



Press release

Charity launches new women's project – 'In It Together Somerset'

The new initiative is helping women to gain confidence to be active and move more

Somerset Activity and Sports Partnership (SASP) are excited to have launched the 'In It Together' women's project in January 2022 covering the whole of Somerset, offering exercise and sports activities for women. The project aims to increase activity levels in women of any age (16+), background or area in Somerset through community-based exercise and sports activities such as Pilates, fit steps, badminton, tennis, netball, running, cycling and more! All the sessions are led by coaches and instructors who have the same goal; to help break down those barriers that women face, empower them to move in their own way, remove that self-doubt, and most importantly, to enjoy it! The programmes motto is all about fun, friends and feeling good!

The pandemic has had a significant impact on the engagement and levels of physical activity in people, with women's activity levels remaining consistently lower in May 2020 – May 2021 than 12 months earlier. It has seen an unprecedented disruption to people's lives and [Sport England's Active Lives Survey](#) data for Somerset shows that 22% of women living in the county are inactive, doing less than 30 minutes of activity a week. Factors contributing to the overall picture seen in this drop, include stress, financial challenges, disruptions to routines and uncertainty for the future.

We therefore want to help women to be more active in the everchanging landscape right now, but also break down the physical and mental barriers women in Somerset are currently facing. The 'In It Together' project is so important for this reason, with not only new barriers being faced, but pre-existing barriers (pre-pandemic) that are faced daily by women. The reality of these challenges is that this isn't unique to a few women, these issues are experienced by your mother, your daughter, your neighbours, your colleagues. The sport, activity and exercise course/classes we are offering is hoped to remove the pressure of physical activity perceived by women that have been placed upon them for far too long.

Charlotte Norman, In It Together Women's Development Officer says, "I am so passionate about the In It Together programme, as its purpose is to support and encourage women in any time of life into a lifestyle of movement, but have either found just thinking about activity daunting, or just don't know where to start".

She further explains, "I will be trying out these activities too, some of which I will be experiencing for the first time, so there will be times I will feel like a fish out of water. I might find them challenging, but I also might find something I love just as much! I'm really looking forward to working with local instructors to bring a range of activities to women in Somerset. We are in this together, taking it at our own pace, our own tempo, having fun and making friends along the way."

Somerset consists of small villages and large towns in district areas that we know need the 'In It Together' project to have a presence in. With women in every area, it is important that they have accessibility to a range of opportunities to exercise they can benefit from. We want to provide different opportunities to women, so that the choice is theirs. Because it's not about making women right for the class/course, it's about making the class/course right for women.

So far, we have launched a range of new sessions in Somerset to help women increase their activity levels and help with any challenges they may be facing. There are lots more to come throughout 2022! A new website is coming soon to make it easier for people to book their activities, but in the meantime, for more information about sessions near you, please visit the In It Together Somerset Facebook page [@InItTogetherSomerset](#) or Instagram and twitter pages [@iit_somerset](#) for all booking and sessions details. Alternatively, visit www.sasp.co.uk/in-it-together.

To launch this new programme and inline with International Women's Day in March, SASP are holding an exciting event for local women to come and try new activities. Join us on **Saturday 5th March from 10am at the Centre for Outdoor Education & Community Hub (C.O.A.C.H), French Weir Park, Taunton, TA1 1AW**. The centre is adjacent to the River Tone and the beautiful Longrun Meadow Country Park. There will be taster sessions in an array of activities from Zumba to exercise classes in the parkroom, to different activities on the outdoor space opposite The Weir Cafe. This is a free event and no booking is required for the outdoor activities. Our friendly instructors will put you at ease, so bring a friend and come along. We will also have local businesses showcasing what's on offer and a special celebratory parkrun at 9am to celebrate International Women's Day. Families and friends are welcome for support.

To book onto any of the indoor activities, visit: www.sasp.co.uk/forms/view/taster-activity-day

**If you are a sports coach, instructor or leader, looking to run an event or course in line with the In It Together Somerset Project, then please email Charlotte Norman: CNorman@sasp.co.uk for more information*

Ends



[@InItTogetherSomerset](#)



[@iit_somerset](#)

Press release issued by: Sarah Crossley: *Marketing & Communications Officer, SASP*

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This project is funded by the European Social Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund

Notes to Editors

There have been key challenges to being active for women, seen below:

- Too tired/lacking energy = 37%
- Bad Weather = 29%
- 'I'm not fit enough' attitude = 25%
- Work commitments = 15%
- 'I just don't want to' = 15%
- Concern over Covid = 17%
- Childcare = 14%
- Unwell or self-isolating = 12%
- No one to exercise with = 10%
- Can't afford the things needed = 8%
- Worry about personal safety = 8%
- Don't have the right space = 8%

**Source – This Girl Can. Savanta ComRes: Sport and Physical Activity Attitudes and Behaviours Wave 22. 14.01.22 – 17.01.22*

Social Media

To keep up to date with any events, classes or courses we will be running, you can find us on the below platforms:

Facebook: **@InItTogetherSomerset**

Instagram & Twitter: **@iit_somerset**

Our Facebook page is a key platform we know has a positive impact on the community in Somerset. It gives us a space to promote upcoming events, classes or courses, to relay information and most importantly, provide a positive space for women to connect in the county, find support, and celebrate their successes.

About SASP

Somerset Activity and Sports Partnership (SASP) is dedicated to increasing the health and happiness of residents in Somerset through physical activity and sport. SASP is a charitable trust and a member of the nation-wide network of 43 Active Partnerships (APs), sharing a mission of transforming lives through sport and physical activity. Each AP is independent, governed by a Board of Trustees and funded through Sport England, and grant giving bodies, companies and individuals who share their mission.

SASP are working in partnership with Pluss and South Somerset District Council (SSDC) to deliver this programme and the project is funded by the European Social Fund and the National Lottery Community Fund and SSDC.



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