

## CASE STUDY JANUARY 2025

Susan Rigney is a small business owner and fitness instructor who resides in the beautiful township of Binalong Bay on Tasmania’s east coast. Binalong Bay is a rural locality in the local government area of Break O’Day (BOD). The 2021 census<sup>1</sup> recorded a population of 247 for the state suburb of Binalong Bay. St Helens, with a population of 1,573<sup>1</sup> is a 12km drive away and the largest town on the north-east coast. St Helens has a SEIFA score of 2 (2016 Census).

Susan has a home studio and a small business BB Fit. ‘BB Fit is about functional fitness; the ability to move well; to have the energy and strength to perform everyday tasks and the things you enjoy; to feel good, strong and balanced in every sense.’ Susan travels to St Helens to conduct fitness classes such as a group outdoor strength & conditioning fitness classes at St Helen’s Foreshore Park and aqua fitness in a small locally owned pool. Susan is a major driver of the BOD Council’s Aquatic Facility survey which has collected over 500 signatures.

Susan enthusiastically trained as a GAP Facilitator in May 2024 after being unable to attending an online training session during the COVID lockdown in 2020.

“The Get Active Program co-ordinator offered this programme to me several years ago when I was unable to take it up. Fortunately, my details have been kept on file. Recently contacted directly by email advising me of this opportunity, thank you.”

The training was held at the BOD Child & Family Learning Centre (CFLC) in St Helens and was attended by 2 of their employees and a Pilates fitness instructor who is relatively new to the area and keen to grow her own business.

Susan is mindful that working in a small community means that there is often competition for group participants. Susan arranged a coffee catch-up with the GAP trainees the following week to discuss timings of programs and strategies. Susan planned a program for late 2024 and BOD CFLC for early 2025. The Pilates instructor was recruited to take one of Susan’s GAP sessions.

At training Susan expressed an interest in attracting and running fitness groups for men. The Womensport & Recreation Tasmania (WSRT) program manager (PM) was able to provide the health resources ‘How to develop male-friendly services’.



GET ACTIVE PROGRAM – “Move & Thrive”  
Mondays 28 October-16 December 10:30am-12:00pm

WEEK	DATE	DISCUSSION TOPIC	ACTIVITY	VENUE
1	14 October	Planning-Getting Started	Transform – yoga-based stretching	Flow
2	21 October	Goal setting	Workout – mix of aerobic and resistance exercises set in a circuit format using a mix of dumbbells, medicine balls	CFLC
3	28 October	Motivation/Nutrition	Walking Group	Georges Bay track
4	4 November	Keep it Going	Workout – mix of aerobic and resistance exercises set in a circuit format using a mix of MsSwing, fitballs and resistance bands	CFLC
5	11 November	Stress Management	Mindfulness & Meditation Pilates	Pandani
6	18 November	Body Comfort	Tai Chi	
7	25 November	Self Esteem	Aqua Aerobics	High School
8	2 December	Getting better with age	Group Outdoor Fitness circuit	BB Village
9	9 December	Maintain Momentum	Dance	Lauren, Flow
10	16 December	What’s Next	Bowls/celebration	St Helens Bowls Club

In late August Susan applied to WSRT’s Get Active Small Grants Program for \$819 and submitted a 10-week program proposal ‘GET ACTIVE PROGRAM – Move & Thrive’

“All of the organisations I have asked to participate have agreed without hesitation.”

Susan’s target audience was chosen “to encourage and expose those largely sedentary, less engaged retirees to a range of physical activities they may never have tried but might find really enjoyable as a means to improving their overall health and quality of life.”

Susan further elaborated on expected benefits. “It will provide a nurturing

environment, giving them the time and space to consider options for improving their overall health and well-being.”

Susan has many years of experience in the fitness industry though still felt there were new areas for her to learn and stretch her wings running a GAP.

“Leading the discussion topics will be new to me, but with the excellent Facilitator resources you provide, I feel confident I can help people Thrive by encouraging them to Move, do something regularly they enjoy in the company of like-minded others.”

Susan invited the PM to the Festival of Wellbeing to assist her with recruiting for the Tasmanian sponsored Get Active Program.

“Should my application be accepted, as previously discussed, I'd like to work with you and Leah Page (Director of Break O Day Council's Wellness Festival in St Helens on Thursday, 10th October 2024) to have you present on the day to introduce, outline and promote the purpose and benefits of the WSRT Program.”

Susan’s application was successful earning a 15 out of 15 score against the small grant approval criteria.



