



## **RUN AN EXERCISE CLASS**

### **Why did you do it?**

We had people in our congregation who were interested in health and fitness and we wanted to make use of this opportunity to meet people who might not attend church but might enjoy a friendly exercise class.

### **What did you do?**

We contacted local fitness trainers to see if they might be interested in running a fitness class in the church hall. We found a trainer who was happy to work with us, then agreed the day and time of the class and the hourly fee that we would give the trainer for each session.

We found 3 members of the congregation who were interested in improving their fitness by attending an exercise class. We then worked out our budget (we aim to break even with 10 people attending the class). Then finally put some publicity together, advertising the class through our community networks.

We worked hard to ensure that our class was high quality and good value, but even more importantly we tried to make sure that the class was very friendly and easy to come along to. We wanted to avoid the idea that you had to look the part to fit in and ensure that everyone felt welcome regardless of age or fitness levels. We now have a class that regularly sees people aged under 18 exercising alongside people over 60. This helps to ensure the class has a community feel.

### **How did it work?**

We have got to know people that we might not otherwise have met by running an exercise class. People have found our class to be friendly and good value. We have had many conversations about why the church would run an exercise class and our small team is always happy to talk about their faith and how it is part of a healthy lifestyle. We have also had opportunities to pray with people, particularly for health concerns.

Several people who have attended the class have also started coming along to other activities that we run.

### **Where did you do it?**

We ran the class in a church hall.

### **What would you do differently?**

If we were starting again we might base the style of class on the preference of our team right from the start. For example some of our team enjoy Pilates so we have now added a Pilates class. We also found that some of our volunteers preferred exercising outdoors so we have added an outdoor class which takes place whatever the weather. This way of meeting people seems to be more effective when the team is doing something that they enjoy rather than them doing something just because it

needs to be done.

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