

## street games briefing paper

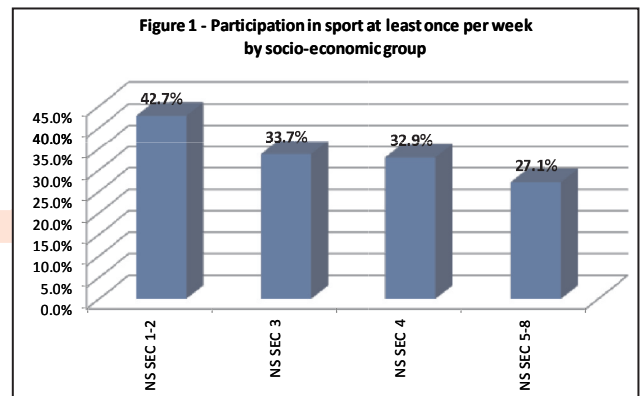
## Report Subject: Rugby League participation and social class

### Background

For many years, research has highlighted variations in the levels of sports participation across different socio-economic groups. Active People Survey results (APS6: 2010-11) still illustrate the differential; highlighting that a significantly higher proportion of adults from the highest socio-economic groups (NS-SEC 1-2) take part in regular sport 42.7%, by comparison to those from the lowest socio-economic groups (NS-SEC 5-8), where only 27.1% do so – See Figure 1.

### StreetGames

StreetGames is the only national charity dedicated to developing sport with disadvantaged communities. It works across the country to try and reverse this long-standing trend and make sport accessible to all regardless of their social circumstances.



A national partner of Sport England, StreetGames is creating networks at national and local levels to strengthen the commitment to doorstep sport, as well as seeking significant funding to make the StreetGames projects sustainable. StreetGames' ambition is to link new doorstep sport with sports clubs, National Governing Bodies of Sport programmes, local authority services, and health agencies.

<sup>i</sup> Data included within this report has been sourced using Sport England Active People Survey Data (APS 2 and APS 6) plus Sport England Market Segmentation Data Index tables. StreetGames data included in the report has been sourced from the 2011 – 2012 Quarterly Monitoring reports provided from the 120 projects included within the StreetGames Network.

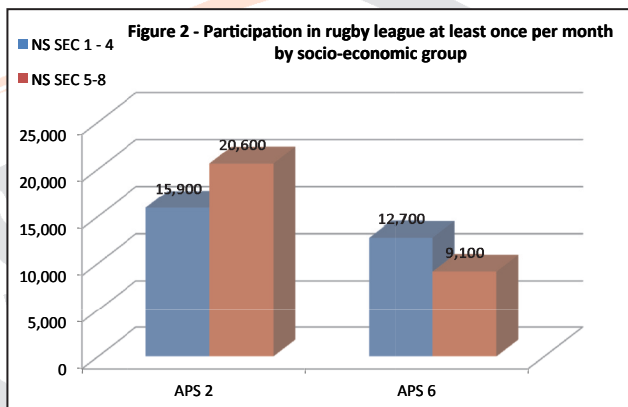
## Rugby league

Results from the Active People Surveys indicate that in total, the number of adults (16+) who took part in 30 minutes moderate intensity rugby league at least once a week was:

- 88,300 (0.21%) – APS2.
- 51,100 (0.12%) – APS 6.

Interestingly, rugby league bucks the overall sports participation trend when it comes to socio-economic grouping; with higher rates of participation amongst the lower socio-economic groups; both in terms of once a week and once a month participation.

As the APS 6 results show in Figure 2 below, 0.08% (9,100) adults from NS-SEC 5-8 played rugby league at



(The remaining 29,300 rugby league participants were from NS-SEC 9 which mainly includes full-time students and occupations not stated. Rates of participation in rugby league within this group are 0.34%)

least once a month whilst 0.08% (12,700) adults from NS-SEC 1-4 do so.

Overall there was a statistically significant decrease in rugby league participation between APS2 – APS6. The decrease was found specifically amongst adults within NS-SEC 5-8 and NS-SEC 9.

## Market Segmentation

Sport England's Market Segmentation model includes 19 segments in total. The two segments which are particularly relevant to StreetGames comprise:

- Jamie – the 'sports team drinkers'.
- Leanne – the 'supportive single'.

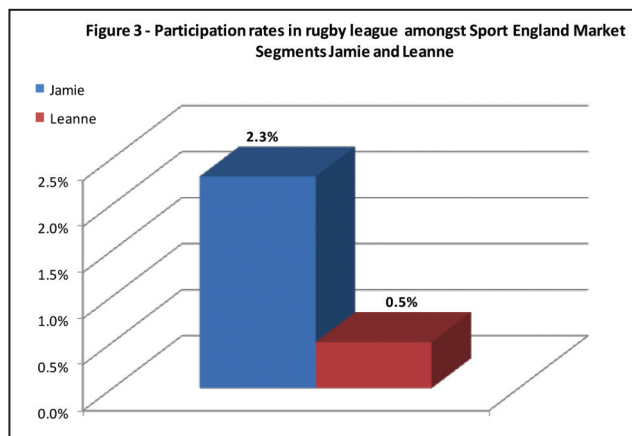
Both groups typically cover the age range 18-25 years and adults from lower socio-economic groups, typically classified as NS-SEC groups 5-8.