GAP Move & Thrive ran 14-Oct to 4-Dec with Pilates slotted into week 5. In late November Susan wrote to the PM answering a ‘check in’ email.

“The programme has been a winner! Every last one of our providers have been excellent.”

“We are eight, plus me. The group has gelled wonderfully. There's a lot of trust within the group. It's been heartening to see our one male not miss a beat and participate in everything, plus our young Mum (and her baby).” *[both were recruited at the expo]*

“It's AQUA in the high school pool on Monday afternoon, then outdoor fitness at Binalong the following week (took ages but received necessary Parks permission to hold it on a special piece of grass, the Village Green; plus, I've been inducted and received permission to drive us in the Neighbourhood House bus to and from).”

“We wrap up in that first week of December, doubling up with bowls and our farewell lunch on Wednesday 4th December.”

The Facilitator's three favourite physical activity sessions were:

1. Tai Chi – different, structured, flowing, tranquil
2. Dance- beautifully organised and delivered
3. Her outdoor fitness – achieving it on my favourite park – fun!

Her three favourite information sessions:

1. Body Comfort – evoked most “strident” discussion
2. Nutrition – second most animated discussion
3. Self-esteem – provoked good discussion

All ten information topics were covered.

“For me particularly as (the) facilitator (I) felt confident enough to lead given (the) wonderful written support.”

The Facilitator thought all external providers did a great job.

“Especially the Yoga lady who came from miles away and had to stay in St Helens overnight. Need to pay her, particularly if (I) do (this) again.”

Susan ran her program only using resources from the WSRT website and made some changes to suit her group. She found them useful and easy to navigate.

She had contact with the PM receiving phone calls, emails, meetings, and was assisted with resources. She felt she got as much support as she needed.

“Yes, she came to the St Helens Festival of Wellness 10/10/24 and was terrific in helping me launch the Program.”

Susan found running her GAP “tiring, but only in addition to regular business commitments. Had to be organised!” Her challenges were “funding; paperwork and administration.”

The Facilitator spent a total of 43.5hrs covering all areas of her program including: 20hrs on administration, 5hrs planning, and 18.5hrs delivering.

The GAP Facilitator introduced the participant to local services and businesses that will help them continue their health and wellbeing journey post GAP. Her future intention in relation to the GAP is that she is unlikely to run anymore.

“My first may well be my best. So lucky with the group & how they gelled, were easy.”

“They grew as people (randoms to mates).”

Susan noted in her evaluation against the section that asks *Often the participants share personal achievement or feelings with the facilitator but may not express them in their evaluation. Sometimes the facilitator notices physical or mental changes in the participants. Maintaining your participants anonymity would you like to share any of those outcomes?*

“I didn’t realise until reading final facilitator notes that I could have been recording my observations as we went for the “certificates” a regret. Would do so if (I) did (a GAP) again.”

The last week’s session plan ‘What’s Next’ in the ‘Celebrate!’ section states: *We encourage you to provide your participants with a certificate of achievement. A ‘GAP certificate’ template is available in the resources under the heading ‘forms, flyers and certificates’. It is nice to acknowledge each*

participant by telling them what you admire most about them and their journey through GAP as you present the certificates.

Susan thinks it is very likely that the participants will be able to continue with some of the activities they experienced.

**Womensport & Recreation Tasmania**

## Start your exercise journey with MOVE & THRIVE

**Get Active Program**  
14th October - 4th December, St Helens

Discover a range of movement opportunities in a safe, encouraging space - Ideal for anyone wanting to start their fitness journey and looking to move with confidence!

**The 9 week program includes:**

Week 1 Beginner Yoga	Week 2 Beginner Workout	Week 3 Walking Group
Week 4 Dance Exercise	Week 5 Beginner Pilates	Week 6 Tai Chi
Week 7 Aqua Aerobics	Week 8 Group Outdoor Fitness	Week 9 Lawn Bowls

The course involves an investment of just \$20 (course value \$225) and participation in all sessions where possible.

**Register Now:** <https://forms.office.com/r/2RfYSChp87>  
OR by emailing [bbfitsuz@gmail.com](mailto:bbfitsuz@gmail.com)

The Get Active Program (GAP) is a statewide initiative that promotes involvement in physical activity and supports participants to improve their health and well-being.

Facilitated by local movement lovers..

**BB Fit** | **Tasmanian Government** | **PIVOT FOOD AND MOVEMENT STUDIO** | **Dance with me** | **PRINDALI SP**

Reference:

1: <https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats>