

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION with...



About Include

Sported's [Include](#) pilot project, run in partnership with [Angel Eyes NI](#), helped community sport groups become more knowledgeable and accessible for young people who are blind or partially sighted.

Working in partnership with Angel Eyes NI, the project provided opportunities for young visually impaired people to become involved in their local community sports groups.

The young people, along with their parents, offered their 'lived experience' to help groups understand how to make their activities and services more accessible and inclusive. In doing so, they helped create more opportunities for young people to become active in sport.



How the project worked



Sported and Angel Eyes NI together developed and delivered an '[Understanding Visual Impairment](#)' training programme and resources for community sport groups.



Sported staff and volunteers [upskilled](#) on how to support young people with visual impairment.



Community groups and volunteer benefited from a visual impairment '[Good practice](#)' site visit.



Groups received 3 [one-to-one support](#) sessions from Sported staff and volunteer to create a [club inclusion action plan](#) to incorporate insight and learning from training.



Visually impaired young people took part in a [confidence building](#) session and [shared their experiences](#) with the groups.



Virtual Reality headsets help groups gain a better understanding of the realities of living with visual impairments.

Outcomes

- Sported members have a greater understanding of how to engage with and include young people who are blind or partially sighted into their groups' sports activities.
- Participating young people who are blind or partially sighted have increased self-confidence having participated in supporting the development of groups' awareness around visual impairment.
- More young people who are blind or partially sighted have access to sports or physical activity through a Sported member.

“ **The Include project was a wonderful opportunity for families and young people with a visual impairment to share their experiences of the barriers they face when joining a club.**

Their insight brought a real depth and meaning to what it actually means to support a young person with a visual impairment. This project illustrates the success of collaboration. ”

Sara McCracken, CEO Angel Eyes NI

Thanks to our funders:



CASE STUDY:

Holy Trinity Youth Centre

About Holy Trinity Youth Centre

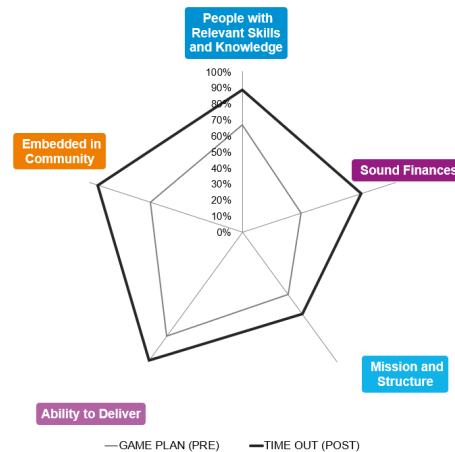
Holy Trinity Youth Centre is the full-time voluntary youth provider in the Turf Lodge area of West Belfast, established in 1971. They work with approximately 500 young people from the local area, supporting them in range of projects and activities designed to increasing young people's capacity to be active and positive, civically responsible members of their community.



Becoming more inclusive

- Staff more confident around asking what the young person's needs are, what their condition is, if they require assistance.
- Staff learnt how to best 'guide' the young person through our building, and the importance of clear communication when introducing people or activities.
- Coloured tape added to stair wells and other tripping hazards. Updated risk assessments in relation to visual impairment.
- Considered integrating a speech/magnification software option to technology at the club

Building capacity



An analysis of Holy Trinity Youth Centre's pre- and post-support surveys reveals the club has built its capacity by 26% over 8 months as a result of being part of Sported's Include project.



ANGEL EYES PARTICIPANT
Caoimhin Pierce & Lisa (parent)

"The difference in Caoimhin [my son] in 6 months is amazing – he's gained confidence, skills, and new friends. The club was really happy to ask questions and willing to learn. Caoimhin is now more willing to try new things alone and is going to youth club regularly, which he never did before."



SPORTED MEMBER
Colleen Ireland, Holy Trinity Youth Centre

"Through the Include project, we have educated our staff and volunteers, supporting them to encourage visually impaired young people to attend our programmes. We have loved every minute of our time with our Sported volunteer; he has been a lifeline in ensuring that we are able to become a fully inclusive building. Without his help and dedication to our staff, volunteers and youth centre, we would never be in a position where we could assist young people with visual impairments."



SPORTED VOLUNTEER
Tony Barclay

"The project was a huge learning curve for the group - they were initially unsure what they could learn or adapt within their programmes, but their commitment and 'positive questioning' was great. Each volunteer and staff member learnt a lot by reflecting on their individual roles and programmes. The group have gained a lot of insight and are more confident in adapting their provision."