

Her Spirit

Hi everyone, great to be here, my name is Holly and I'm one of the co-founders from Her Spirit thanks to London Sport for inviting us to share a little bit about ourselves what we've been doing over the last 12 months and what we've learned and some of our plans for the future. So I'm going to chat you through the slide deck we have in front of you and I'm also sharing our app here on the screen as well and I will show a little bit of what that looks like as we go through the next kind of 15 minutes or so.

So, who are we? Myself and my co-founder Mel Barry started Her Spirit probably two years ago now and we were really passionate about trying to help more women become more physically active. I've been in the sports activity sector for 20 years, Mel more from a brand side working with people like Speedo, Adidas, London 2012 to actually look at how to engage people in those particular brands. Mel and I were both chair of Active Partnerships and that's where we met over a conversation about This Girl Can and what a great campaign it was but wanted to see more offers and more solutions for women that were starting that activity journey and actually progressing on that journey.

So, our view was that in order to really get more women more active we needed to be quite holistic in our approach, so mind, body and fuel are the three pillars that we really focus on. So, your mental health your nutritional health and your physical health and Her Spirit is essentially a personalised coaching solution to help you change your behaviours around those three kind of dimensions. Everything we do is absolutely grounded in behaviour change not just theory but actually practise and things that we've learned over the last two years around different cohorts of kind of women we brought all of that together in and out that you see here on the left-hand side.

We have an amazing community of women that are hugely supportive of each other to become more kind of physically active so you know you can switch into the app there. What we are really doing is trying to connect women both virtually and through local activity to get fitter healthier and stronger together and we're trying to create the first scalable and I think most importantly affordable accessible solution for women's nutritional, physical and mental health. One of our members said this back to us we couldn't think of a better quote really to have that on that first slide. We really tried to solve the problem around activity but in order to do that for every woman we have to understand what the right solution is for those people that can afford to access some of these existing services and those that can't and that's the mission that we are very much on with Her Spirit. It is about the health of the whole nation and it is about everyone so I think what we are trying to create as a model that's a blended funding model between public and private sector and individuals as well, Covid obviously has had a significant impact on all of us society that we live in and I think it's been a real stop reminders to have fragile all of our health is and that of the health system so we really want to try and create solution that will avoid some of these long term health conditions that are related to obviously inactivity obesity and sort of anxiety and that's really what our kind of mission is.

You probably know a lot of these stats so I'm not going to go through them the one that we spend most days thinking about 78% of women were not active enough for health benefits pretty. It's pretty staggering 78% of the population female population are not active enough for a health benefit. This numbers grown through covid significantly we now as a sector there are gaps around ethnicity and also those on low social economic income so there's some big issues that we've already been dealing with the sector and I've only got kind of bigger. Anxiety levels through the roof

right now particularly for women typically around exercising indoors and it's no surprise really that job losses will also probably disproportionately affect women through the process.

So, whilst that sounds like a bleak picture, we've been really encouraged by what we've seen in the Her Spirit community so during this last 12 months 93% of Her Spirit members have either increase or maintained activity levels since joining the community. So, what does that really look like? We surveyed our members around their activity levels when they start with us and obviously after kind of joining that's pretty much kind of a 12-month period. We have sort of an over index if you like on members 50 to 59 and a sweet spot really is 40-59 so this is women that are really keen in this point in life to make change. A number of things are probably happening at this point around pre-existing activity levels or inactivity levels. Maybe nutritional health not as good as it should be or could be and also that thing called the menopause that really starts to affect women in those late 40s and kind of early 50s so it's a bit of a perfect storm I think at that age. It would be very interesting to see the uptake take from women in that kind of category. From all of that data it's very much that fairly active group we've seen the greatest increase in activity levels and that's where we're looking to really progress Her Spirit to see if we can get more of those women who are fairly active but not active enough for health benefit up to a level where they really getting a health benefit.

So, it's really interesting early data around the kind of the impact beyond the data, this is very much about the people and this is where we really think the magic starts to happen with Her Spirit. There's three very different women here that you see on your screen from 50-year-old Tracy to Lynn whose retired to Allison whose 40 something with four kids she works six days a week. All of these women came to spirit wanting to find support wanting to achieve a specific goal whether it's Tracy to lead to swim whether it's Lynn who actually wanted to have a swimming experience and Alison who was keen to pick up her running again and try a multi activity event like a triathlon.

All three have achieved the goals they set but all three have gone on to do multiple activities so running, swimming, cycling, walking attend our live strength sessions or do them on playback. So, what we've seen is if you can create a really strong supportive environment with high quality coaching and really well structured kind of motivational programmes then actually you can get all of us to be interested in multiple activities. We think this is really interesting kind of insight in terms of how we can build long term participation levels across the community.

