time”

Involvement can be a means to an end, to an achievement



I Will If You Will in Bury

“I’m a social animal. I like to be distracted. I used to swim a mile, I like to do it with a friend so I don’t notice I’m doing it

Feeling supported can build confidence

What are the barriers women face?

- A range of emotional, perceived ability and opportunity barriers act to reinforce low female participation norms
- The word “sport” itself can bring narrow or negative associations
- Time, cost , knowing what is out there can be barriers
- The sport ‘experience’ often isn’t designed to fit into women’s lives or meet their needs – its not perceived as fulfilling their values
- **But our research has told us there is one unifying factor...**

It's the fear of judgement that is truly significant and a unifying barrier to taking part.

INACTIVE

Getting sweaty
Changing in front of others
It's not feminine
Reminiscent of school
No equipment/clothing
Don't know anyone
Lycra
Not fit enough
Forgotten the rules
Too competitive
The family comes first
Male instructors

ACTIVE

2. How to engage with women?



Use the right tone of voice...

This Girl Can campaign shows we need to empathise with our audience of all women and inspire them to exercise regularly.

We're not here to tell women that how they feel about exercise is wrong, the way they're doing it is incorrect, or to guilt-trip them into taking up a sport.

We are on a level with our audience, We're here to support, encourage and enthuse women, rather than enlighten them.

And we're doing it in a fun, accessible and sassy way.

So, whether we're talking to them through social media, press, partner communications or wherever, there are ways in which we should say things.

This girl does...

- Speak to the girls as one of the girls
- Encourage and support
- Debate on relevant subjects
- Add value to the conversations she joins
- Write informally
- Use correct language and grammar
- Feel inclusive and inviting to our audience and their support network
- Exude sassiness, confidence and energy
- Empathise with our audience

This girl does not...

- Tell anyone what they're doing or thinking is wrong
- Scaremonger, force or cajole
- Argue with interactions
- Speak for the sake of speaking
- Overuse exclamation marks or kisses! xxx
- Feel too chummy, clichéd or over the top
- Act arrogantly or dwell on the negatives
- Judge anyone, for anything!

**Women come in all shapes and sizes and all levels of ability.
It doesn't matter if you're rubbish or an expert.
The point is you're doing something**

Get the tone of voice right in all that you do





Emily Roberts
@miss_roberts_e

Follow

@ThisGirlCanUK I wanted to start running to get into shape after Xmas, but was afraid of being judged. #thisgirlcan is just what I needed!

RETWEET FAVORITES

1

4



10:00 PM - 10 Jan 2015



Rebecca Whittham ▶ This Girl Can

16 January at 16:43 · 🌐

Just signed up to my first ever 10k race in May! I'm not a fast ringer but as #thisgirlcan says "I may be slow but I'm lapping everyone on the couch" x

Like · Comment · Share



Write a comment...



Tanni Grey-Thompson ✓
@Tanni_GT

Follow

I'm going to watch #thisgirlcan campaign ad tonight to make me feel happy

RETWEETS FAVORITES

40

75



6:35 PM - 16 Jan 2015



Claudia Barnett
@claudiaharrict

Follow

#thisgirlcan is the best thing to ever happen.

First ever ever... #empower

Use social media to have the conversation with women

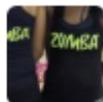


Tania Rodrian ▶ This Girl Can

12 hrs · 🌐

First run in a few months and all due to that advert!

Like · Comment · Share



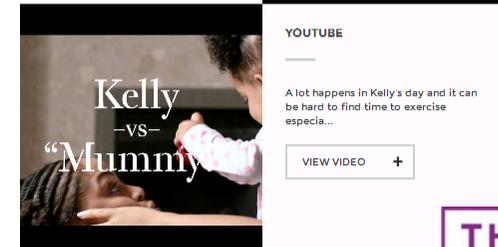
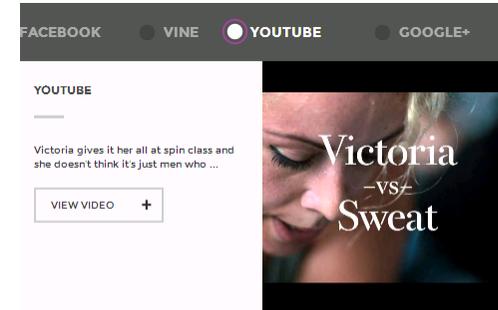
Zumba with Sharon @ZumbaSharon1 · 49s

@BCCNewsRoom @ThisGirlCanUK @BhamCityCouncil @ActiveParksBirm
record breaking zumba session count me in #thisgirlcan

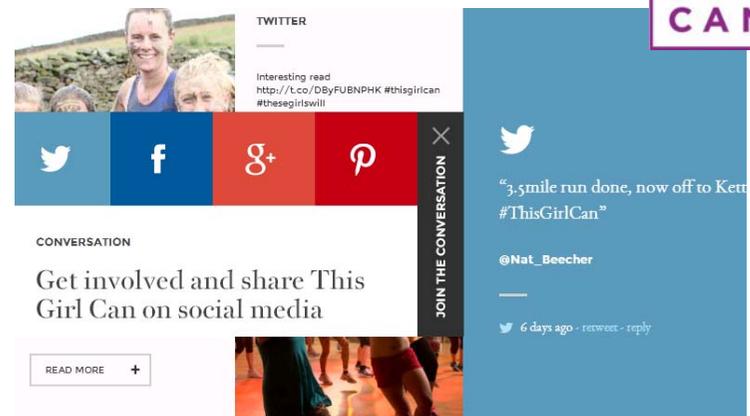


10:23 AM - 15 Jan 2015

...make sure your marketing is where women will see it and has the right 'tone' – make it familiar and local



#IWIYWGIRLSTALK



Deliver the actual activity it in a way that appeals ...

