



#ONEBIGHAPPYFAMILY

Lay Report

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In collaboration with Thriving Places



University
of Glasgow

Introduction

As part of my University of Glasgow post graduate dissertation, I observed “The Summer Camp” (TSC) programme organised by Thriving Places. TSC was a free three-week programme for parents and children who live in Dalmarnock. The programme was designed to encourage an active and healthy lifestyle for parents and children, create positive relationships between residents in the area and provide a cost-effective option for parents to entertain their children during the school summer holidays.

The purpose of my research project was to determine the extent to which recent sport and leisure planning developments completed for the recent Commonwealth Games (CWG) in Glasgow have helped to address long term public health issues in the city and successfully delivered an effective community engagement and legacy programme.. Four research objectives were identified:

1. To what extent does TSC form a part of the “legacy” programmes completed for the 2014 CWG?
2. Do people attach more worth to Thriving Places programmes than the sport and leisure planning developments completed for the 2014 CWG?
3. Has TSC helped to promote community engagement and improve relationships between residents in the Dalmarnock?
4. Has TSC been effective at addressing long term public health issues specific to Dalmarnock?

Key Findings

1. Community Engagement

The TSC programme effectively brought residents in the community together. The programme has contributed towards residents feeling a greater sense of personal attachment to Dalmarnock. Positive relationships between residents in the area arising from Thriving Places programmes has contributed towards the emergence of a greater quality of life for residents in Dalmarnock.

2. Trust

Glasgow City Council (GCC) regeneration programmes have had mixed results in addressing long term public health issues in the East End of Glasgow in the last couple of decades. Trust has been identified as the biggest barrier in effective community engagement in a recent research study (Yellow Book Limited, 2017.). completed by the Scottish Government. Residents believe that Thriving Places are helping to address health and wealth inequalities in

their area. The effective regeneration programmes being completed by Thriving Places will help to repair levels of trust between residents and the local authority.

3. Volunteering

The TSC provided an opportunity for young people in Dalmarnock to interact with staff and volunteers from Thriving Places and PEEK; a Glasgow based organisation aiming to improve the quality of life for children, young people and their families. Young people having the opportunity to interact with such organisations has increased the number of young people in the area hoping to become involved with volunteering or who have already done so.

Volunteering at a young age can help to improve their employability prospects and help young people develop confidence and a new skill set.

4. Education

The TSC provided an opportunity to residents in Dalmarnock to learn about the culture and beliefs of different residents within the community, and the importance of an active and health lifestyle in a non-condescending way. Dalmarnock has a diverse population, residents having a variety of different beliefs and cultural backgrounds.. Being able to participate in healthy cooking classes provided residents with an opportunity to learn how to cook healthy food in a cost-effective manner.

5. CWG Irrelevance

Many residents believed that the 2014 CWG has been irrelevant to the success of TSC.

Residents thought of the legacy programmes completed for the Games solely as the physical developments constructed, rather than the non-physical legacies which were also created.

Residents felt that TSC has done more to positively affect their lives and the area compared to the 2014 CWG legacy programmes

6. Cost

There is an appetite amongst residents to use the physical developments completed for the Games, but the cost of using such facilities is a significant barrier to this happening. TSC provides a free opportunity to residents to bring their children along to a local resource, where parents and children can interact with one another in a positive manner. Speaking with parents, the facilities developed for the Games are impressive. Yet, they are not financially viable options for them and their children during the school summer holidays because of how much they cost.

Methodology

Participating and observing in the various activities of the TSC, I could see exactly what Thriving Places was doing in Dalmarnock. Engaging in informal conversations but with core questions in mind, I discussed various key points in relation to my research with residents. Interacting in a relaxed environment was key to my research being successful and helped to ensure a representative perspective from TSC participants was gathered. Attending TSC provided an opportunity to see the extent to which residents successfully interact with the community based programme.

Information was gathered and recorded immediately after the data was collected. This was to ensure that any ideas that I developed observing and interacting with residents could be expanded upon.

The study was approved by the University of Glasgow ethics committee before any data was collected or any participants were recruited.

Personal Thoughts

At the beginning of my academic year, the opportunity arose to participate in a collaborative dissertation with Thriving Places. I saw this an opportunity to expand upon my dissertation subject, and an exciting chance to see some of the community based regeneration projects going on in Glasgow. What I have learnt from working with Thriving Places is that my initial beliefs on the extent to which a major-sporting event (MSE) can help to address long term public health issues were incorrect. MSEs can act as a catalyst for regeneration, yet are unable to directly address any long term public health issues on their own.

Thriving Places is an excellent community based programme, working with residents to help address areas of inequality in Glasgow. Working within the limited resources available, they are reaching out and working alongside residents in areas which suffer from high levels of deprivation. Doing so they are helping to deliver a greater quality of life for current and future residents.

Glasgow has a growing global reputation for event hosting. Effective collaboration between community based regeneration programmes and the mega-events that Glasgow will host in the future could help to address long term public health issues in the city. I believe this collaborative approach could contribute towards more effective legacies being created from the mega-events being held in Glasgow, and more effective community engagement with residents.

Conclusions

The name of this Lay Report is inspired by one of the residents who took part in the TSC, and who referred to the programme as “*#onebighappyfamily*”. TSC has been a very successful programme in Dalmarnock, with residents feeling involved with the programme and believe it is having a positive contribution towards their wellbeing.

The CWG has had little effect upon TSC programme. Cost is the biggest issue for residents to use the physical developments completed for the Games. Arguably, there is a lack of understanding amongst residents about the various non-physical legacy programmes also completed. More information about the non-physical developments completed for the 2014 CWG can be found within the dissertation upon which this Lay Report is based upon.

It is difficult to measure the true extent to which the TSC has been a success in helping to address health and wealth inequalities in Glasgow. Yet, I am confident that with time TSC and other Thriving Places programmes will help to address long term public health issues in Glasgow.

Further Research

As a result of completing the research for this master’s dissertation, a number of other topics for further research have been identified.

- The long-term effects of TSC and other Thriving Places programmes in addressing long term public health issues in Glasgow. For example, how helpful is the volunteering experience young people participate in following TSC in helping to improve employment prospects.
- Whether the Thriving Places model could be adapted accordingly and put in other areas of Glasgow which suffer from long term public health issues.
- To what extent have the 2014 CWG Legacy programmes worked alongside Thriving Places to help address long term public health issues in Glasgow.