



Report on the Mobigamz project December 2011

The Mobigamz Arena finally arrived at Langholm Academy in early May following our search for the best deal. We eventually purchased from PMF Products, Bentley, Doncaster, South Yorkshire.

The first training session was delivered on May 4th at the Academy by Matt Murray from PMF products. This involved ten young volunteers from the S5 pupils in the Academy as well as two teachers from the school, two police officers, Duncan Elliot the correct procedure for setting up and putting the equipment away as well as the various games for which the arena could be used.

Following the initial training the Core group had a meeting to organise the official launch which was to be held on 7th July 2011. In the meantime, however, we were contacted by Youth for Christ who wanted to use the arena at Whithaugh Park near Newcastleton for a whole weekend at their annual 'Spree' event. The Mobigamz trailer was then collected on 16th June and used over the weekend 17th-19th June as part of the activities for Christian teenagers. We understand it was used for a variety of sports and was well received by the young people.

Mobigamz had its launch on July 7th at the Annandale and Eskdale Sports centre in Langholm and this also incorporated a health improvement event for Annandale and Eskdale. Cathy Agnew, Chairman of the local action group of the Dumfries and Galloway Leader project, officially opened Mobigamz and the afternoon's events and activities. Leader is, of course, our major sponsor and we had representation from all our other sponsors; Dumfries and Galloway Housing Project, Community Learning and Development, The Police, Xcel Project, The Church of Scotland, Dumfries and Galloway Sport and Leisure and Langholm Academy pupils and staff.

The Arena was set up by the young people from the Academy who had been trained in May, and they also helped to organise the afternoon's sporting activities as well as playing themselves. Ross Dawson from Active Schools and Ian Park, a coach, from the Scottish Rugby Association planned and ran the sports for pupils from the Academy's S2 to S5 pupils. The afternoon took the form of a tournament which unfortunately was curtailed as the weather was so wet and cold! However, the young people had a great time and were sad to stop a little early!

Representatives from clubs, schools, community councils and other organisations across Annandale and Eskdale were invited to attend the launch so they could come and see Mobigamz in action and see its possibilities. Although no-one booked on the day, everyone agreed it has multiple uses and great potential for a wide range of games activities.

In addition to the sporting action there was an assortment of stands and stalls set up which were all related to health and wellbeing. As well as providing plenty of advice, some offered interactive educational and fun activities. Adele Hannah, sexual health coordinator for Dumfries and Galloway had a stand and she also gave away some pens, badges and leaflets. Integrated substance service was also represented with advice and leaflets to hand out. Smoking Matters had a stall with computer software to 'age' a face to show the fast ageing of a person who smokes.



The nurses from Langholm Health Centre took people's blood pressure and had activities on offer to show how to have a healthy lifestyle. Paula Hinds from CLD had a stand with health related adult learning opportunities including a cookery course.

Rhona Mcgregor (CLD) also had a stand showing the origins of the Mobigamz project and a signing up sheet for anyone (public and pupils) who are interested in training to be a helper or for first aid.

Meanwhile, the Home Economics Department from the Academy and some of the Hospitality students made and cooked a delicious, healthy barbecue feast for all to try free of charge! All the food and drink was provided by the CoOOperative in Langholm.

Despite the weather, the launch went extremely well and advertised the Arena so that organisations across Annandale and Eskdale were fully aware of its prospective uses. The local press covered the event and there were articles in at least two papers.

Following this, the Annan Community Police then took the arena to a supermarket car park in Annan for an evening. The young people had an evening of football and basketball and enjoyed the competition! They intend to make this a regular event in Annan and Gretna.

Most recently, the Langholm Academy S5 volunteers set up the arena for a football tournament in aid of Children in Need in November. Eight teams were involved across all age ranges and there were many spectators.

The organising committee has investigated the cost of sign writing to place sponsors and the Mobigamz logo on the boards around the arena to increase awareness. Duncan Elliot has made a flyer (attached) to advertise the arena to hire along with a recording sheet to show who has used it.

The Police have put a listing on Dumfries and Galloway's Force Facebook page, the Police Intranet and are arranging for it to be put on Glow, the Scottish education website. The Police also attend Community Council meetings, and they have taken the flyers to them as well as verbally promoting Mobigamz.

Our next step is to further advertise and promote the arena across Annandale and to train more volunteers in its use. We are also arranging first aid training with the Scottish Ambulance Service in the New Year which will be offered to adults and young people across the area. Training is also being organised for using the floodlights which have not been used so far. We are hoping the weather allows for transportation across Annandale and Eskdale throughout the rest of the winter months!

Alison Mann
Mobigamz