This is Charlene this is one of our team members who started cycling with us first time she was really keen to look at doing a triathlon and had done very little cycling and join through COVID-19 on our indoor cycle sessions. She went on to do her triathlon and is now flying on a path of even more extreme triathlons which is fantastic. As well as the digital we also have a physical location so we created the very first spirit hub and that's based in Nottingham where over the last 12 months we've had over weekly 100 women who come and access swimming, cycling, running and coaching and it's all around coaching their technical coaching so how can they develop those skills confidence to achieve some of their specific goals. It's been a really interesting experience it's created a really big social community that gets absolutely magnified when all of the ladies who meet each other here also chat to each other or line so it's a very powerful combination bringing the digital and physical together. At the moment we are sort of that 12,000 women who are past the community accessing our coaches and accessing our programmes that we sort of have available so mind body and fuel it is honestly our virtuous circle and so holistic approach. We have sections within the app that cover those kinds of areas so everything from fuel for example on our six week learn to fuel programme so some really rich audio and information about how to actually fuel effectively everything through to kind of recipes. In the mind section access to a healthy mind programme to help you around how you can develop your healthy mind thinking but also things like a 10-day meditation challenge

through to 21 days of calm. We've got something that you are practically looking for very much introducing our members to probably topics and things they haven't access before or thought about kind of accessing.

So, mind body fuel is the structure but what underpins that is the high quality coaching and so you can see here in the app we have a series of live classes that happen every single day. You receive a notification to say a class is about to stream and then you can access that class live. This is an example of our Wednesday strength session which is an all-body strength session that doesn't require any equipment you can jump onto the live with other community members share that kind of morning experience from your bedroom and then you can play the session back if you want to do that session against if you liked it. Or if you haven't been able to access session then you can literally just kind of go into each of these sections and play that content back so it's a hugely popular part of part of our kind of offer.

Lots of small communities around each of the classes each week and the ability for women to really fit in and around their jobs and family for those kinds of pressures. We really found that creating a reason for someone to make a change is really key and I guess it's logical to say that you know you said something would you like to be fitter and healthier the answer is going to be yes, but the question is why now why today why not leave it till tomorrow. We found challenges with the start and end date and a sign up is actually very simple but it's very effective way for people to make a commitment to themselves and also to the other members of the community that they need as well.

So, we have a monthly challenge that we do as a whole community so something we have a shared experience together that really build bonds amongst all the members, creates really great kind of conversation. Mix it up March is our one at the moment and it's all about 150 minutes of activity each week a couple of strength sessions and then filling your jar of joy so something that you're grateful for every day.

I'll just show you the give me five programmes that we've got this our 5K running programme for somebody who is completely new to running. As I said everything that we do is completely holistic so it's never about just the physical activity whilst here you can see there are three run audios coached by full time Olympian Donna Fraser OBE. Donna's an incredible woman enigmatic inspiring really kind of engages our community and our community absolutely loved that give me five kind of programme. So, you can hear Donna three times a week in your ear to take you through a journey at 5K running but you can also access things like yoga. So, this is a five minutes of yoga so really great if you've been for a run and you want to really focus on the areas related to running it's literally five minutes so it gives you an introduction to what yoga would be like. Same as our meditation content and also see a recipe of the week so some ideas on how to do that and this is a really good example, I think about that holistic behaviour change kind of programming that that we can talk about it it's just completely kind of embedded in everything that we do.

This is our 30-day boot camp which we did in January seven moves one move a day so many reps so we started with 10 and then you literally built it up every week same move and you built the reps up. The community absolutely loved it you can do it today so if you're looking at this and I want to get stronger then signup and then dive into 30 days stronger. We did it as a whole team unity in January day 30 was our boot camp showdown and that was literally the whole community coming together doing 40 minutes flat out of those seven moves and it was it was great fun the community loved it and looking forward to the kind of the next one. Community we've spoke about a lot it's actually the thing that's really the fire in the belly of sort of Her Spirit, so we wanted to create a positive supportive community and it's really inclusive and open to all so no matter your age or size

or location where you act on your journey Her Spirit is absolutely for you. Everything that we do we make sure that if you've just started your journey or if you're a long way into your journey you can still kind of take part to your level. The way the community works we have a global community, which you see here that anybody can join at any time you can be part of that community kind of experience. There are also groups at the top you can see which are anything from fuel so you looking for some inspiration on what you can eat and how you can fuel more kind of healthily then it's there. You could also feel particularly interested in the topic so swimming for example then you can really focus and meet members also interested in swimming, so the community is actually critical to everything that we do an it's the big reason why members actually stay motivated and inspired.

I guess the how we do it and you've seen a little bit of the how but really what we're trying to do is blend that physical and digital community experiences together. There is nothing better around meeting people in person but lives and commitments make that real kind of difficult what we found is when you bring the physical and digital together it will really drives that whole sense of motivation for you to be active. Actually, fear of missing out is definitely a driver of the behaviour change that we that we've seen over the last 12 months. If you're interested in self-determination behaviour change theory then and have a look, we think this is particularly relevant for women and women of the age category that we are looking around driving long term physical activity habits.

Achieving more than you think is possible is absolutely part of our mantra and a lot of what we do is tap into that tendency to want to seek out a challenge. Some people have said to us challenge a really exclusive word and it's not a great word and think it might put people off, but we've actually found it to be the opposite people intrinsically have this desire to challenge themselves they might not tell you it or not tell you exactly how but there is that in age kind of driver that's what's what we're tapping into in a lot of what we do. We've seen our community members have gaseous appetites to learn and to be educated and to understand what they're doing why they're doing the strength sessions why they are doing sort of flexibility and not just being told what. It's all about coaches are educators and we found that once you've really trying to help someone understand why it's important to be strong and why it's important to do a strength movement a particular way they are much more invested in doing it and the motivation comes from themselves to do it not because they're being told they should do it or just being told to carry out an activity. The last thing that we have is a little bit of community sparkle we like to call it's that inspiration it's that that bit every week that you need something to keep motivated, so we have a weekly podcast hosted by the Louise Minchin who's the BBC Breakfast host an also Annie Emerson who's a BBC triathlon commentator. So, the two of them host an amazing podcast which I will sort of share a bit more with you in a moment.

They are part of this team this is our team of coaches really diverse and what makes us different from any other digital online groups on Facebook or else is we have high quality coaches sharing their expertise. Whilst it's really important to have peer support and encouragement and suggestions from each other peers about what people could do we want to make sure that all of the advice is given is grounded in high quality expert coaching so you can essentially get the most out of the time that you're spending being active.

This is podcasts I mentioned series two some amazing guests and the most important thing is while some of these are well known kind of women, they're just like us you know Her Spirit focus on the things that make us the same not what makes us different and all of these women have the same challenges around physical activity, nutrition and mental health and hearing their stories is really inspiring fascinating.

We are actually over 150,000 downloads now I'm going to get trouble from Mel my Co-founder for not changing that number, but it's been hugely successful and it's a listen that our members love every single week. They take them on their runs and their walks as part of that motivation to get out every week. You know and we know that the challenge that we face with absolutely huge around getting more of the population active so we believe that partnering collaborating with others is the only way we're going to be successful in doing that so we've got a great set of partners that we work with we help achieve their goals and they help us achieve ours and it is absolutely the way to go in terms of trying to develop that sort of a bigger sort of offer for the different kind of people that we are trying to work with.

We've also got a great advisory board that help and support Mel and I to think about the big problems and how we can structure Her Spirit to solve those. So, we're very grateful to all of the support that we get you know some quite kind of eminent individuals that get that I'm upset for free to try and help us solve these kind of challenges.

So what are our future plans? We are looking for a million members by 2024 we think if we can grow the communities to that size and we can have the impact that we had already around increasing levels of activity and maintaining activities of level then we could make a significant impact on the population and that's what we're going for. We are unashamedly saying we're going for it and we want to make it happen and it's just a question on how we make it happen not if. A big part of Her Spirit is trying to create different funding models and we have to find a solution where we don't rely exclusively on public funding. I worked in the sports sector for sport and physical activity sector for 20 plus years and I've seen great project great activities literally stop the day the funding stops because they haven't been sustainable. So, we really want to try and crack the sustainability triangle and it's a big part will be doing at the moment working with different types of parts to explore routes to do that. There are lots of neighbours and mechanisms and we want to try and create a model that will ensure that if you can afford to pay a small amount of money for £4.99 a month or £4.99 a year but if you can't afford it then we can still give you access to everything that something like Her Spirit has to offer around your physical nutritional and your mental health. So, our ambition is to be able to gift at least 50% of memberships to women who are less economically able to buy a membership and also to women from different diverse kind of communities.

Everything that we are trying to do is to create a personalised experience we're all different so why would we all want the same things at the same time. So much of the work that we're doing around self-determination and behaviour change and to understand the differences between different types of women and create a more bespoke journey for you as you come into Her Spirit. We obviously want to look at ways in which we can track real time activity levels and the community love the challenges that we do so we want to digitalise a lot of those and rewards the community for the progress that they are making.

On the physical side we want to replicate the hub that we have in Nottingham so we're looking at 20 more hubs in the next couple of years in addition to that we will try and recruit at least 600 local coaches delivering weekly sessions so we would love it if every woman could access in their locality a swim, a cycle, a run session or a walk session with high quality coaches that really understand them and really understand how you can progress someone at a different stage in their journey. So, it's an ambitious target and we want to recruit 200 this year which is hugely ambitious for the size that we are it's pretty much just Mel and I at the moment but we made a lot of progress and maybe someone who's watching this listening said you know what we can help with that. So, if you can get in contact with love to talk to you we love to collaborate we love to partner and we love to help you achieve the goals that you're trying to achieve as well.

So hopefully this is giving you an insight into Her Spirit and everything that we have to offer and the ambitions that we have set out to try and achieve. If you want to have a chat if you're curious you wanna ask questions about something that I've presented or something I've said today, then drop me an email my email is holly@herspirit.co.uk. So, feel free if you're interested, if your female, you want to sign up to the spirit you can download Her Spirit from any of the app stores or you can actually sign up with us online so we're both the web platform as well as an app offer as well. So, sign up give it a go if you're brave enough please emailed me and let me know that you watch this session and I'm happy to give you premium access to Her Spirit for 30 days so you can have an experience to see what it's really like to yourself. Thanks again, thanks to London Sport for the opportunity I hope you've enjoyed it very much forward to speaking to some of you have watched this in the future.