



SPFL Trust

Football Fans in Training

Season 2022-23 Annual Report

spfltrust.org.uk/ffit



What is FFIT?



Football Fans in Training (FFIT) is one of Europe's most successful health intervention programmes. It was created by the University of Glasgow and has been proved to create a positive, long-term impact on people's health and wellbeing.

FFIT has been running for over 13 years and is SPFL Trust's flagship health and being programme, with almost 8,000 people taking part during this time.

The programme is fully supported and funded by the Scottish Government.

FFIT helps tackle health inequalities that men and women who are 35-65 years old may experience. It has been observed that these inequalities may often lead to obesity amongst this age group.

To take part, participants must be 35+ years old and overweight or obese. Specifically, men must have a BMI of at least 28, and women 26.

The programme enables easy access to inspiring places such as SPFL club stadia across the country and brilliant, compassionate staff - all in a bid to make participants feel better.

FFIT runs for 13 weeks and each session is split into two halves. Sessions are run in same sex groups.

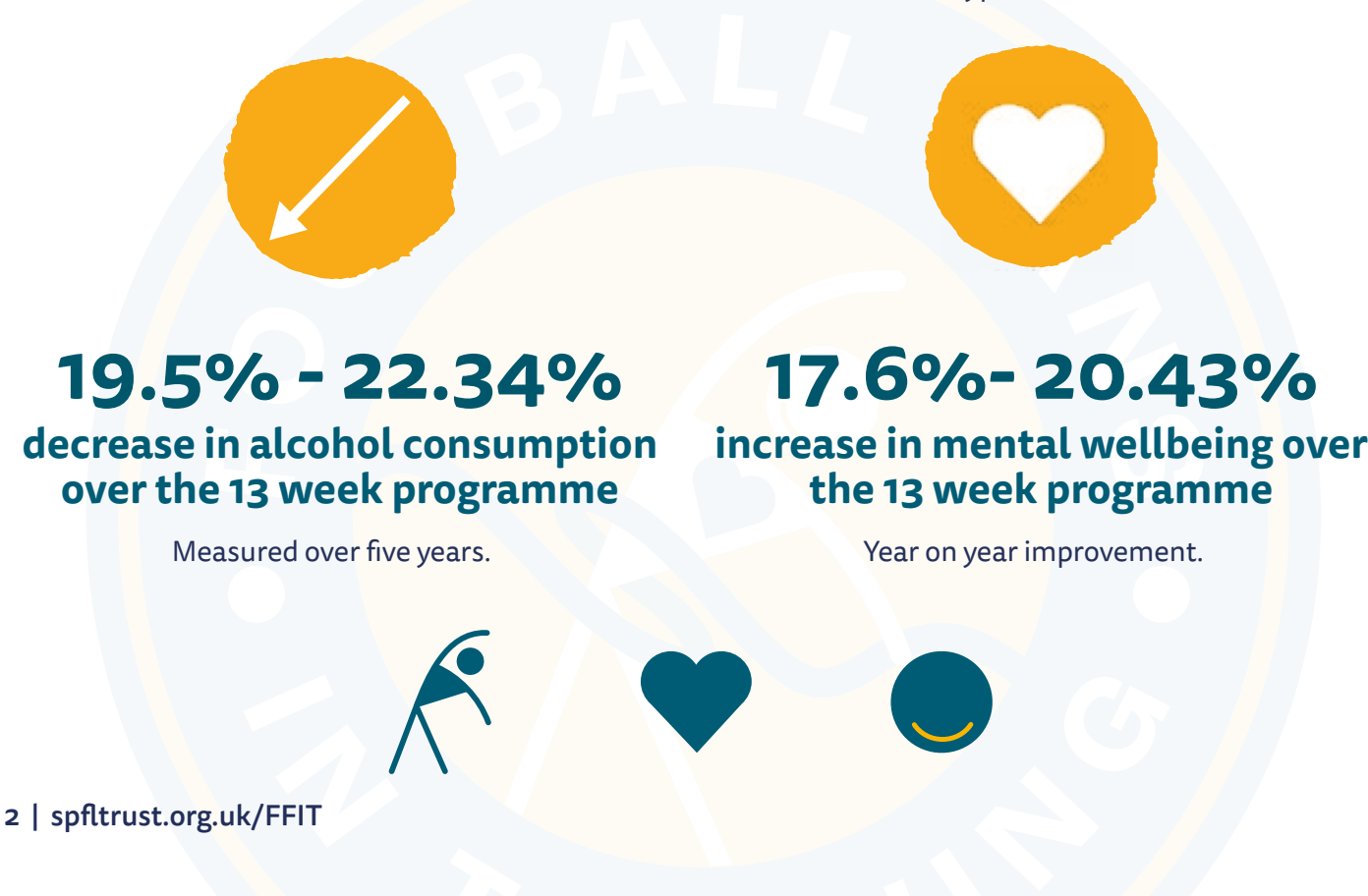
In the first 45 minutes there is a mix of classroom activities, where participants are given tips and advice about how to improve their lifestyle and wellbeing. Topics like nutrition, portion control, and alcohol are covered.

In the second half, participants take part in light exercise and physical activity within the stadium's grounds and are given the opportunity to make use of the equipment onsite.

In the last five years, the programme has supported men to cumulatively reduce their alcohol intake from 4,866 units to 3,779 units (down 22.34%) and women to cumulatively reduce their intake from 1,677 units to 1,350 units (down 19.50%).

This year also saw us launch Prostate FFIT, in partnership with Prostate Scotland (who fully funded the programme).

With all of this combined, participants were able to not only get fitter, healthier and happier, but also helped themselves to lower the risk of obesity-linked conditions, such as Type 2 Diabetes.



A successful year

During 2022-23 we continued to reflect and improve FFIT focusing on improving accessibility.

We also benefitted from a first full season that was free of Covid-19 restrictions, enabling 25 associated community trusts and SPFL clubs (ATCs) to deliver the programme.

During the season, 991 people started the programme with over 65% of them completing it.

We also saw an **average weight loss** of around **4 kg per participant** and a **total waist loss of 1,652 inches** across all participants!

Mental health and wellbeing data captured throughout the programme using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale, showed significant improvements.

Prostate FFIT

This year, we launched Prostate FFIT in partnership with Prostate Scotland, who fully funded the programme. It took place with Heart of Midlothian FC and the Rangers Charity Foundation.



**RANGERS
CHARITY
FOUNDATION**

Prostate FFIT has been specifically designed for men living with prostate cancer. The SPFL Trust team has used the knowledge and experienced gained from the FFIT programme to provide significant help to this particular group of participants.

The programme has been built with the aim of giving these men a safe space to connect with others who are also living with cancer, build their knowledge of exercise, diet and nutrition as well as giving them access to videos and other information to help them exercise at home.

Prostate FFIT has been developed alongside experts in prostate cancer from the University of Glasgow and meets medical guidelines for men receiving hormone therapy.



"Prostate FFIT was highly acceptable to participants, who described the programme as exceeding their expectations and helpful in making them feel physically stronger, mentally better, more energised and more positive about life and their illness."

Prostate FFIT, Final Report and Executive Summary, University of Glasgow



What next?

The culture and structure of FFIT has consistently engaged men and women to become fitter, healthier and happier. We know when men lose weight, it stays off and that women, through the programme, will increase their physical activity.

The launch of Prostate FFIT last year was an important development allowing us to support men living with cancer to be as healthy and as well as possible.

We're using this learning to explore other versions of FFIT that can support positive proactive health interventions.

For example, we're piloting the launch of targeted messaging for people with diabetes in the NHS Tayside area.

Access is through the normal FFIT programme, but specific recruitment engages people through the NHS Tayside healthcare system. Arbroath Community Trust, Dundee United Community Trust, Montrose Community Trust and Saints in the Community are all taking part.

Who delivered FFIT in 2022-2023?

Women and Men



Men Only



FFIT in numbers

	Men	Women
Starters	570	421
Completers	366	241
Retention	64.21%	57.24%
Total weight lost	1604.30kg	772.70kg
Average weight lost	4.38kg	3.21kg
Average age	49.33	46.95
Reduction in alcohol consumption	22.34%	19.50%
Reduction in fizzy drinks	51.62%	48.73%
Reduction in chocolate intake	46.70%	46.76%
Reduction in units of alcohol	17.03%	22.84%
Increase in fruit consumption	52.07%	52.27%
Increase in vegetable consumption	23.45%	41.15%
Reduction in take-away consumption	28.89%	32.45%
Reduction in sedentary minutes	22.05%	18.74%
Increase in physical activity	52.57%	50.68%

We congratulate SPFL Trust on another successful year of the FFIT programme and the positive outcomes for participants demonstrated in this report. With football clubs often being at the heart of their communities this programme is a perfect 'FFIT' to support the Scottish Government's aim of addressing weight related health issues in Scotland and tackling health inequalities. We look forward to its continued success."

Jenni Minto MSP, Minister for Public Health and Women's Health and Maree Todd, MSP for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport



Men physical activity increased by 52.7%



Ladies physical activity increased by 50.68%

Mental health and wellbeing

As mentioned earlier in the report and like every other year the FFIT programme has run, this year our FFIT participants also recorded an increase in their mental health and wellbeing.

Participants complete the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale Monitoring and this year recorded stats of:

Men:
An improvement of **20.43%**
(+35.4% on last year)

Women:
An improvement of **17.56%**
(+17% on last year)

FFIT and diabetes

28.42% of the male cohort and 12.45% of the female cohort began the FFIT programme with a high Know Your Risk (KYR) rating.

On completing the 13 week FFIT programme, these statistics reduced to 22.40% and 10.37% respectively, ultimately reducing their likelihood of developing diabetes.

Furthermore, we have also seen the number of FFIT participants who seek medical advice has increased year on year. This year, we saw an increase of 7% (with 17% of our FFIT participants reaching out for medical expertise overall). Again, helping to ensure conditions related to obesity (such as diabetes), are managed in the correct way.

Positive outcomes

Alisdair
Inverness Caledonian Thistle
Male

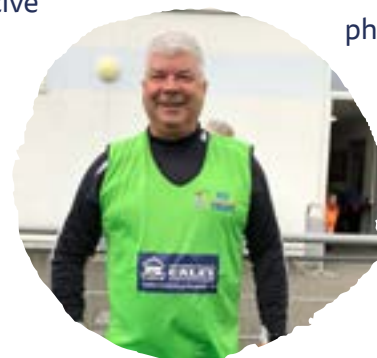


"My motivation to take part in FFIT was to lose weight and become fitter and healthier. My progress was positive with me losing over 5% of my starting weight and with the added benefit of my blood sugar also improving.

I changed my diet and cut out alcohol and crisps for the majority of the course, leading to much better energy levels. I also increased my cardiovascular level from 1 to 3.

During the course I also went on holiday to Spain. I found I was much better at making healthier choices.

I found the course to be informative and encouraging. It was also excellent to show just how much weight I had lost by carrying the equivalent in sand around the stadium."



Lesley
St Johnstone
Female



Lesley lives alone after her husband passed away and unfortunately struggled with her mental health. This led to her having a reduced appetite and when she was hungry, she would often visit McDonald's.

Lesley uses crutches to help her walk due to severe arthritis in her ankles and wrist and due to a metal pin in her knee.

She said: "I'm loving it! I didn't realise all the exercises I could do with my physical restrictions.

"I'm definitely hoping to carry everything on after the class finishes which, I'm surprising myself at saying! It's all thanks to Saints in the the Community that I'm starting to feel better in myself."



Alister
St Mirren
Male



"When I started FFIT I was overweight, I had high blood pressure and I was a borderline diabetic with atrial fibrillation. My journey started over 2.5 years ago and after finishing the FFIT class, and I then went on to join Buds Bootcamp.

Since starting FFIT and attending bootcamp, I reduced my weight from 132 KG to just over 111 KG and I reduced my blood pressure to 'normal'. In fact, at my last check up, my practice nurse was absolutely delighted with my progress.

As stated, I also suffer from atrial fibrillation and in my opinion, FFIT bootcamp have helped to reduce my medication and not have any issues for a while.

FFIT has changed my outlook on life, eating, drinking and exercise habits. I've also made new friends at FFIT and mentally, I'm in a better place.'



Click to watch

Deryk "Del" Wilson talks about his experience of participating in the Falkirk Foundation FFIT course.

Promoting FFIT

We've continued to evolve the way we promote FFIT and encourage people to sign up for the programme. The return to a full season of face to face activity enabled us to continue to make positive changes.