Focus on engaging in exercise with and for her friends.

She may dislike sport because it is: 'competitive, serious, physical and aggressive'.

Encouragement, small first steps, other women 'like her', messages from friends, sharing photos, encouragement from her partner and 'local hero's' motivate.

'Finding a family', 'feeling part of the community' and trusted instructors are also important.

Women come in all shapes and sizes and levels of ability.

It doesn't really matter if you are rubbish or an expert.

The point is that you are a woman and doing something.

We need to liberate women from the fear of judgement – saying you are not alone, building confidence, normalising activity.

Focus on activities for their own sake, for the joy, exhilaration, buzz, fun, and embodied physical experience.

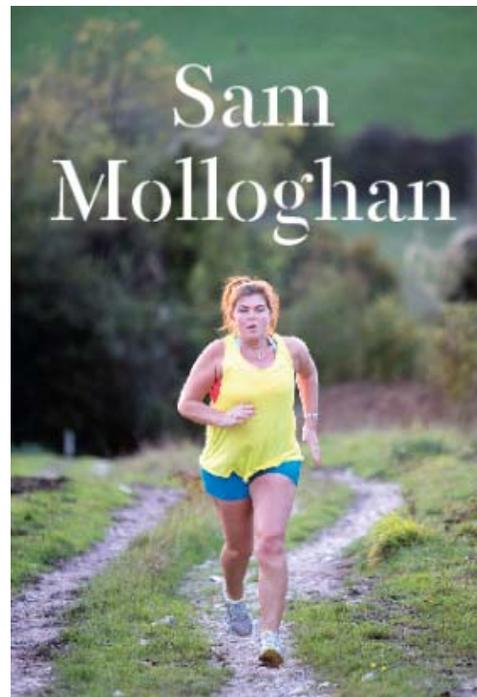
Building confidence to seek new opportunities to stay active may be key.



Make the experience . . .

- Empowering
- Meaningful
- Fun and sociable
- Worthwhile with a sense of achievement

If you use ambassadors: use local real women



And try and be consistent...

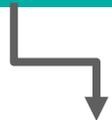
Consider the customer journey from seeing and advert to coming along to taking part to what they think afterwards, if the tone of voice messages at each point are not the same you risk losing your women.

Familiar
Casual
Local

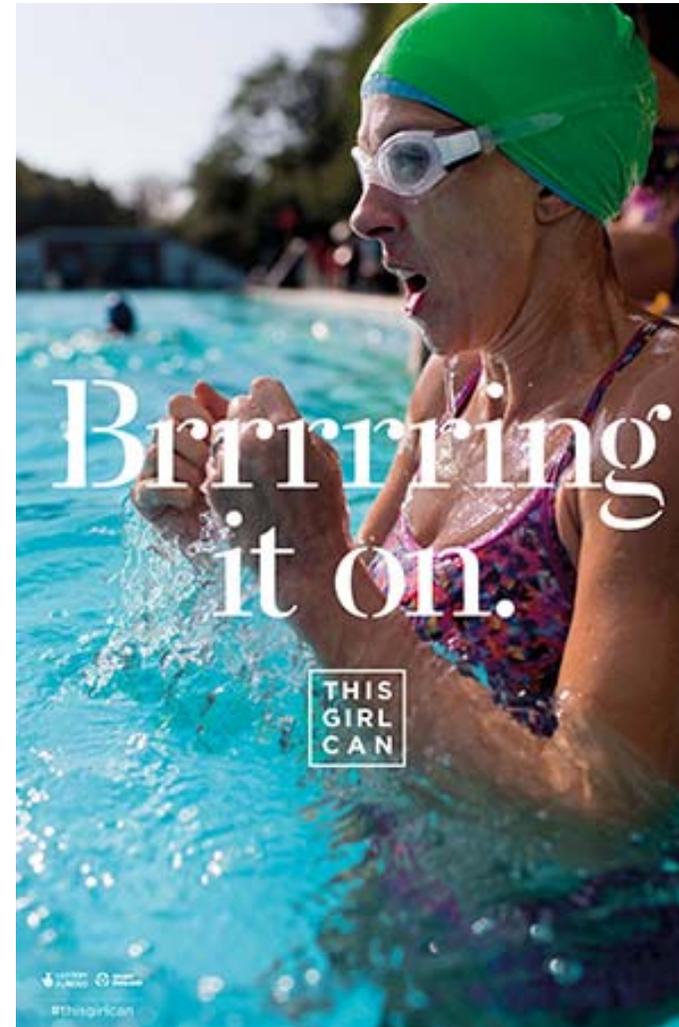
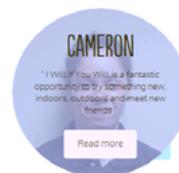
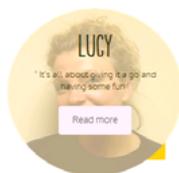


JOIN JEAN AND THE OTHER LADIES OF BURY, WHO ARE ALREADY GETTING ACTIVE AND FEELING THE BENEFITS! HEAD TO IWILLIFYOUWILL.CO.UK TO JOIN IN.

JOIN IN [f](#) [t](#) [@I_WILL_IF](#)



JOIN THE CONVERSATION AND MEET YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY ACTIVATOR



3. Examples of what works



Sports projects that work

Back to Netball

- Fond memories built on
- Confidence to play
- 'People like me'
- Flexible
- Integrated social offer
- Local groups facebook



Breeze

- Bike hire & maintenance
- Choice of levels
- YouTube footage to reassure
- Ride leaders are key
- Social just as important



Parkrun

- Predictable simplicity
- Celebrate taking part
- Run by 'people like me'
- Powerful personal testimony
- Always a cafe near the end
- Social media
- Almost 50/50 male/female



Parkrun is outperforming the national average for women's participation in running

Success Factors

- Predictable simplicity (capability and opportunity)
- Celebrate taking part (support and benefits)
- Run by local volunteers 'like me' (support and experience)
- Power of personal testimony – 'non-runners' (capability)
- Social interaction central (support and experience)
- Community – social media (support)





British Cycling's Breeze programme has gained a critical mass of participants after a difficult start

Success Factors

- **Ownership** of bikes/renting (opportunity)
- **Perception** challenges (tackles capability/skills)
- **Maintenance** of bike (support and capability)
- **Choice** of level and progression – you won't be dropped (support and experience)
- **Champions** critical to success (support)



Successful **champions understand women's barriers, motivations and hectic lifestyles.** They also **go where the women are** – looking for them through a number of channels eg

- Friends, neighbours, schools & women's groups
- Local cycling groups and bike shops
- Professionals, referrals and council officers
- Social media – conversations
- Email list

Other approaches that work



I'M IN, ARE YOU?

#IWILLIFYOUWILL

I Will If You Will project in Bury

"I'm a social animal. I like to be distracted. I used to swim a mile, I like to do it with a friend so I don't notice I'm doing it



Youth participation review

Attitudes and behaviours don't always align.
Change behaviours not attitudes!



This Girl Can Campaign

"I'm self-conscious going to a gym. There are fit women on the treadmill and big men."

More on I Will If You Will (Bury)

IWIYW GOING WHERE WOMEN ARE EMOTIONALLY

- **Community outreach** - through non-sport related local influencers (identify the right people), one size does not fit all
- **Make use of unpaid marketing** – instill a word of mouth promo process with participants, make use of local voluntary Champions who support what you are doing
- If you can, put a tried and tested **Customer Relationship Management** tool in place – plan what you need it to achieve before implementing

IWIYW GOING WHERE WOMEN ARE VISUALLY

- A variety of **local women** in marketing materials, including different faith groups and ages – feels like ‘something for me’
- **Better quality information** online - intelligent signposting to full range of activities
- **Ongoing dialogue** (prompts) with women – it is vital you understand your target audience, the women you are trying to reach, well. This conversation can happen via email campaigns, social media or face to face
- **Engage with local stakeholders and partners** – widen your network through established stakeholder/partner channels. Think about places where women go – mums and toddler groups, hairdressers, supermarkets, offices – take your message out to them

IWIYW GOING WHERE WOMEN ARE PHYSICALLY

- **Mobile pool and mobile crèche unit** – focus on a particular target audience and define a pathway to ensure continued participation in sport and physical activity once the unit has been removed
- **Pop-up shop** – identify a clear purpose, it could be a new route to your target audience, a different way of doing things
- **Targeted Zumba sessions at sheltered accommodation** – ensure that the venue feels ‘safe’ for all participants and that it addresses any religious or cultural sensitivities within the target audience that you are looking to attract

This Girl Can campaign

What a good local activation looks like...

- Understands the campaign's insight and its tone of voice – and stays true to this from start to finish
- Is aligned to your local outcomes
- Is understood and supported by your organisation
- Is shared with partners locally and prods them to think about the experiences they offer

Activity Ideas

- Use the imagery and brand and stories
- Use of local ambassadors
- Very small grants to activate community groups
- Talk to the non sport system locally
- Build on, tie together existing work/programmes
- The take over of places e.g city centres
- Use International Women's Day as a focus
- Work place approach
- Pick the right activators locally

In summary if you are focussing on women . . .

There is a huge opportunity in converting the number of women interested but not currently active

Understand the motivations and barriers

Communicate with women with the right tone of voice, be consistent with this

Deliver the activity and experience in a way that appeals

Make sure you have an on-going dialogue with women, using their feedback to adapt and change