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BURTON ALBION COMMUNITY TRUSTS GOLDEN GOAL OVER 50'S ACTIVITY CLUB – PROJECT REPORT

*A report produced by the Centre for Active Lifestyle Institute of Sport, PA and Leisure,
Carnegie School of Sport, Leeds Metropolitan University (Leeds Met) for Burton Albion
Community Trust.*

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Executive Summary

Background: In England we have an ageing population and major health concerns for Older Adults (OA). The financial burden this places on the National Health Service (NHS), alongside government public spending austerity provides a compelling case for preventative medicine. PA offers a valuable method to tackle health concerns in OA. One approach to overcome OA barriers to PA opportunities has been to utilise football clubs as a vehicle to support OA in meeting recommended guidelines for PA. This report will detail an evaluation study that investigates the impact of Golden Goal Activity Club (GGAC), a pilot programme of PA-led health improvement for OA delivered by and at Burton Albion FC.

Intervention: Sessions involved the delivery of a weekly moderate-intensity PA sessions led by health coaches employed by the club.

Methods: At baseline and at week 12, participants (N=23 males (42.6%) and n=31 females (57.4%) with a mean age of 69.38 (± 5.87) (n=40), ranging from 55-85 years engaged the evaluation) completed self-reports for demographics, health screening/complications and EQ5D (quality of life) using the EQVAS. Registers recorded attendance at 12 weekly sessions by the health coaches.

Results: The mean attendance was 7.73 (± 3.12) sessions for all (n=51). Participants with a number of health complications (two or more) (n=22, 42.3%) attended fewer sessions on average (6.91 ± 3.322) compared to those reporting less than two health complications (8.65 ± 2.694). EQVAS results highlighted self-rated health was much higher for women (87.32 ± 9.573) compared to men (80.16 ± 18.557). There was an increase in self-rated health scores by men between post-intervention compared to pre-intervention (81.16 ± 17.270), while women reported a marginal decline (86.79 ± 8.946).

Conclusion: Burton Albion FC can recruit and engage both male and female OA. Whilst the participants appear predominantly healthy, GGAC was able to maintain engagement of those who reported a number of health issues throughout the duration of the intervention. Adopting flexible and varied, participant led PA opportunities worked for participants, notably those with two or more health complications. The key design characteristics of GGAC should be considered by other agencies delivering health improvement work with OA. The partnership with independent Public Health and Academic departments to inform delivery and evaluation of the intervention was both valuable to inform current and future delivery and is recommended. Whilst this pilot offered a unique insight in work of this ilk, further research and evaluation is needed to explore the potential of professional football clubs in engaging inactive OA into health-improvement programmes.

Key words: Health, Older Adults, Football Clubs, Community

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