

The Inclusive Fitness Kitbag for Marketing Gyms to Disabled People





Foreword - your kitbag

Disabled people are a large part of your community and it makes great business sense to ensure they are thought about when marketing your facility and activities.

Traditionally disabled people have been excluded from typical gym and leisure facility marketing, and leisure providers have perhaps been caught up in battling for the same market share of existing gym users.

This kitbag is full of useful support to attract disabled people, provide a more inclusive service and make sure they want to come back to use your service provision again! You may have already invested a lot of time and resources in achieving the IFI Mark - so it would be a missed opportunity not to now promote your facility more inclusively. This way more disabled people will not only know what a fantastic facility you have, they'll use it and spread the word too!

Marketing and engagement of disabled people is a fundamental part of the journey towards inclusive fitness. The recommendations and good practice in this kitbag come tried and tested from facilities like yours. You can use, adapt and update them to suit you and capitalise on your investment into inclusive fitness - offering disabled people access to an active and healthier lifestyle.

So let's get started...



"Marketing and engagement of disabled people is a fundamental part of the journey towards inclusive fitness."



Let's get physicall

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1 : Setting the scene - inclusive fitness

The Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) has been established for over 10 years, with a national coverage of over 400 IFI Mark gyms.

Managed by the national body for disabled people in sport and physical activity - the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) - the IFI Mark remains crucial in addressing inequality in physical activity by:

- supporting the industry to be more inclusive to disabled people and;
- raising awareness of the benefits of exercise, create demand and reach inactive populations

This resource has been written as part of our work to support IFI Mark facilities and the wider leisure industry to promote physical activity opportunities to disabled people.

The Inclusive Fitness Initiative addresses inclusion as a whole and IFI Mark facilities offer disabled people enhanced opportunities across all of the following elements:-



The IFI Mark is awarded to gym facilities at one of three levels; provisional, registered or excellent assessed against the IFI Mark standards for accessibility for each of the above criteria. For more information on the process of how to gain the IFI Mark - [visit our website](#).

The introduction of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) and subsequent Equality Act 2010, alongside the impact of the IFI has changed service provision within the leisure industry and is now more inclusive and accessible to disabled people. Inclusive fitness is a great way to get more disabled people active and certainly provides IFI Mark facilities with the opportunity to reap the benefits of accreditation.

To ensure that your facility is welcoming to disabled people and to make the most of your accreditation, inclusive fitness works best when all staff within your facility adopt the principles of inclusive fitness. Staff buy-in to create better marketing and engagement practices will help all your customers feel welcome. This kitbag will support everyone to understand how to market to disabled people and see a return on your investment.

“Inclusive fitness is a great way to get more disabled people active and certainly provides IFI Mark facilities with the opportunity to reap the benefits of accreditation.”

However, you may want to allocate the overall responsibility of community engagement to one of your team, to be a champion for inclusive fitness and increase participation amongst disabled people. A member of staff may already specialise in this area or want to learn more about it.

That's great!

The responsibility could become part of their job description - maybe a Gym Instructor, Duty Manager or Marketing Officer? Or you may choose to put this role at the heart of your community and build relationships with other local partners i.e., the County Sport Partnerships, clubs or a disabled people's organisation. You may also be able to access funding with partners to recruit for this type of position within the local community [\(see Section 7 – Budget and Funding\)](#).



Whoever leads the marketing and engagement element towards inclusion, this kitbag provides a useful tool. The table below gives examples of tasks and responsibilities towards this goal:

Engagement Tasks

- Promote inclusive fitness opportunities and services to disabled people along with the IFI Mark status of your facility if you have it.
- Provide information about inclusive fitness within the local community and develop marketing communication which is inclusive and effective in engaging disabled people into physical activity.
- Advocate inclusivity within the facility, accessible marketing and service provision to ensure that disabled people are included throughout plans and activities.
- Identify user groups within the local community to be targeted and identify methods to communicate with them.
- Link your IFI Mark facility with local disability groups/charities/services/organisations, GP's (Clinical Commissioning Groups), other health organisations and service providers (opticians, pharmacists, healthcare and wheelchair services etc.), disability sport partners etc.
- Develop and promote marketing opportunities to increase disabled people's interest in physical activity such as open days, taster sessions, point of sales at reception
- Develop partnerships with appropriate local public and voluntary organisations.
- Provide information to disabled people about accessing complimentary sports and physical activity opportunities within the facility or locally.



2: Situation analysis - the business we're in

Currently, only two in ten (18%) of disabled people (1.66 million) participate in sport / physical activity once a week compared to four in ten (39%) of non-disabled people. These figures are well below the Department of Health physical activity recommendations of 5x30 minutes per week.

Research increasingly suggests that being inactive is more harmful than smoking. Physical activity has also been proven to extend the life span and is recognised as a method of prevention and cure for many medical conditions. Yet many individuals remain inactive and ignore physical activity as a healthy lifestyle choice¹.

With the estimated cost of inactivity to the NHS being £1.89 billion a year, disabled people and society as a whole will benefit from participating in physical activity. National government projects like [Change 4 Life](#) and [Lets Get Moving](#) have been running for several years to support a change in people's behaviour in relation to their lifestyles, in particular around doing physical activity.

The leisure industry has recently taken on board the health agenda providing leisure facilities with the opportunity to be part of, capitalise and influence these changes on a local level.

As part of your wider planning, your facility may already do what's called a **SWOT** analysis - to identify your **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities** and **Threats**. This model supports organisations to review and establish their current situation and to plan and anticipate future changes and opportunities – you may want to do this to reflect the potential changes above. For further guidance on how to do this, [click here](#).

¹ www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736%2812%2960954-4/fulltext accessed 03.12.2012



Here's an example of a SWOT analysis for including disabled people in your provision:-

Strengths (Internal)

- Staff trained in disability awareness who provide good customer service
- Gym staff qualified to prescribe exercise to disabled people
- IFI Mark status is a Unique Selling Point for special and older populations
- Accessible building and service provision
- Concessionary rates available to disabled people
- Accessible fitness equipment
- Regional/ national support to be innovative and target new markets.

Weaknesses (Internal)

- High staff turnover
- New staff who haven't received training
- Culture of Inclusive Fitness is only limited to the gym environment other staff within the facility aren't aware or advocate it
- No other inclusive sport or physical activity offer is available to disabled customers
- Lack of resources (staff, budget) to target disabled people.

SWOT

Opportunities (External)

- Number of disabled people and spending potential
- To sit on health and wellbeing boards to drive local physical activity strategy
- Physical activity is high on the funding and health agenda
- Seasonal opportunities to attract more disabled people and those with medical conditions to use the facility
- More disabled people want to try sport and physical activity since the Paralympics
- Inclusive sport is included in National Governing Body's Whole Sports Plans
- To train or recruit gym staff to level 4 to support special populations.

Threats (External)

- Psychological barriers to participation
- Local community hubs are being set up to deliver GP and health referral exercise
- Economic downturn means people don't have money to spend on leisure
- Concerns over health and safety and liability of disabled people exercising
- Missed opportunity to tap into and attract new market share
- Lack of innovation or support in developing new products and services to support disabled people.

Once you've used this tool to analyse where you are you can now work on how to market in the future to maximise **Strengths** and **Opportunities**, limit **Weaknesses** and be better prepared for **Threats**!

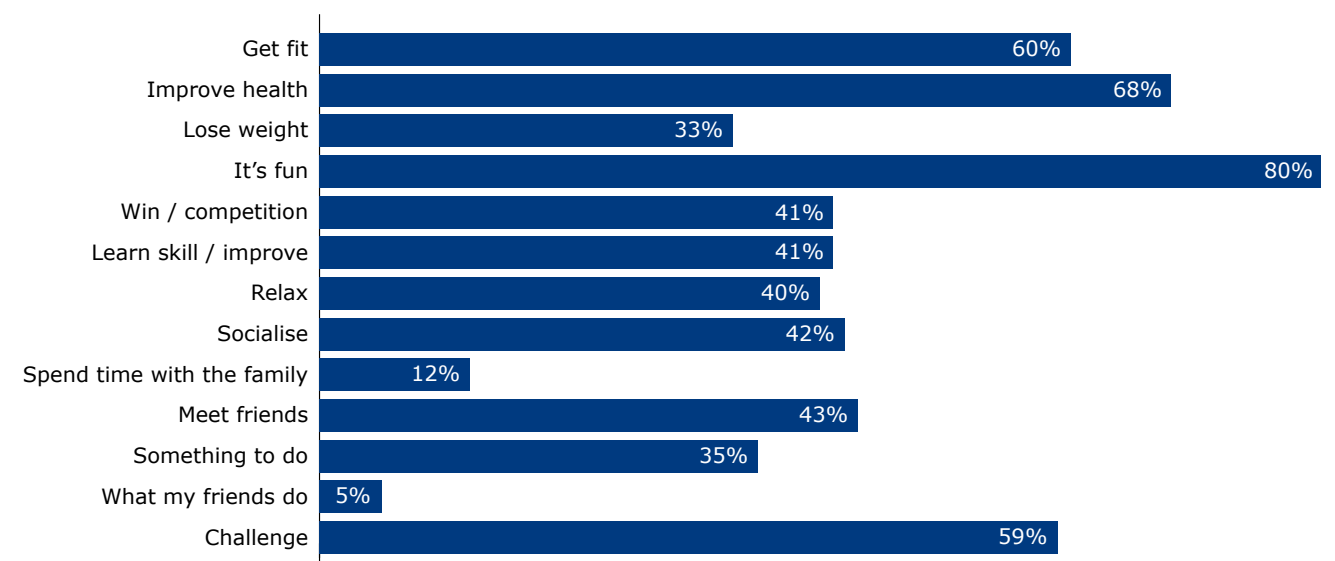


3: Target audience - disabled people

The objective is to increase the number of disabled people participating in physical activity and the biggest point to remember when thinking about the target audience of disabled people – is that disabled people are all individuals! And just like all your existing and potential gym members, they have different lifestyles which will lead to different needs and motivations in terms of participating in physical activity.

The diagram below shows responses from EFDS's recent lifestyle survey. It identifies the reasons disabled people take part in physical activity.

Reasons for taking part in sport or physical activity



So, when marketing to disabled people it is important to bear in mind that not all disabled people can be targeted or triggered to exercise in the same way. Like anyone, they will have their own reasons for being active.



To support you to understand the target audience - did you know?

It is estimated that there are 11 million disabled people in the UK². That's approximately one in five of the total population..

It is estimated that disabled people have a potential spending power in excess of £80 billion per year³.

Disability under the Equality Act 2010 is defined as anyone who has 'a *physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.*

Statistics show that disability is more prevalent in older age groups; 45% of over 64 year olds consider themselves a disabled person compared to only two in ten (22%) within the 16-64 year age bracket. Therefore when marketing to disabled people a high percentage will also be in the over 64 year old age group⁴.

Around 40% of disabled people are in paid employment⁵.

These few statistics show that disabled people make up a substantial market share of consumers (not to be ignored) and are diverse in terms of age, income and economic activity. In terms of marketing physical activity to disabled people as a target audience – recent research from Sport England (APS6) suggests that keep

fit/gym activities are very popular for once a week participation. So there's no reason to suggest that disabled people don't want to participate - perhaps more that they don't know how to access it or like the rest of the inactive population need to change their behaviour and lifestyle to include regular physical activity.

Do you know how many disabled gym members you currently have?

² 2011 Census

³ Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) - 2004

⁴ The Office for Disability Issues (DWP) - 2010/2011

⁵ Labour Force Survey and ONS 1994

Knowing your audience (Market segmentation)

In getting to know disabled people as a target group – gathering insight and market research is important for one key reason – **it is pointless to deliver something which does not respond to a need or demand.**

There are a number of ways to get to know disabled people. Ask disabled people what they want – set up a forum, identify products and services that disabled people currently use, find out what will motivate disabled people to exercise.

Do a SWOT analysis, locate local disability groups and charities and to find out the local demographical population of disabled people – the [NHS Atlas of Variation](#) is a useful tool. Once you have better insight, you can deliver customer-focused programmes which respond to disabled people's needs.

Using the same marketing for everyone doesn't work – everyone is different and will therefore want a different service. However, marketing to individuals is time consuming and costly - so that's not easy either.

Market segmentation is a way of grouping people together by common factors – identifying similar attitudes or behaviour through market research.

"Using the same marketing for everyone doesn't work – everyone is different and will therefore want a different service."



It is also important to understand that not all disabled people can be specifically targeted by their impairment. Some disabled people will not fit into a specific impairment group and a vast majority of disabled people have hidden impairments, which therefore may not be obvious. Other sections of the population, who would be legally defined as a disabled person, may actually not consider themselves as disabled unless in certain situations. With a larger aging population in the country there also comes additional considerations for older disabled people.

Consequently, it is important to look at how your organisation adapts its existing models of delivery to become more inclusive. The provision of alternative formats is perhaps the most obvious choice, but it is important to look at and use all forms of marketing activity. Being inclusive can be part of your ongoing culture change as an organisation. It is much wider than a leaflet or form, and you should consider other creative elements – for instance your market research, website communications etc.

Often, providers have used the ways below to group disabled people, but they should always be backed with strong research which determines they carry similar traits:

3.1 By Impairment – naturally there are different considerations that need to be taken into account when marketing to people with differing impairments. For instance you would communicate quite differently with someone who has a hearing impairment when compared to someone with a visual impairment. To underpin all marketing activity, two points are relevant:

- a. If it is a specific activity targeting a specific impairment group then make sure that it is appropriate. For instance, use simpler language when communicating with someone who has a learning difficulty or someone who uses BSL as their first language.
- b. If adopting a general approach then consider how well the strategy communicates with the full breadth of potential customers. If all potential gym members cannot be targeted with one approach then put in place mechanisms to produce alternative formats and to make people aware of the fact that it is available. [\(See Example in Section 4\).](#)

3.2 By Circumstance – the usage by disabled people within the majority of leisure facilities is often referred to in a group context. There is often an assumption that disabled people participate in groups and that this is the appropriate way in which to target them. This simply isn't the case. The IFI have always broken the disability market into two distinct sections for this purpose:

a. Groups – e.g. Social Services, day centres, gateway clubs, disability sports clubs etc. Whilst not the sole source of marketing to disabled people, this is nonetheless a way of attracting people to participate, often at a time when a gym would otherwise be fairly quiet. The downsides are that typically, disabled people who would participate in a group context may have less income and need more support from fitness instructors. That said, many issues of support can be resolved through initial assessment and variety of activities.

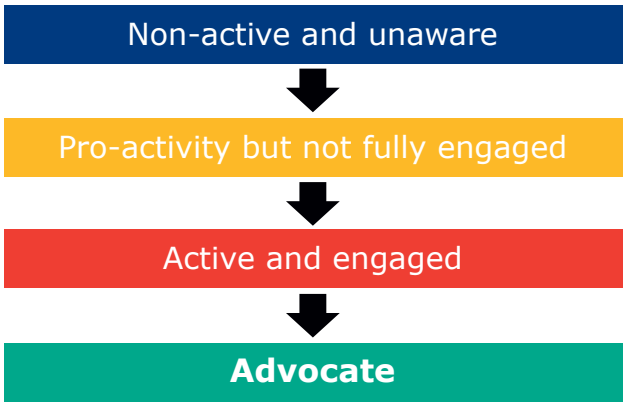
b. People who benefit from specific services – e.g. motability schemes, health professionals, organisations that represent a specific impairment group. The vast majority of disabled people do not attend a specific group as identified above. There are however, ways in which you can reach large numbers of disabled people or target services that are more prevalently used by disabled people. By giving thought to the organisations that you target, you can empower respected givers of information to act as advocates on behalf of the facility.



Our recent organisational research and insight has proved that segmenting disabled people into whole impairment groups or demographic features does not always work. One wheelchair user is not the same as the next one, just like not every woman is the same. Disabled people, like non-disabled people, have various lifestyles, motivations and experiences. The **triggers, actions, lifestyles** and **motivations** of individual disabled people are four areas EFDS work now focusses on.

From this new insight, EFDS is looking at how we best develop a behaviour change model that is applicable to disabled people. We know a useful starting point is to use an adapted marketing Loyalty Ladder or Engagement Ladder which can be used for customers or stakeholders. It takes, in marketing and IFI terms, the prospects on a journey to hopefully become a gym member or advocate of physical activity services you provide. The aim is to move prospects onto the next step of the ladder:-

Table 1 - EFDS engagement ladder.



See Resource A in Section 5 – for an example of an inclusive Engagement Ladder. [Click here](#)



“Disabled people, like non-disabled people, have various lifestyles, motivations and experiences.”

“you can empower respected givers of information to act as advocates”

Based on continued extensive research into disabled people and their lifestyles EFDS are developing profiles for disabled people. These will support EFDS to tailor guidance and recommendations to stakeholders more effectively. They will highlight the type of sport interventions, likely barriers and communication preferences for different disabled people, which will reduce wasted opportunities and to meet market demand.

However, in the meantime, Sport England have a web based segmentation tool which features nineteen profiles to support sport and leisure providers to understand people's attitudes to sport; motivations and barriers, why some people play sport, and why some simply do not want to participate.

For more details about the Sport England market segment profiles [click here](#).

Each of the nineteen portraits gives a description of:-

- The profile type
- Their current level of sport/ physical activity
- Barriers and motivations towards sport/ physical activity
- Other interests
- How to reach them
- Where they are more likely to live.

Profiles 15-19: (Terry, Norma, Ralph and Phyllis, Frank and Elsie) are more likely to face barriers of 'health, injury or disability' due to older age of these groups. However, disabled people will fall into any of the 19 segments and therefore any marketing you do to attract these profiles to participate in sport and physical activity should also be inclusive for all impairments.

For example; let's consider **Alison – profile 7** – a stay at home mum – if Alison was a wheelchair user how would you adapt your marketing and service provision to include Alison bearing in mind that she wants to participate in sport and physical activity with her children?

It's highly likely that **Arnold – profile 19** has visual impairment how are you going to adapt your marketing and engagement to be inclusive to Arnold who would love to socialise in a low impact group aerobic activity session at your facility?

The next section provides you with examples and ideas of how to develop your marketing to be more inclusive and attract more disabled people to use your gym and participate in physical activity.



4. Adapting your kit - the marketing mix

So you will now know how and why it's important to gather insight about the target audience - and that the information will support you towards your objective of increasing the number of disabled people using your facility.

The next step is to develop and adapt your marketing to be inclusive to meet your potential and existing disabled gym member's needs.

Let's look at how we can adapt the marketing mix to be more inclusive.

Currently, the marketing mix can range from four to ten elements which are 'a set of controllable tactical marketing tools that blend to produce the response required from the target market'⁶.

As gyms provide a service, we have used the seven P's to show how you could adapt your mix for disabled people in your gym and the impact they all have on each other.



⁶Kotler and Armstrong (2010).

4.1 Product / Service – what you offer

The IFI Mark and Inclusive Fitness provide a unique selling point to attract a new market share of disabled and older people to convert to gym members! The unique selling point (USP) of the IFI Mark is in relation to the inclusive environment of the gym - and not just the physical access - the whole inclusive culture of the service provision should also be reflected and influenced within your marketing to engage with disabled people.

The percentage of the population who are currently gym members hasn't changed significantly over the last couple of decades and remains around 12%⁷. Facilities who offer inclusive fitness across their service provision have the opportunity to increase that market share and continue the cultural shift of inclusion. As a product/service the culture of your leisure centre can have a significant impact on behaviour change and on increasing physical activity amongst disabled people.

As discussed above – in order to attract a new market, you need to know what they want.

Carry out market research with local disability groups to see what sorts of activities they are interested in ([see Section 6 – Monitoring and Evaluation](#)). Offer products like a 'come and try day' or free trial sessions so that potential customers can see for themselves whether the activity is suitable for them – offer the right activities which are designed and delivered to consider inclusion and the needs of the local community.

When developing your product and service to be inclusive for disabled people you may want to refer to the [Inclusion Spectrum](#) which incorporates the **STEP model** (Space, Task, Equipment, People) and is often used by practitioners to include disabled people in sport and physical activity as a coaching tool. It's a model which adapts and modifies activities to enable the widest possible participation.

⁷ http://www.marketresearchworld.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=164 (last accessed 18.01.2013)



Good Example

ABC Leisure Centre is holding a free gym open day for disabled people on Tuesday 23rd March from 12.30pm - 7pm.

This free open day offers disabled customers aged 14 and over the chance to look around the centre. Qualified staff will be available to give advice and support.

Try the gym or take part in one of our inclusive activities. Places are limited so you are advised to book into one of the following timeslots:

- 12:30pm - 2:30pm Chair Based Exercise, Table Cricket, Gym and Boccia
- 2:30pm - 4:30pm Swimming (£1)
- 4:30pm - 7:30pm Chair Based Exercise, Table Cricket, Gym, Boccia and Public Swimming (£1)

To book or find out more information about the day, contact the ABC Leisure Centre on 01354 *** for text relay prefix 18001 or email: *******



In this example the facility hosted the free taster sessions all afternoon/early evening for disabled people who were interested in either off peak or peak sessions.

They offered a selection of activities to participate in either individually or as part of a group – the activities were chosen after asking disability groups and individuals what they would like to try. Some of the activities were closed sessions and some were inclusive during public usage and adapted to cater for all abilities.

In a sports development environment there is a tendency to measure people as participants rather than customers. Cross sales and marketing opportunities are often missed. Once you have people in the four walls of your facility provide them with other inclusive products and promotions to try another sport or activity as the gym might not be the only activity they might be interested in.

Top Tip

Make sure the product/ service you're providing meets the needs of your target audience!

4.2 Place – where

Think about how you may be able to provide information to disabled people which helps them to overcome any potential travel barriers that may prevent them from using your facility. This may include information on accessible transport options or route maps showing directions to your facility from bus stops or train stations. IFI research in 2009 found that disabled people are more likely to travel further to access inclusive service provision – for example, Aspire – one of our IFI Mark flagship facilities and the national charity supporting people with spinal injury, has gym members who will travel one and half hours across London to use their facility.

When targeting the inactive market remember that they haven’t chosen sport or physical activity as a lifestyle choice and may therefore never enter your facility to know what you offer. You therefore need to be creative in terms of your engagement to attract them. You may need to consider providing physical activity opportunities outside of the facility or online. It doesn’t cost anything to put a link on You Tube or Facebook about participating in physical activity highlighting the benefits to disabled people. These would be short term measures – with the long term goal of encouraging the disabled people to come into your facility.

Fit as a Fiddle - The Mobile Gym

The Time of Your Life

The mobile gym travels to remote, rural locations around North Norfolk that have little or no access to fitness activities offering sessions to suit older people’s needs.

Funded by Age Concern and the Big Lottery, and led by North Norfolk District Council, the project has proved successful in providing:

- Two fully qualified instructors
- Friendly environment
- Kettlebell classes
- Personal fitness programme to suit your need
- Fun
- Zumba Fitness
- Nordic Walking

Sessions are held in Village Halls and the weekly programme is as follows:

Monday at Langham Parish Room –

- Gym 10am-12pm • Kettlesize • Nordic Walk 10.30-11.30am • Tai Chi 12.30-1.15pm
- Zumba Fitness 1.30-2.30pm

Tuesday at Holt Day Centre –

- Tai Chi 10-10.45am • Gym 1-5pm • Nordic walk 2.30-3.30pm

Tuesday at Holt Day Services, Charles Road, Holt –

- Zumba 6-7pm

Wednesday at Aldborough Church Room –

- Gym 10am-12.45pm • Nordic walking 10-11am • Tai Chi 1.45-2.30pm

Friday at The War Memorial and Recreation Centre, Bridwell Lane, Acle -

- Gym 10am-2.15pm

For further information please contact email/ telephone number

4.3 Price – what it costs

Disabled people will value your service provision more if it is accessible and welcoming to them and meets their needs. Accessibility as we know doesn’t just mean physical access. Disabled people will also value the health benefits of physical activity and the support of knowledgeable gym staff who can support them to feel healthier and improve their active daily living. It’s also good practice as part of your pricing policy to offer concessionary membership for carers or personal assistants who are there to support the disabled person to use the facility – this is the value to them because without their support they wouldn’t be able to participate.

Your pricing policy and structure will no doubt already include a vast array of options: peak/off peak membership and concessions for disabled people and other potentially hard to reach segments of the community e.g., older people, unemployed etc. As discussed above, one size does not fit all and even more so in terms of pricing your leisure services/gym membership. Price is a factor regardless of disability and can also be dependent on other economic and societal factors such as areas with low indices of deprivation, rural or urban areas resulting in additional subsidiary costs of public or own transport, employment status etc.

The IFI has always advocated that concessionary rates should be means tested and not a right for all disabled people. However having said that, if disabled people receive an inferior service or are excluded from any of your service provision because of their impairment you may need to rethink this to reflect equal opportunities. We’d also recommend flexibility of pricing (e.g. for people with fluctuating medical conditions, new to exercise etc.,) and a suitable justification for the pricing structure reflected within your policies.

You may want to provide free taster sessions for all potential new members especially if they are new to exercise so that they can try the activity before they commit and sign up to a membership. Let them know how much they are saving with their free taster session so that they know the value and are aware of how much it will cost in future. Promote the value further by including information about what else is included – free inductions or a ‘personal assistant comes free’ policy alongside the key health messages of value to disabled people.

“Let them know how much they are saving with their free taster session”



Recent research suggests that people don't value products and services that are free. However – if you have funding to be able to do this long term where cost is a barrier to participation it can only be a bonus. Consider introductory offers which ease new members into the concept of becoming habitual gym members and paying monthly subscriptions.

The same applies for GP referrals and short term interventions for rehabilitation, once the period of concession has ended and the habit of physical activity has formed – you don't want to lose the custom! Price membership appropriately to enable the customer to continue to access the service – concessionary rates are a great way to fill your quiet off peak times in the gym.

Good Example

GLL - Better and Inclusive

The benefits of being a Better Inclusive member:

- No joining fee, and no minimum contract
- Access to over 100 Better leisure centres
- Free entry for an accompanying personal assistant
- Come and go as you like with anytime access to our gyms, swimming pools and group exercise classes
- Free fitness induction
- Telephone and online bookings can be made up to 6 days in advance for group exercise classes, squash, and badminton
- Get up to 30% discount off the price of other non-member activities

To receive a Better Inclusive membership, you must be aged 16 or over, and entitled to any of the following:

- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Mobility Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance
- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit
- Disablement Benefit
- Attendance Allowance
- Employment and Support Allowance

For more information see:
<http://www.better.org.uk/memberships/concessionary>

4.4 Promotion – how you communicate

Promoting your facility inclusively is crucial to targeting disabled people. Disabled people included in the inactive population are the people who need your service the most and yet may never engage in physical activity unless you conduct the right promotional activity to reach them.

Key Messages

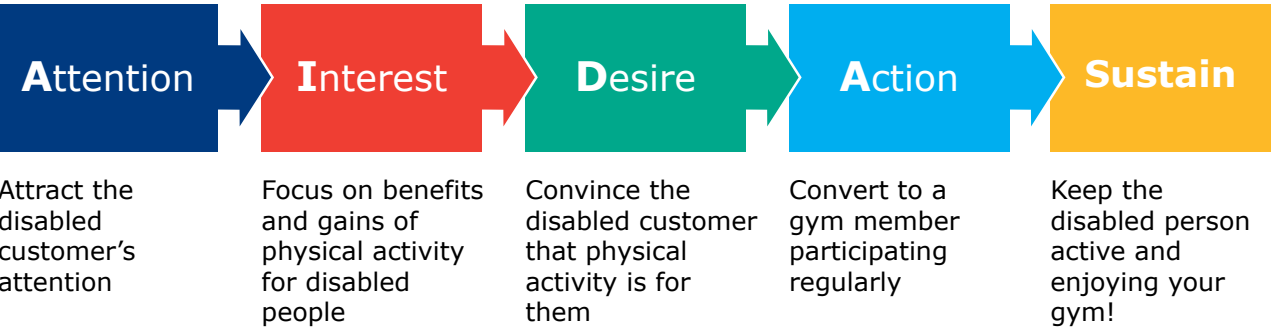
Send out the right message and images to attract disabled people. Their motivations and triggers to exercise will be the same as non-disabled peoples:-

- To feel healthier
- To lose weight
- To look and feel good
- For social reasons
- For enjoyment!

And the national physical activity guidelines for adults are the same too:-

At least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) of **moderate-intensity aerobic activity** such as cycling or fast walking every week, and **muscle-strengthening activities** on 2 or more days a week that work all major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms).

In developing a successful campaign to promote the key messages of physical activity to disabled users you should consider the four stages of marketing engagement- **AIDA**. For sustainability, we have added the additional stage to support behaviour change and create a loyal customer base:



If you're truly going to provide 'opportunities for all' then your promotional marketing needs to be inclusive and reflect the market you're trying to attract and not just represent those that are already active. Of course we need to reflect the aspirational goal and benefits of being physically active to increase the perceived benefits of exercise however we're not all going to be able to aspire to be Jane Fonda or Jillian Michaels!

Top Tip

We've recently developed some positive inclusive imagery of disabled people using the gym. You can use this photography or get some ideas to develop your own images – go to promoting activity website.

Let's now look at some promotional activities and how you can make them more inclusive to engage with disabled people within the market segmentations.

Posters and Leaflets

Your generic marketing material – posters and leaflets displayed and distributed generally within the community may well be seen by disabled people. It is therefore important to ensure that it is inclusive and attractive to disabled people too.

Generic marketing = cost effective way to reach disabled people.

In addition – consider where your flyers are circulated to ensure that they will reach potential disabled customers - GP surgeries, physiotherapists /rehab centres, mobility shops.

You may also consider creating disability specific marketing as well as generic marketing to target certain impairment groups or individuals - ensure that it is accessible to them - here is a checklist of things to consider:-

Inclusive Marketing Literature	Yes	No
Have you included the IFI Mark logo if you are accredited?		
Does the photography on your promotional material reflect the market you are aiming to attract?		
Does the promotional material say that it's available in alternative formats? (e.g., large print).		
Can you provide the promotional material in alternative formats upon request?		
Is the literature printed in a clear accessible font like Arial or Calibri?		
Is the text at least 12 point?		
Is the promotional material printed on matt rather than a shiny surface?		
Is the colour scheme used appropriate and easy to read?		
Have you included details about what features make your facility accessible to disabled people?		
Have you included a range of alternative ways of contacting the facility including landline and mobile telephone numbers, email and website addresses?		

For further information about creating accessible information visit the [RNIB website](#).

Top Tip

If you are an IFI Mark accredited facility include the IFI Mark logo on your promotional material – disabled people will actively seek out the IFI Mark ‘badge’ to assess whether your facility is accessible to them. Use inclusive images, details about your accessible service provision and availability of information in alternative formats.



Websites

Start with your own website – make sure your website is firstly accessible to disabled users and secondly that you are advertising your inclusivity on your website. Include your IFI Mark status, inclusive service provision and accessible features.

When developing your website to ensure that it is accessible to your target market refer to [RNIB guidance](#) or refer to BS 8878 2010 Web Accessibility Code of Practice British Standard.

For good examples of accessible websites visit: [www.easyhealth.org.uk](#), [www.disabledgo.com](#), [www.rnib.org.uk](#) and [www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk](#), [www.efds.co.uk](#)

Advertise on external websites relevant to sport and disability i.e., [Spogo](#), [Disabledgo](#), [Parasport](#). See [Section 9](#) for further information and useful contacts and don't forget to search for local disability groups, charities and sports organisations to target your local population of disabled people.

If you are an IFI Mark facility you will have a web page on both our website; [EFDS – Inclusive Fitness](#) and on [Direct Enquiries](#) website which has more than 1 million hits per month. And both these websites are visited by disabled people actively looking for accessible service provision and sport and leisure opportunities. Make the

most of these opportunities and provide the [IFI](#) with details of any promotional work or PR you want to share on your [website page](#).

Ensure that you have maximised your search engine optimisation (SEO) so people who are searching for ‘inclusive fitness’, ‘accessible gyms’, ‘gyms for disabled people’ are able to find you quickly. Remember that most people search through Google and it's free to have your facility details on the [Google Maps](#) directory.

You Tube

You may also want to advertise your accessible facility on [You Tube](#) to attract those potential members who are not currently engaged in leisure activities and who may be facing social and psychological barriers preventing them from visiting the facility. Lincolnshire Sports Partnership have done some great examples of You Tube videos featuring:

- [Accessible venues](#) and [changing facilities](#)
- [Fitness suite and equipment](#)
- [Trained staff in disability awareness and exercise and disability](#) of their IFI Mark facilities.



Let's get physical

Social Media

Set up a [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) account for your facility – social networks are a key element in attracting disabled people to use your facility and they're a great word of mouth tool. Use these tools to advertise the benefits of exercise, develop forums, gather feedback, advertise promotions and competitions and as a discussion board. Cross promote through online media and get people interacting!

See Everyone Active for an example of good practice: www.facebook.com/everyoneactive

Local Media - Advertising

If you can afford to advertise in the local media then you should consider promoting inclusive events and/or free taster sessions/membership for disabled people or if the advert is generic then make sure the message is inclusive. Look out for regional/national awards recognising good practice and get nominated! You may also want to spend budget on attending disability or health events and exhibitions to showcase your facility and accessible service provision. Don't forget local radio either and [talking pages](#) for people with visual impairments.

Public and Media relations

If you haven't already, build up good rapport with your local newspaper. Local journalists are always looking to cover good news stories featuring activities and people in the community. Find out who writes about sport and health and provide them with good news stories. Be clear on who the target readers are, what you want to tell them, what you want them to do as a result of reading the article and what they need to know to take action. Make sure your headline grabs their attention.

Establish a PR strategy for inclusive fitness –

- the launch (IFI Mark accreditation/re-accreditation)
- new equipment/refurbishment
- membership recruitment (come and have-a-go sessions)
- personal stories (case studies of the benefits of physical activity for disabled people).

Top Tip

Refer to [Resource B in Section 5](#) – for Press Release examples

Direct Mail

The benefit of direct mail is that you can target the market you want to communicate with directly and tailor the message and call to action to exercise accordingly – you can send direct mail through the post or email. As discussed earlier though, it is very difficult to identify where disabled people are and therefore again – the more inclusive you make your generic marketing the better. It may also be more cost effective to target local organisations that provide products and services for disabled people as they may be influential in encouraging their service users to participate in physical activity i.e., [physiotherapists](#), [local carers association](#), and local groups and clubs of and for disabled people etc.

The [Sport England market segmentation web tool](#) breaks down where dominant profiles live by area and whilst there will be disabled people in every segment, segments 15. Terry, 16. Norma, 17. Ralph and Phyllis, 18. Frank and 19. Elsie – may be the most likely to have an impairment or medical condition. Sample communication plans for each profile can be found on the [Promoting Activity website](#).

Alternatively you can buy a mailing list which matches your target market – for example www.marketingguru.co.uk have lists of consumers who are interested in health and fitness or health related products i.e., mobility, hearing aids. Email marketing is very cost effective plus you can track and capture further data through this method. Choose a promotion that is likely to get the recipient to click for further information, register their contact details for further information or complete a survey – click [here](#) for an example. Again make sure that your marketing is accessible to the target audience.

Other Promotional Tools

There are always other ways in which you may want to promote your gym to disabled people, such as exhibiting at local and national disability events, conferences or in public places (such as shopping centres). You may even want to consider sponsoring an award that involves local disabled people, perhaps in relation to the use of your facility or a local disabled people's group or club.



“The benefit of direct mail is that you can target the market you want to communicate with directly.”



4.5 Process – the methods

This is often the most forgotten ‘P’, but it can have huge implications on keeping and increasing your customers. It can also give you an advantage over competitor gyms, because your service has thought about the disabled customer in greater detail. Word of mouth is a great form of marketing and ‘process’ is a perfect example of why disabled customers who are happy with your processes in a gym, will recommend you to their friends or family.

Process is all about how and the method in which you deliver your services. These help you to satisfy your disabled customers in so many ways. Ask yourself the following questions:

- How do you keep potential or current disabled customers informed?
- Are your staff helpful and friendly towards them?
- Are disabled customers’ emails, phone call or feedback forms answered effectively and in a timely manner?
- How often do you interact with potential or current disabled customers?

Think about the journey a disabled customer will go through to answer their queries before joining your gym. This could be a huge barrier in their feelings towards your service. For example, if a blind person chooses to contact you via your website and your website is not up to standard for their reading software - they can not contact you and you may have lost a customer.

Perhaps a potential disabled person phones your gym to ask a question about the joining process. They are kept on the phone for a long time because the person answering does not know how to handle the enquiry. Then, this staff member keeps them on a waiting list for a member of management to answer if they get the chance. Like anyone would, the disabled person could lose enthusiasm to join your gym based on the unhelpfulness. They may go somewhere else which provides better procedures, systems and processes. And, they will tell the people they know about it... and even more – feed it back on forums for disabled people etc.

Think about your processes within the gym and whether people with every impairment are covered. For example, if your only method of contact is by telephone – how will this impact on deaf or hearing impaired customers? If you only have intricate membership forms to fill out – how will this impact on people with a learning disability?

Even when you have disabled customers actively using your gym, retaining them is important too. The communication they receive as members may not be in an accessible format, or their feedback forms may not give them room to discuss their extra needs as a disabled person.

This can be the first and last impression disabled people have of your gym, so with better practices, your gym can be instantly recognised as a thoughtful, thorough and positive venue to exercise in.

4.6 People – who’s involved

For anyone joining a gym or already a member, the way you are treated and the contact you receive from people working in the gym has a huge impact on the way we feel about it. The staff play a huge role in your reputation as a gym which is welcoming to disabled customers.

Think about some of the services you rate highly. Is it because when you signed up to that service the person selling it to you accommodated to your needs or did the receptionist go the extra mile to help you? We will usually remember the treatment from people rather than the product itself. A gym is no different to disabled people and this ‘P’ is often an important factor in how a disabled customer values your gym. It shows the connection with ‘Price’ (value) too as many will remember the way they were treated by the personal instructor rather than the price they paid to join the gym.

Are there support services you could add in your gym, which would enhance disabled customer’s satisfaction with your staff? Perhaps this is where a ‘gym champion’ would be made available to regularly support disabled members and listen to their needs. Maybe it means better training, or a company staff policy about your treatment of disabled customers.



Staff training is an important element of the IFI Mark in terms of the whole customer experience. Customer service training and disability awareness of all staff to welcome disabled people to use the facility - is vital. Staff should be aware of the accessible features and service provision within the facility e.g. if you have a hearing induction - make sure staff know how to use it. Customer service will make or break a disabled person’s first experience of leisure and is therefore important in terms of marketing your inclusive service provision. We all know that word of mouth is one of the most effective means of marketing and disabled people will spread the word if they’ve had a positive or negative experience - try and make sure that your staff become and want to be your advocates!

Good Example of how an IFI Mark facility went above and beyond to support participation:

Festival Hall, Willow Woods Day Centre and Kirkby Volunteer Centre

Festival Hall Leisure Centre an IFI Mark facility promoted their inclusive fitness provision to a local day centre for adults with physical and learning disabilities. The day centre used the facility weekly during off peak times to provide opportunities for service users to participate in different sporting activities. A member of staff at the day centre transported the group by mini bus to and from the leisure centre.

A small group of service users also started to enjoy using the gym – however due to cut backs at the day service - staff were unable to continue to provide this additional activity to their service users. Festival Hall contacted the local volunteer centre to enquire about a volunteer driver to pick the service users up to transport them to use the gym. Between the 4 service users they agreed to pay an £2 each to cover the volunteer driver’s petrol costs.



4.7 Physical Evidence – how you show it

Your gym runs a service to all customers. As we cannot ‘feel’ a gym before we have joined, it is important to reduce any doubts disabled people have while they choose to join or continue their membership with you. You can do this by letting disabled people see what they could be buying into beforehand and during their time with you.

Think about what you want you expect in a gym before you join and while you are a customer. Disabled people will expect the same as many customers – a tidy and accessible reception, clean changing facilities etc.

Your premises should meet disabled people’s assumptions about exercising. As well as an inclusive gym environment, there are other ways you could increase your evidence. Try writing some testimonials or getting endorsements off current disabled customers - add them to your literature. Your leaflets and brochures will play a part too. Try adding some more inclusive images of disabled people working out within them. This is a great way to ‘feel’ a gym cares about you as a disabled customer.

This is where you can see how the marketing mix truly inter-link each with other. If your processes are not ideal for disabled people to feedback testimonials - then you will not have perfect examples to use in your gym brochures. Without testimonials - you could be missing out on disabled customers who just wanted to read and be confident in how you are already answering their needs.

“Try writing some testimonials or getting endorsements off current disabled customers - add them to your literature.”



5: Resources - good kit

Now you know how to adapt your marketing to be more inclusive - this section will provide you with tools and good examples to develop and deliver your campaign to get more disabled people participating in physical activity at your facility.

- Resource A** [Example of an Inclusive Engagement Ladder incorporating the marketing mix.](#)
- Resource B** [Examples of Press Releases for Inclusive Fitness.](#)
- Resource C** [Ways to Promote Inclusive Fitness – A Checklist.](#)
- Resource D** [Example of an Inclusive Marketing Plan.](#)
- Resource E** [Inclusive Fitness Marketing Concepts and Templates.](#)
- Resource F** [Examples of Presentations for Community Engagement.](#)

If you need additional advice on how use the inclusive tools above and embed them into a marketing campaign to Make Sport Fun and download a copy of their [6 stages of an effective sport and marketing campaign.](#)

This resource will provide you with a step by step guide to develop an effective campaign to increase participation in sport and physical activity and support you to:-



“Rather than re-invent the wheel if you use both resources together will be able to develop a campaign that will attract more disabled people to use your facility.”



6: Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is crucial to prove the case for inclusion and justify marketing expenditure in targeting prospective disabled gym members.

From a marketing perspective – the most important information to gather is the 'call to action'. This means through what means did your prospective disabled gym member learn about your inclusive provision? Once you know this – you will be able to establish the most effective means of communicating with disabled people and allocate your marketing expenditure accordingly for future campaigns.



“From a marketing perspective - the most important information to gather is the 'call to action'.”

If you can – try to establish a before and after picture of your membership profile. Do you know how many disabled gym members you have to measure before, during and after the marketing campaign? The IFI Mark stipulates that you monitor the quantitatively the number of disabled people that join your facility and the frequency of use. We also recommend monitoring by impairment group and qualitatively monitoring customer feedback, the benefits of exercise of disabled people and income generation. Monitoring can only support you to check that your marketing activity to recruit disabled people is working and in the longer term to access potential funding for engaging with the local inactive population and provide useful data relating to activity of disabled users.

The easiest way to capture this information is to ask for disability data on the membership form or within your Health Commitment Statement/ Par-Q. Some disabled people won't want to declare their impairment or condition and of course that's their choice. Even if they have an obvious impairment it is not for anyone else to label and is discretionary.

See below for a suggested format of questions to gather relevant information about disability and distinguishing impairment groups:

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person or are you the parent, guardian or personal assistant of a person who is disabled?	Please tick YES NO	
We define disabled as someone who has a long term illness, health condition or impairment that limits daily activities		

Which of the following best describes how your impairment or health condition affects you?	Please tick all that apply	
a. Vision. For example, due to blindness or visual impairment		
b. Hearing. For example, due to deafness or hard of hearing		
c. Physical impairment (including dwarfism, cerebral palsy, wheelchair users, Mobility issues due to imbalance or coordination, illness and pain discomfort (such as back problems), amputee		
d. Learning or concentrating or remembering		
e. Mental Health issue		
f. Social or behavioural issues, for example, due to neurological diverse conditions such as Autism, Attention Deficit or Aspergers' Syndrome		
g. Other		
h. Prefer not to say		

By gathering this data you will be able to measure the proportion of disabled people who are gym members by impairment group. In order to monitor how often they exercise will depend on how sophisticated your membership management software is and how far it drills down in terms of disability or impairment group. Your system may group disabled people on concessionary memberships but not necessarily capture all disabled people or by impairment group. Research suggests that certain types of impairment group are more prone to secondary health and medical conditions such as diabetes and cardiovascular diseases⁸. This could be related to sedentary behaviour and participating physical activity will support the management of these conditions and be as important as diet.

“go beyond just monitoring the level of physical activity and start to look at the benefits.”

⁸ British Association of Cardiac Rehabilitation (2000), Phase IV Exercise Instructor Training Module, revised edition.

Monitoring the frequency and length of time disabled users are participating in physical activity will help to establish whether disabled people are meeting the current guidelines of physical activity. To enhance the opportunity of accessing further funding or developing partnerships - we advise that you go beyond just monitoring the level of physical activity and start to look at the benefits. By simply recording data such as resting heart rate, weight and BMI you can start to analyse the benefits of physical activity as a lifestyle intervention. Make sure you plan your monitoring activity effectively and decide on what you want to measure, how, when and how the results will be used.

This type of monitoring will of course also support retention of your disabled gym members as they see the benefits of all their hard work!

If you're not already linked to your local GP surgery and health referral schemes then invest in staff training to develop staff to lead cardiac

and stroke rehabilitation groups. This will support the Clinical Commissioning Group's and provide a catalyst to record the long term health impacts of physical activity, quality of life and the savings on local health care costs through physical activity interventions. Physical activity has also been shown to act as a successful motivation and retention tool in setting and reviewing weight loss goals.

Gathering qualitative data will provide you with additional insight into the customer experience and how disabled people participate in physical activity. You can then start to develop case studies highlighting the success of individuals and the programmes you are running. Develop these into press stories for local media coverage to launch programmes and record the on-going success of the participants – make sure they agree to this beforehand though. Local media coverage will provide an excellent way of recruiting new participants and through positive results will ensure future referrals.

As a national project – the IFI is always looking for examples of innovative good practice and case studies – so please share them with us!

Continually evaluate the products and services you are offering through member focus groups - include disabled people in these groups to represent disabled people's views and gain a better understanding about what brought them to your facility, their motivations to exercise and how to keep them coming back. Qualitative monitoring will provide you with additional insight into the customer experience and how disabled people participate in physical activity.

Here are some example questions to gather qualitative information:

- Why do you become a member of this facility?
- How did you find out about it?
- What did you expect?
- Does the facility meet your expectations?
- What type of membership do you have?

- How do you travel to the gym?
 - Does someone attend with you?
 - What do you think of the staff's attitude at the facility?
 - What improvements would you like to see?
 - Do you want to try different activities? If so, what?
- Survey Monkey is a great way to send out an online questionnaire via email to collect quantitative and qualitative data from your gym members. It's easy to set up and **FREE!** See www.surveymonkey.com. To get a better response you may want to provide an incentive for completion. Remember also to make sure that the form is accessible to disabled members and is available in alternative formats if requested.

7: Budget and funding

To maximise your investment in achieving the IFI Mark we recommend that you set aside a percentage of your existing marketing budget for membership recruitment specifically to target disabled people as well investing in making your generic marketing more inclusive.

As outlined in Section 4 the tools you adapt to do this do not have to be cost prohibitive but will be a sound investment if you are serious about tapping into this market segmentation. Commitment both in terms of time and finance will be required and are the only ways that you'll be able to establish the case for inclusive fitness.

You may well be able to source your own budget or seek partnership funding to develop more inclusive provision locally or nationally – [see Section 9](#) for funding information. Opportunities

may exist for you with the changes from Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) to Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) – (who now have the responsibility of producing a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)) to support the health and wellbeing of the local community. See [Department of Health](#) website for further information on how to fit the requirements of the CCG's and support service delivery to meet funding criteria. A good example of this under the old structure of the PCTs - the first of its kind was developed in Lincolnshire.

“a sound investment if you are serious about tapping into this market segmentation.”

Good Example

Lincolnshire Sports

Lincolnshire Sports developed a partnership between themselves, NHS Lincolnshire, Lincolnshire County Council, District Council and the local leisure providers to achieve the IFI Mark at 18 of its leisure facilities.

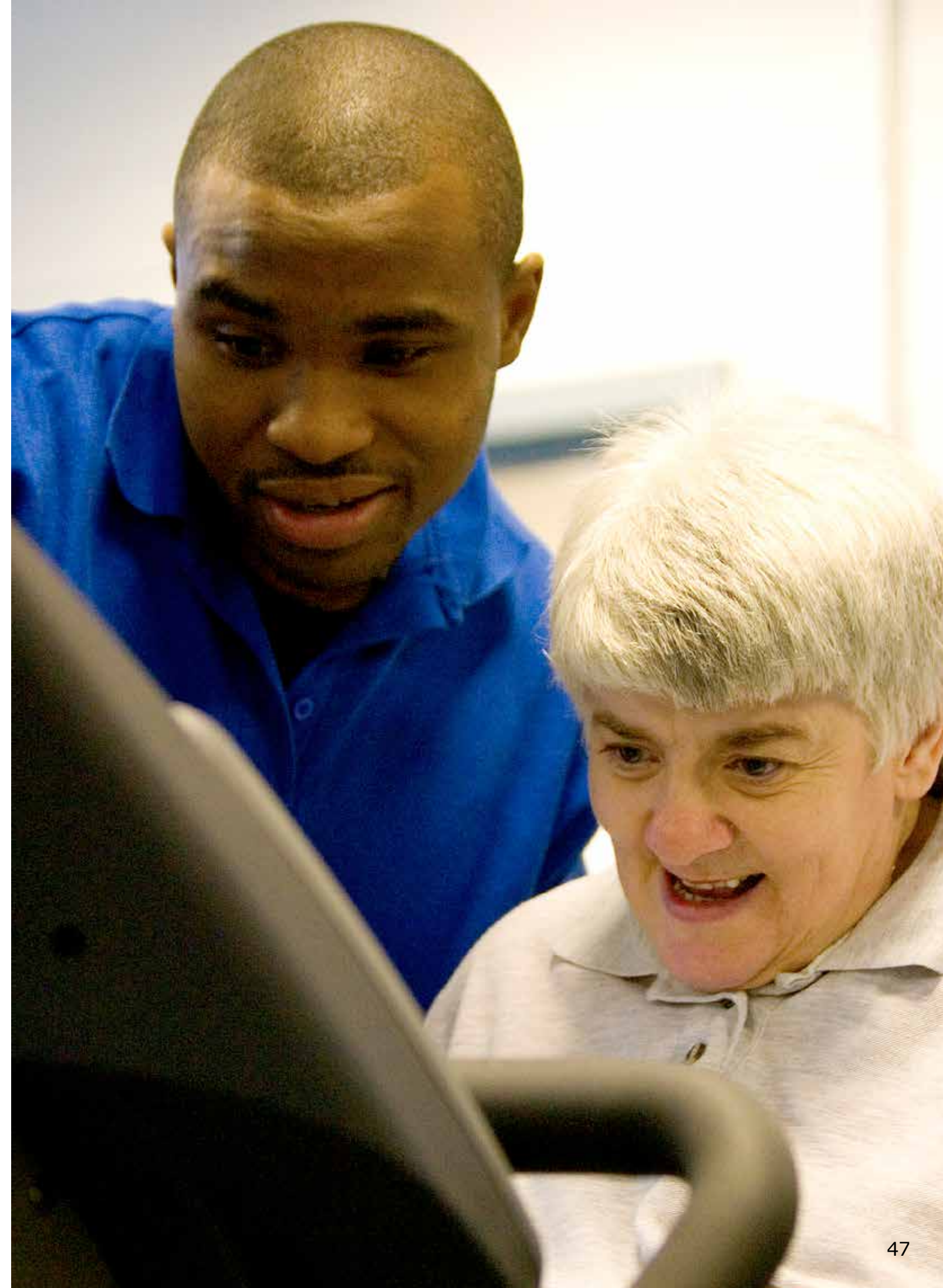
NHS Lincolnshire invested £340,000 in all areas of the IFI to support accessible gym provision for disabled people across the County. Over the period of a year 900 disabled people joined the gyms with a total of 20,000 visits between them. The impact and outcomes included:

- Improved health and wellbeing of new members
- Improved provision in terms of the facility and service they received
- 1st place at the NHS Celebrating Success Awards in the Equality and Diversity category
- Increase in the numbers of and range of Exercise Referral Programmes
- Shared success amongst the partners and development of further projects to include disabled people in sport and physical activity across the County.

This example highlights how the IFI Mark can support you to achieve these outcomes and provide you with additional opportunities to work with local partners and acquire potential funding.

It can unlock funding opportunities for sport, health and disability. An investment in inclusive fitness provision will capture a new market of disabled people who will be loyal customers if services they receive are good. This will inevitably increase your revenue in terms of membership, secondary spend and referrals!

“An investment in inclusive fitness provision will capture a new market of disabled people.”





8: Conclusion

We hope that you find this resource useful and that it supports you to see a return on your investment by attracting more disabled people to use your facility.

Inclusion is not just about the accessibility of your building. It is of course useful to benchmark how accessible your facility is and in receiving the IFI Mark accreditation, you will know how to continuously improve this in all elements of the IFI. However, the benefits of marketing your inclusive facility to potential and current disabled users are endless. If marketing is done effectively, your gym will sell itself to everyone as a welcoming and customer-friendly place to enjoy being active!

If you have any comments or additional information that you think would be useful to add to this resource then please do not hesitate to contact us. We're always looking for examples of good practice and case studies to share.

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3 Oakwood Drive
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Telephone: **01509 227750**

Email: ifi@efds.co.uk

Website: www.efds.co.uk/inclusive_fitness

Twitter: [@incl_fitness](https://twitter.com/incl_fitness) [#letsgetphysicALL](https://twitter.com/letsgetphysicALL)





9 Useful contacts and further information

National Disability Sports Organisations

- English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) and Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) – www.efds.co.uk
Telephone: 01509 227750
- British Amputee and Les Autres Sports Association (BALASA) – www.balasa.org.uk
Telephone: 01773 715984
- British Blind Sport (BBS) – www.britishblindsport.org.uk
Telephone: 01926 424247
- Cerebral Palsy Sport (CP Sport) – www.cpsport.org
Telephone: 01159 257027
- Dwarf Sports Association UK – www.dsauk.org
Telephone: 01246 296485
- Mencap Sport – www.mencap.org.uk
Telephone: 01924 234912
- Special Olympics Great Britain (SOGB) – www.sogb.org.uk
Telephone: 0207 2478891
- UK Deaf Sport (UKDS) – www.ukdeafsport.org.uk
Email: office@ukds.org.uk
- Wheelpower – www.wheelpower.org.uk
Telephone: 01296 395995

Disabled People's Organisations, Services and National Networks

- Action on Hearing Loss – www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk
- Age UK – Fit as a Fiddle a programme championing physical activity and well-being for older people
www.ageuk.org.uk/health-wellbeing/fit-as-a-fiddle
- Arthritis Care – www.arthritiscare.org.uk
- British Institute of Learning Disabilities – www.bild.org.uk
- College of Occupational Therapists – www.cot.co.uk
- Diabetes UK – www.diabetes.org.uk
- DotComUnity – www.dotcommunity.org.uk – an online resource for disabled people to access local opportunities and share information and feedback on services and activities.
- Disability Now – www.disabilitynow.org.uk
- Downs Syndrome Association – www.downs-syndrome.org.uk
- Equality and Human Rights Commission – www.equalityhumanrights.com
- Guide Dogs for the Blind – www.guidedogs.org.uk
- M.E. Association – www.meassociation.org.uk
- MENCAP – www.mencap.org.uk
- MIND – www.mind.org.uk
- RADAR Information Services – www.radar.org.uk
- RNIB – www.rnib.org.uk
- SCOPE – www.scope.org.uk
- Sense – www.sense.org.uk
- Stroke Association – www.stroke.org.uk



Sports and Physical Activity

- EFDS – www.efds.co.uk signposting and resources: Engaging Disabled People in Sport
- Disability Sport Wales – www.disabilitysportwales.org
- Scottish Disability Sport - www.scottishdisabilitysport.com
- Disability Sport Northern Ireland - www.dsni.co.uk
- Parasport - www.parasport.org.uk signposts and informs disabled people, and those interested in disability sport, about sport and sporting activities
- Spogo – www.spogo.co.uk finds local sport and fitness opportunities
- National Governing Bodies (NGBs) - EFDS works in partnership with five priority sports NGBs; Athletics, Cycling, Football, Swimming and Tennis. Weightlifting, indoor rowing and triathlon also provide cross marketing opportunities to attract disabled people to use the gym
- County Sports Partnerships (CSPs) – a network of 49 local agencies committed to working together to increase participation in sport and physical activity including disabled people www.cspnetwork.org
- SPORTA – www.sporta.org

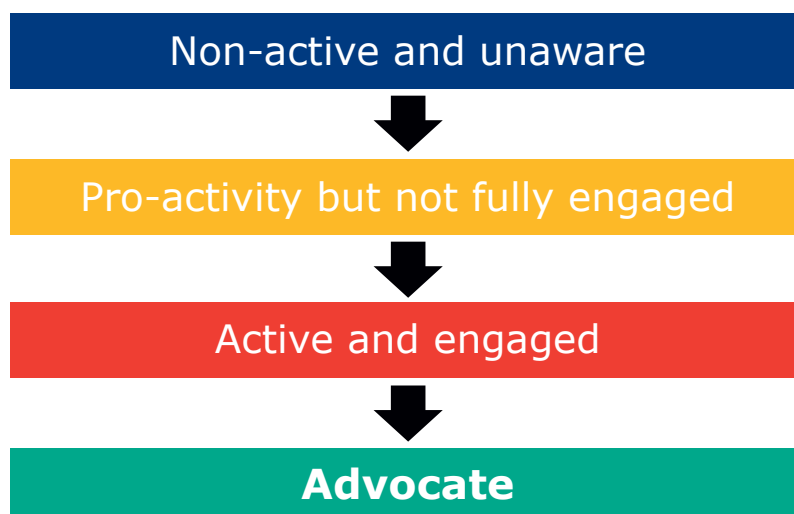
Health

- Change 4 Life - www.nhs.uk/Change4Life/Pages/change-for-life.aspx
- Let's Get Moving <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/let-s-get-moving-revised-commissioning-guidance>
- Start Active, Stay Active - www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh_128210.pdf

Funding Information

- www.fundingcentral.org
- www.grantsnet.co.uk
- www.j4bcommunity.co.uk
- www.sportengland.org/funding/csaf.aspx
- www.grantnet.com
- Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Local main libraries have the Directory of Grant Making Trusts available for reference only containing information on 2,500 grant making trusts
- Local Volunteer Centres / CVS for funding advice
- Community Foundations and Funds
- Funding Advice Networks
- Local Councils – District and County
- County Sports Partnerships

Example of an Inclusive Engagement Ladder



Non-active and unaware

Product / Service	Provide lots of choice – programme activities effectively throughout the day and cater for beginners and different levels of fitness.
Place	Increase of local opportunities, timing of sessions to suit family arrangements.
Price	If providing a free taster session make sure that users know how much they're saving! Include pricing strategies that support people on benefits to be included. Include concessions for family member/ personal assistant to attend alongside.
Promotion	Have website links to sign up for membership, regular twitter feeds, newsletters, free event trials, have a go sessions, case studies and news stories – which all highlight services for disabled people.
Process	Ensure that there are quick response rates to contact points - phone, forms and that every member of staff can deal with enquiries related to access and inclusion.
People	Recruit mentors, buddies and encouragers for group exercise sessions or as part of the induction so that new disabled members can relate to someone who is similar to them.
Physical Evidence	Produce targeted inclusive brochures, "How am I doing" books, membership packs and gifts.

Example of an Inclusive Engagement Ladder

Pro-activity but not fully engaged

Product / Service	Provide intermediate sessions to continue to motivate individuals, monitor benefits of physical activity and set challenges and goals.
Place	Continue to expand opportunities into the community, timing of sessions to suit family arrangements etc.,
Price	Provide monthly membership options for clients who potentially can't maintain an annual membership due to their condition or impairment.
Promotion	Use a range of resources, training packs, cross-selling/up-selling and mailers with incentives and reminder for users to come back including reference to disability.
Process	Record interaction on a customer relationship management system to follow up engagement.
People	Maintain group sessions and/ or additional one to one contact with personal training or coaching to monitor and maintain physical activity levels.
Physical Evidence	Include other activities to support engagement – set up social aspects i.e., free drink in the café so that users can interact and support each other at the end of the sessions.

Example of an Inclusive Engagement Ladder

Active and engaged

Product / Service	Continue personal interaction with customer so they feel valued. Develop services to be innovative – add value and benefit to membership i.e., free resources, retention gifts, host disability forums.
Place	Develop additional opportunities in the community eg; fun events, team competitions.
Price	Reward retained members with annual promotional pricing eg; sign up for 12 months pay for 10.
Promotion	Promote challenges and/or set goals to motivate users to challenge their fitness levels and achieve more. Consider appropriate activities.
Process	Review the process of service provision to make sure that it still meets their needs and aspirations.
People	Recruit active members as buddies for new starters. Use them as success stories to sell the benefits of physical activity for disabled people.
Physical Evidence	Reward active members with award 'member of the month' and fitness gift to highlight what they've achieved.

Example of an Inclusive Engagement Ladder

Advocate

Product / Service	Include advocate in development of service provision for other disabled users. Value and utilise their passion, commitment and involvement
Place	Ask advocate to attend outreach sessions with you externally to sell the benefits of physical activity
Price	Provide incentives/ reduction in annual membership fee in return for advocacy and membership recruitment
Promotion	Ask advocate to promote the benefits of physical activity within disability community
Process	Pilot or ask for advocates advice on any new service provision/ policies at the facility
People	Ask them to mentor and potentially train to lead group inclusive sessions
Physical Evidence	Have a hall of fame to display case studies and success stories

Inclusive Fitness Initiative Mark (IFI) achieved at the [name of facility]

[Name of Gym] at the **[Name of Facility]** in **[Location]** has recently been awarded the IFI Mark at **[Provisional/ Registered/ Excellent]** level in recognition of its commitment to improving customer service and access for disabled people.

This means you will find staff at the **[name of gym]** who have had specialist training, providing them with the understanding, skills and expertise to ensure all users have a safe and effective workout. The gym has been equipped with an inclusive range of **[name of fitness equipment supplier]** fitness equipment that allows for a full body workout for both disabled and non-disabled people and the building has accessible toilet and changing facilities and plenty of accessible parking bays.

As part of the IFI Mark launch the **[facility]** Centre is providing free taster sessions of the gym along with a number of different sports and activities for disabled people with the aim of encouraging local people to become more active. The inclusive activities day will be on **[insert date]** including use of the gym, pool, handball, Boccia, basketball and trampolining. Come and have a go!

The official launch of the IFI Mark will be conducted by **[name]** who will thank staff involved at the centre who have contributed to achieving the award and also **[name and job title]** at **[sports development team or CSP]** who has also assisted in promoting activities to disabled people within the local community.

For further information on **[name of facility]** and inclusive activities within the local authority, please visit [www.\[\].co.uk](http://www.[].co.uk) For further information about the IFI Mark visit www.efds.co.uk/inclusive_fitness

Ends ###

Notes to Editor:

Written by:

100 local disabled people are more active thanks to the Inclusive Fitness Initiative

[Name of Facility] boasts 100 disabled gym members since it achieved its Inclusive Fitness Initiative Mark **[?]** months/ years ago. The Inclusive Fitness Initiative is a project run by the English Federation of Disability Sport to support facilities to be more accessible to disabled people so that they can participate in physical activity.

The project has worked in partnership with the **[local NHS, disability sports team, CSP and/or local disabled people's organisations]** investing time and resources to accredit **[]** gyms across the local authority to improve their facilities and services to allow more disabled people to use the centres regularly.

Spokes person for the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) said: "The Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) is delighted to be part of this project that places the needs of disabled people firmly at the heart of the delivery of fitness, sport and physical activity provision. The investment made demonstrates a change in ensuring a proactive response to ensuring that disabled people are able to make the same healthy lifestyle choices as non-disabled people."

Project Manager quote:

"We have had a lot of positive feedback from the IFI project and we are delighted that the project has made such an impact on people's lives. More disabled people are using gyms across the county, leisure centres are becoming more aware of disabled users, staff have had training and understand the requirements disabled users may need. Disability groups are being welcomed into new facilities which can specifically cater for their needs. This is a fantastic achievement."

All facilities have also noticed an increase in the number of disabled people visiting other areas of the leisure centre, as a result of better access to the gym and the building themselves. A number of sites now have 'Changing Places' standard facilities which include changing beds and hoists within the accessible toilet.

[Gym member] joined one of the accredited Inclusive Fitness facilities last year. She/he said:

"I have a physical impairment but because the equipment is easy to use and accessible, I use the IFI equipment in the fitness suite three times per week. I use most of the equipment but especially like the treadmill and the bike. If I need assistance the staff are very helpful and friendly. I really feel that I am making progress in my efforts to drop dress sizes."

For further information on **[name of facility]** and inclusive activities within the local authority, please visit [www.\[\].co.uk](http://www.[].co.uk) For further information about the IFI Mark visit www.efds.co.uk/inclusive_fitness

Ends ###

Notes to Editor:

Written by:



Let's get physicall

[Name of Facility] invests in new inclusive fitness equipment

[Name of Facility] is continuing with its mission to get the nation active by investing £??k refurbishing its gym with new **[name of supplier]** cardiovascular and strength IFI accredited equipment at the same time as being reaccredited with the IFI Mark at **[provisional/registered/excellent]** level.