New sign-up form

The sign-up process for FFIT on the SPFL Trust website was outdated, inflexible, and consequently didn't provide a good user experience.

We therefore chose to build a new form using JotForm. This platform helped us to aid accessibility for our future participants when signing up.

JotForm also helped with:

- Tracking sign up numbers closely
- Examining the efficacy of recruitment campaigns in real-time (including paid media)
- Easily exporting recruitment data
- Making changes when needed such as, when new clubs join the programme
- Incorporating FFIT and club specific branding
- Delivering personalised responses in club colours via email

Animation update

Last year's explainer animation helped prospective participants to understand the benefits of FFIT easily and quickly.

We therefore chose to continue using the animation however, this time updating it to move away from the older 'Get Back' messaging and towards aligning with the 2022-23 concept - 'Get Fit for Free'.

To see this year's 'Get Fit for Free' concept, please visit our landing page by clicking [here](#).



Paid media campaign

We introduced wide use of paid social media for the 2022-23 season.

Ads were run across the Meta platform with Facebook proving the most effective for our target audience.

Using JotForm and Meta's ads platform, we have been able to track the campaign closely and adjust it in order to secure sign ups.

Meta Campaign 1
110 sign ups
across Scotland over a
28 day period

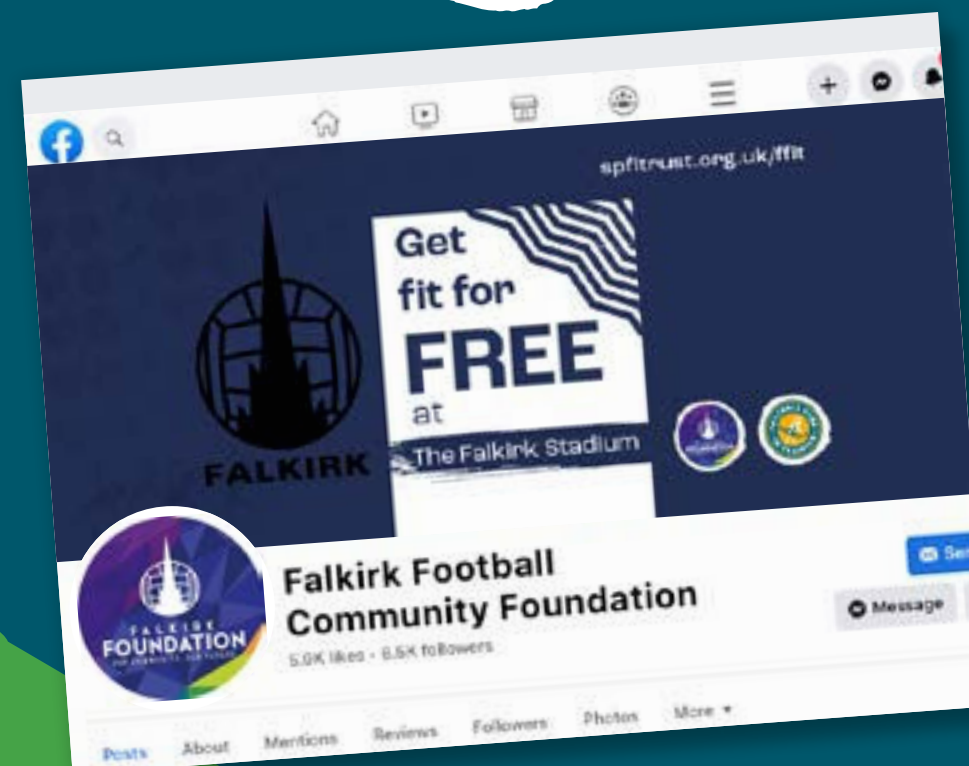
Meta Campaign 2
Almost
60 sign ups
in 21 days

Club packs

Club colours are important to fans as they give them a sense of community and aligns the identity of the FFIT programme with their clubs.

We therefore, took the decision to issue each participating club with a bespoke promotional pack, highlighting their club colours. These packs include:

- Social media banners
- Social media graphics
- Our updated animation
- Case study videos
- Template web articles
- Web banners
- Template press releases



To find out more about the flagship health and wellbeing programme,
contact our Football Fans in Training Programme Lead **Craig Joyce** on:

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 SPFLTrust

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