

Disability Golf and Stepping Stone

Adrienne, a PGA professional based within Cambridgeshire has been coaching for over 20 years. She has a keen interest in making golf more inclusive, so when a new Inclusive qualification became available in 2013 she signed up.

When developing her inclusive sessions she met John, a local sporting inspiration, who doesn't let his disability stop him from having a go at different sporting activities and setting challenges, all in the name of his Power 2 Inspire charity. John inspired Adrienne so much they established an inclusive golf event at Cambridge Lakes on the 15th May 2015.

Through this event, three young adults were identified as having a keen interest and aptitude for golf, but funding any further development of their golf was an issue. So Adrienne contacted Living Sport to find out what options there were available, and Stepping Stone funding sounded perfect. Funding for the individual to choose the type and style of activity they wanted to do.

Between Adrienne, Living Sport and the individuals, funding was arranged for each of the three young people to have private lessons to maximise their learning and opportunity to experience golf.

'When coaching those with disabilities or additional needs, the key is to work with them as an individual, to suit their needs and ways of learning' Adrienne explains. 'Laurence has Autism so the coaching was very mathematical, numbers and angles based – very mentally challenging for me! Rachel has Turner Syndrome so the sessions were about building her confidence, lots of high 5s. For Daniel, who has Down's Syndrome, the sessions were very fun, lots of laughter, more emotional and tactile. By having this style of funding it allowed me as a coach to make these sessions very personalised giving them the best experience I can.'

As a result of the initial funded sessions through Stepping Stone, all three individuals have continued to play golf. Laurence is playing and continues to be in contact with Adrienne; Rachel has self-funded more private sessions and now plays out on the course. Even her Mum has now started to play. Daniel has continued to have lessons, and regularly plays with his family. The aim now is to get all three back together playing golf and develop a small team to enable them to play together longer term.

Stepping Stone has supported the individuals, but it has also helped Adrienne develop as a coach, gaining knowledge and experience and also professionally enabling her to develop more work from the initial funding.

'Without Living Sport supporting these individuals 'to have a go' through the Stepping Stone funding, I don't think these three young people would be playing golf today with their families.'



Goalball and Stepping Stone: Cambridge Dons

Stepping Stone came at a really good time for Cambridge Dons and has allowed them to offer support for their membership, which they have seen grow steadily. The club first signed up to receive club bursaries in August 2014 for their members to purchase much needed expensive specialist equipment. The club bursary allowed a club to apply for £100 per new eligible member; £50 when they start and a further £50 when they are participating regularly with the club.

Warren Wilson, Chair of the Cambridge Dons Goalball club describes how Stepping Stone has impacted on the club.

'The Stepping Stone funding has been an incredible help to me and the Cambridge Dons Goalball Club. The money provided from Stepping Stone helped me to be able to afford to go on a Goalball coaching conference. As a visually impaired person who can't see the players on the court, it was very helpful to go on this course to get an idea on how to coach with a visual impairment. It helped me realise ways around using what sight I have to be able to coach as well as I can.'

'The Stepping Stone funding has also helped the club. Many of the newest members of the club used the funding to buy some of the expensive and essential goalball equipment to be able to play in tournaments. This funding has therefore really helped our club grow to the point where we have three teams at each level of the sport in the UK, novice, intermediate and elite. This is important because it is often difficult for visually impaired people to afford expensive goalball equipment. Visually impaired people find it hard to find a job, even if they are qualified for a position, and the majority of our club are in full time education so it was incredibly helpful.'



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