[Name of Facility] have redesigned the gym and included equipment that will be more inclusive for disabled and older people in the community. Gym staff have also under taken training in Exercise and Disability so that they are confident in delivering adapted physical activity for all levels of fitness. The new equipment features **[monitoring system name]** which monitor health and fitness, set goals and motivate the user.

The layout of the gym allows zones where fitness instructors can cater for small groups to work out and stay motivated together. Working out alone can be daunting so these new sessions will provide a social and fun environment for all.

[Name of staff member] says: "Our aim is to encourage new members who perhaps don't currently exercise to change their behavior and make a long term commitment to keeping fit and being active. The refurbishment with inclusive equipment and our delivery will motivate people to make physical activity a part of their everyday life.'

The facility work with a number of local authority partners and offer other inclusive activities including **[name activities]**. To launch the new gym, the facility will be holding an open day on **[date]** with free taster sessions in the gym along with a number of different sports and activities for disabled people. Come and have a go and make physical activity part of your daily life!

For further information on **[name of facility]** and inclusive activities within the local authority, please visit [www.\[\].co.uk](http://www.[].co.uk) For further information about the IFI Mark visit www.efds.co.uk/inclusive_fitness

Ends ###

Notes to Editor:

Written by:

Workout Walter's a Whiz in the Gym

Bowling and ballroom dancing are not unsurprising hobbies for pensioner Walter but he also spends three hours a week working out in the gym.

The 83-year-old from Newchurch laughed when it was suggested he was the oldest swinger in town as he happily pedalled away on an exercise bike at Pioneer Health Studio in Bacup. This facility is an IFI Mark gym which means that it has been adapted to be more accessible to disabled people.

Walter is the oldest gym member but he thoroughly enjoys his training sessions and is reaping the rewards of feeling healthier and having an even lighter step on the ballroom floor at St Mary's Chambers in Rawtenstall.

He said: "I have osteoarthritis, which affects all my joints making them seize up. My doctor at Irwell Medical Practice prescribed me exercise at Pioneer.

"That was for six weeks and I found it made such a difference I have been paying to attend the gym for 18 months now."

The former engineer worked in various mills in the Valley and said the heavy work he endured left him with arthritis but from retiring at 63 to starting at the gym he had done little physical exercise.

"Now people don't believe I am 83," the great-grandfather said as he lifted weights.

Pioneer's exercise referral instructor James Riley said: "When Walter first came here he had not properly exercised in years and he needed to work on his cardiovascular system - now he comes here to keep himself fit and healthy so he can lead his very active social life."

Walter praised the support he had received at Pioneer and said he had recommended the gym to his bowling pals at Stubbylee Park.

The studio also has a range of special fitness stations specifically designed for people who have had joint replacements and equipment that is accessible for disabled people.

[continued onto page 6]

Example Press Releases - Personal Experience

As a result Pioneer has been awarded the prestigious Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) Mark, for its work to ensure the gym can be accessed by all. The only other Rossendale gym to hold the award is Haslingden Sports Centre.

Rossendale charity REAL's community development worker Pat Smith said: "This is the year of health and well-being and it is fantastic that people of all ages and impairments are able to access the gym equipment. It is an excellent way to keep healthy in body and mind."

For further information on **[name of facility]** and inclusive activities within the local authority, please visit [www.\[\].co.uk](http://www.[].co.uk) For further information about the IFI Mark visit www.efds.co.uk/inclusive_fitness

Ends ###

Notes to Editor:

Written by:

Checklist

1. Within your facility

Sell your facility; illustrate what you have to offer at your facility and use your IFI Mark as a unique selling point. Never assume that people already know you are an inclusive facility.

Tick

Display the IFI Logo on all literature

Provide accessible literature and use clear print as standard

Offer alternative formats

Utilise your website

Promote internally on display / notice boards

Posters / flyers

Use inclusive imagery

Hold open days / taster sessions or coffee mornings

2. In the community

Distribute literature to the following community areas and keep information up to date.

Tick

Libraries

Health Centres and GP Surgeries

Hospitals / Physiotherapy clinics

Bus & Rail stations / Taxi Ranks

Mobility shops

Shopping Centres

[continued onto page 2]

Checklist cont'd

2. In the community cont'd

Distribute literature to the following community areas and keep information up to date.

Tick

Higher Education Centres

Local Disability Organisations

Social services

Local day care centres

Personal assistants / Personal assistant Associations

Post Offices

Community Centres

3. In the media

Create and circulate pre and post event press releases, articles, case studies and profiles to:

Tick

Newspapers

Talking newspapers

Radio Stations

Local Television

Magazines (Disability, Health and Leisure)

Local disability and health organisations

Community organisations

[continued onto page 3]

Checklist cont'd

3. In the media cont'd

Create and circulate pre and post event press releases, articles, case studies and profiles to:

Tick

Online Media:-

Use Social Networking Sites

Websites:-

Promote your facilities inclusive features in detail

Provide comprehensive contacts list

Exchange web-links

Regularly update pages

Display news stories

Display logos on links pages

4. Partnerships

Use your networks; engage with local organisations, share literature, news & resources. Get people talking about the Inclusive Fitness Initiative and the accessibility of your gym. Develop 'word of mouth' through networking.

Tick

County Sports Partnerships (CSP's)

Primary Care Trusts (PCT)

GP Surgeries

Equity & Disability Officers

Schools & special schools

Higher & further education

Disability and health organisations

Example Inclusive Marketing Delivery Plan

Introduction

This marketing plan aims to define how **[name of facility]** will effectively target disabled people to increase membership and participation from this target market. It is our intention to improve communications and awareness to both prospective and existing disabled customers within the local community.

The anticipated key outcomes are to:

- Develop mainstream marketing strategies to be more inclusive.
- Develop strategies to specifically target disabled people.
- Develop workforce skills in order to cater to the needs of our disabled customers.

Key Marketing Objectives

The key aims of this inclusive marketing plan are to:

- Promote strategies for targeting all impairment groups.
- Improve the quality, accessibility and performance of our services
- Meet the diverse needs of the local community.

The objectives of the plan are:

- To increase the number of gym members and their frequency of participation among the following impairment groups:-
 - Physical impairment
 - Learning disability
 - Visual impairment
 - Hearing impairment
 - Other impairment groups covered under the definition of the Equality Act
- Promote strategies to target disability groups, services and individuals who do not have any specific differentiation in terms of marketing.

[continued onto page 2]

Example Inclusive Marketing Delivery Plan

The key actions are as follows:

- Develop marketing initiatives to include:
 - Inclusive imagery, principles, colours, text, paper type etc
 - Alternative formats to include Braille, audio format and large print
 - Website development
- Attend regional disability forums
- Database development
- Appoint and develop Inclusive Activator role
- Expand and develop use of the media to target different impairment groups/disabled organisations
- Launch / Re-launch the facility or host an inclusive open day
 - Involve the local media
 - Invite disabled people and disability groups
 - Invite local 'celebrity'/ advocate
- Develop retention strategies
- Monitoring and evaluation

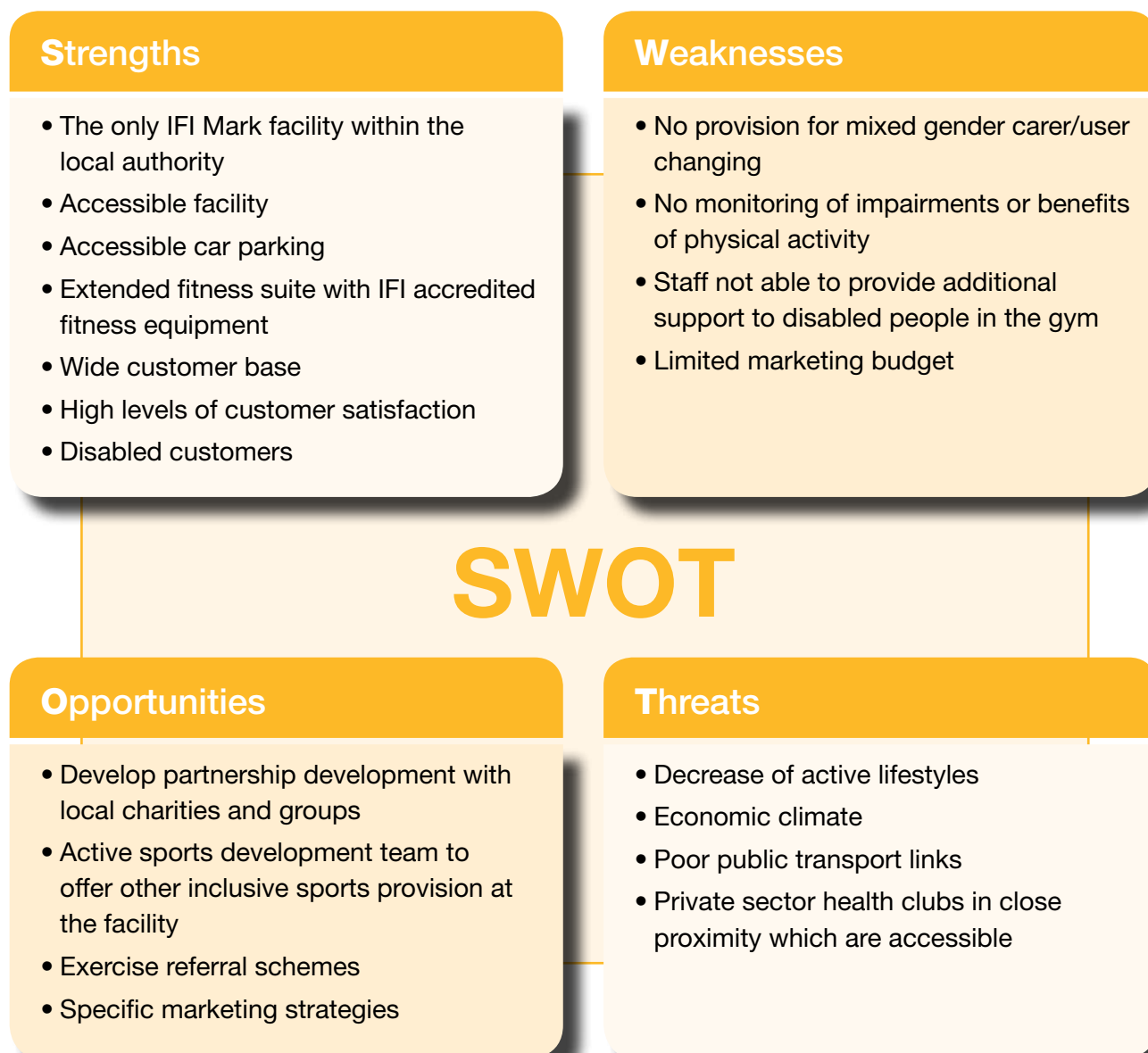
Analysing the environment

The facility can build upon its current position within the market place as it offers a wide range of quality facilities to cater for all age groups within an area which is fairly affluent and has an expanding population.

[continued onto page 3]

Example Inclusive Marketing Delivery Plan

The following **SWOT analysis** identifies the **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities** and **Threats** to the local area.



Work Area / Task	Timescale	Performance Indicator	Notes	Resp.
Development of the Target Market				
Development of disabled user database - CRM	On-going	Establishment of functional database of local contacts. Number of direct mail campaigns performed		Site Manager/ Fitness Manager
Brand and Corporate Image				
Use inclusive imagery on all promotional material	To be used on quarterly recruitment campaigns	An increased number of prospective disabled members		Marketing Manager
Development of Promotional Literature				
Ensure that mainstream marketing follows inclusive principles	On-going	Campaign promoting the use of plain English, large text, contrasting colours, on matt paper etc.,		Marketing Manager
Production of Alternative Formats				
Ensure that membership information is available in alternative formats and its availability is publicised on mainstream marketing	One month's time	Membership information available at reception in Braille, large print and audio, also electronic / email versions		Site Manager
Website Development and Links with IFI Web Site				
Display the IFI logo (if applicable). Ensure the website is kept up to date with all the latest inclusive fitness marketing information and linked to other relevant websites (EFDS, local and national disability/ sport websites)	Review monthly	Amount of website hit and leads generated from website		Marketing Manager

Work Area / Task	Timescale	Performance Indicator	Notes	Resp.
Forums				
Host disability members forum	Quarterly	Arrange and host disability forums for members to have their say to develop service provision within the facility		Site Manager
Community Activation				
To actively promote the site and to encourage disabled users around the centre	On-going at least once a week	Number of leads/prospective members generated		Gym staff/ Marketing Manager
To identify user groups to be targeted and to identify methods to encourage participation	On-going at least once a week	Number of appointments and subsequent prospective members		Gym staff/ Marketing Manager
Organise promotions/campaigns specifically to target disabled users – taster session/open days	Monthly	Amount of campaigns/open days / events		Marketing Manager
Press and PR				
Media campaign – send good news stories and updates to local newspaper or local charity newsletters	On-going at least once a quarter	Amount of press cuttings		Marketing Manager

Work Area / Task	Timescale	Performance Indicator	Notes	Resp.
Development of Consultation Mechanisms				
Develop or attend local inclusion focus group with CCG/Health and Wellbeing Board	On-going	Amount of members on group/amount of meetings staged – number of prospective members		Marketing Manager/ Site Manager/ Clinical Commissioning Group
Launch Event				
Launch/re-launch event New equipment/refurbishment Inclusive event	Three months time	Media coverage. Number of tours. Number of people who attend event. Number of induction performed	Arrange for a dignitary or character to be at the event	Site Manager/ Marketing Manager
Partnership Development				
To develop partnerships with external bodies to assist with the promotion of the site i.e., sports development team/County Sports Partnership	On-going	Promotional partner Referral partner Consultation		Gym Staff/Sports Development Team
Specific Strategies for Making Mainstream Marketing Activity More 'Inclusive'				
Include disabled people in all corporate marketing campaigns/initiatives and not only target them with specific campaigns	On-going	Amount of disabled leads generated and converted from corporate campaigns		Marketing Manager
Specific Strategies for Targeting People with a Physical Impairment				
Create links with rehabilitation/physiotherapy centres/wheelchair services	On-going	Amount of referrals generated		Marketing Manager/ Gym Staff

Work Area / Task	Timescale	Performance Indicator	Notes	Resp.
Specific Strategies for Targeting People with a Learning Disability				
Contact social services and local day care centres. Develop services that meet the needs of adults with a learning disability i.e., pictorial induction information	3 months	Amount of people with learning disabilities inducted		Gym/ Membership sales team
Specific Strategies for Targeting People with a Visual Impairment				
Contact local visually impairment groups, charities and services. Improve provision – signage and use of alternative formats around the centre	3 months	Amount of visually impaired people inducted	Braille workout cards	Gym/ Membership sales team
Specific Strategies for Targeting with a Hearing Impairment				
Contact local hearing impairment groups, charities and services. Improve service provision and develop better systems of communication. Include Text Relay on marketing information.	3 months	Amount of people with hearing impairments inducted	Investigate a basic sign language course	Gym/ Membership sales team
Specific Strategies Targeting Disabled People in a Group Setting				
Deliver presentations or taster sessions to local groups; day centres/residential homes/ disability sports groups about the benefits of physical activity and inclusive fitness	On-going	Amount of presentations performed and subsequent leads generated		Gym/ Membership sales team

Work Area / Task	Timescale	Performance Indicator	Notes	Resp.
Specific Strategies Targeting Influencers of Disabled People				
Offer personal assistants and group leaders a free trial and on-going membership to use facility with a paying disabled person	On-going	Amount of complimentary guest passes used		Gym/ Membership sales team
Monitoring and Evaluation of Marketing Activity				
Monitor whether new members consider themselves to have a disability or impairment and continue to monitor their usage	Immediately and on-going	Weekly reports		Membership team/ Site Manager
Carry out customer satisfaction survey of new/ existing disabled customers	Quarterly	Amount of surveys performed	Act on feedback	Marketing Manager
Carry out market research and insight with disabled non users	Quarterly	Amount of surveys performed	Process and act on feedback to make provision more inclusive to non- users	Marketing manager

Example Marketing Poster - Good Practice

inclusive
imagery

large print

clear
language
and text

pricing and
personal
assistant
come free

alternative formats
available

Exercise shaped for *everybody*.

Enjoy the benefits of a leisure membership at YourGym from just £19.95 per month.

No joining fee & no minimum contract

- **Anytime access** to our gyms, pools & group exercise classes
- Up to **30% discount** on other non-member activities
- **FREE** entry for an accompanying personal assistant if required

Information also available in large print and braille upon request.

We are your nearest inclusive fitness facility.
For more information visit www.yourgym.co.uk
Contact us on **01234 56789** or dial **18001+number** (for text relay) or email info@yourgym.co.uk

YourGym
Your IFI Mark accredited centre.
Station Road, Manchester M1 2AB

Inclusive Fitness
Let's get physic**all**

clear call
to action

include text
relay
information

telephone
and email
address
included

reference to
accredited
centre

Logos

The following logo and strapline are available for inclusion on marketing material.
The Inclusive Fitness logo is only to be used by IFI Mark centres.



Let's get physic**all**

To download, [click here](#)

Photography

We also have a library of IFI approved inclusive photography for use.
These images can be downloaded at www.promotingactivity.com



Inclusive Fitness: Making Physical Activity Accessible to All



Let's get physic*all*

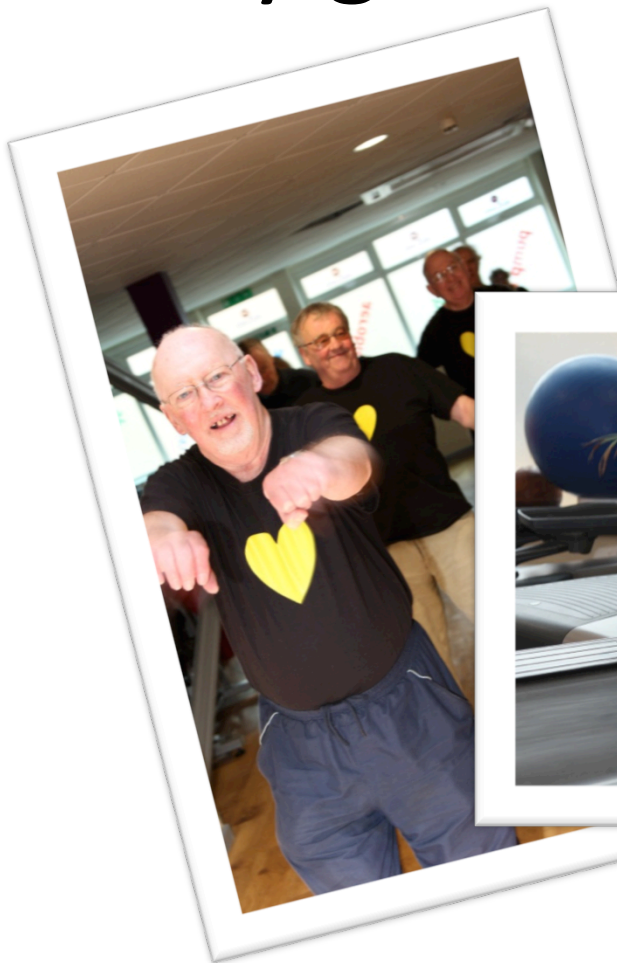
www.efds.co.uk

Introduction



- My Role
- Name of Facility
- What makes our facility accessible and inclusive
- What it means to you

Why go to the gym?



www.efds.co.uk

To Have Fun!

- Meet new people
- Enjoy being active
- Make exercise part of your routine
- Set yourself a challenge
- Celebrate achieving your goal
- Be a role model and inspire others



To Be Fit!

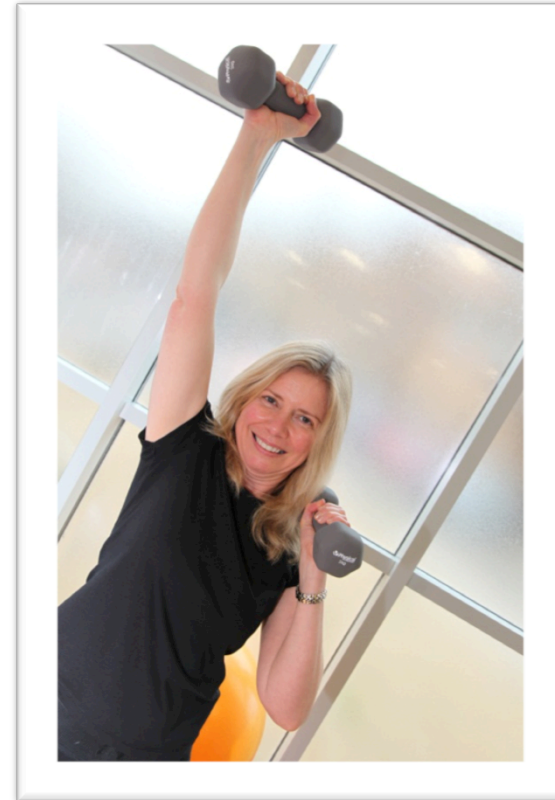


- Make daily tasks easier
- Develop strength, flexibility, coordination & balance
- Improve cardiovascular system
- Better stamina
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Improve health & immune system
- Natural pain relief, aid recovery
- Lower risk of disease
- Sleep better and live longer!



To Feel Good

- Reduce stress and anxiety
- Feel more energised
- Feel good about how you look
- Improve your confidence
- Enjoy the Endorphins!



What's stopping you?



- Physical Access?
- Transport?
- Cost?
- Anxiety?
- Current fitness?
- Nobody to go with?
- Understanding of staff?



Our Inclusive Service



- Accessible facility- parking, changing
- Welcoming environment
- Trained knowledgeable staff
- Volunteer drivers
- Concessionary rates
- Gym buddies
- Other inclusive activities to try

Come and have a go!

Contact details:



Promotion: FREE Trial

Book a time convenient to you!

www.efds.co.uk