Both Jamie and Leanne segments typically have participation rates in rugby league that are higher than most other segments:

- 2.3% for Jamie.
- 0.5% for Leanne.

These rates of participation translate to circa 58,000 rugby league participants across England from these two segments (circa 49,000 for Jamie and 8,000 for Leanne).

In addition, there is demand from over 17,800 adults in the Jamie segment and 1,300 in the Leanne segment who 'would like to play' rugby league, suggesting that there is some demand for rugby league amongst these two segments – particularly Jamie.



## Rugby league at StreetGames

In line with our current work, as a National Partner to Sport England; StreetGames has been working with a range of National Governing Bodies of sport (NGBs), including the Rugby Football League, to help 'grow' and 'sustain' sports participation within areas of high deprivation. Work to date, has included a variety of joint initiatives and pilot projects aimed at testing alternative approaches to delivery.

## What works well in StreetGames settings

StreetGames projects delivering rugby league have found that the following tends to work in a doorstep sport setting:

### Place

- Holding regular Street Rugby sessions within the 'heart' of the targeted communities/estates; ie within the subjective neighbourhood of the disadvantaged community to negate any reliance on car travel.
- Sessions need to be central to the community; therefore, Street Rugby is flexible in terms of rules, to meet the needs of the venue so that it can be played on concrete, grass, in a basketball court or on sand etc. Sessions do not need to take place on a traditional marked pitch.

### Time

- Consultation with young people is essential in the planning stages to ensure that the sessions are provided at a convenient time and place to them. For example, this may include Friday/Saturday evenings, later time slots for older teenagers (8-9.30pm) or at times identified by the Police for high incidences of youth anti-social behaviour.

### Style

- The style of sessions are less formal than traditional skills/drills club based training sessions.
- Street Rugby sessions tend to not only include rugby

# Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

league but a range of activities to keep participants interested - from off side rugby league touch, rugby basket ball, rugby football fitness, boxercise to rugby league specific.

- Sessions will also look to develop generic skills such as team work, control and discipline.
- Some projects have set up competition structures, so that local projects play in tag festivals against each other - showing that they are part of a bigger picture. It also enables participants to use the skills and values they have developed during weekly sessions.
- The open access sessions will attract both males and females and they are happy to participate in mixed gender sessions. The coaches will include specific conditions and rules on the game or certain players to ensure safety and equity in games that include a mix of ages and gender.

The use of female coaches and volunteers can help to attract girls.

- Some sessions play music on the sidelines to attract participants and provide a more 'informal feel'.
- Most participants are new to rugby league/at beginner level. Although some participants may already playing at local clubs – particularly in areas where rugby league is well established, such as Wigan and Warrington.

## Cost

- Affordable pricing is essential - sessions often charge a nominal fee (such as 50p or £1 per session) to ensure that a value is attached to the sessions.
- Some sessions may be provided free of charge – with

subsidised funding sourced from a range of partners which could include local authorities, the Police, Community Safety Partnerships and external funding grants.

## Coaches and Volunteers

- The skills of those delivering the sessions are critical.

Coaches need to:

- Understand the target that they are engaging with, be on 'their level' and develop a good rapport with participants.
- Have excellent delivery skills to ensure that the sessions are fun, interesting and challenging.
- Be flexible and able to adapt their sessions to meet the needs of the young people attending.
- The engagement and up skilling of local volunteers is extremely important. Not only in terms of the support they provide, but as StreetGames volunteers tend to be recruited internally they act as role models to younger participants and can attract new participants and relate well to those attending.
- Some projects with a crime reduction objective, also engage Police Officers and PCSOs to help run the sessions as this can assist in breaking down barriers and stereotypes.

## Retention

- The following factors are considered to be important in terms of retention/minimising drop-out:



# Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

- Ensuring that the sessions are interesting and fun.
  - The use of rewards/awards – such as certificates and medals.
  - Incentives – such as match tickets to professional rugby league matches.
  - Personal contact between the coach and participants to build relationships, provide feedback about performance, check they are coming to the next session.
  - Regularly reviewing registers and attendance data to review patterns and identify participants in danger of ‘dropping out’.
- Some projects have also been able to bring professional rugby league players to attend/guest at sessions – providing tangible incentives and positive role models for participants.
- Providing participants with a diverse range of pathways – which may involve becoming a volunteer at the sessions, access to sports related training/qualifications such as CSLA courses or moving on to join local clubs/teams.
  - Promotion mainly takes place via word of mouth - with coaches and partner organisations going out into the communities and key locations where children/young people ‘hang out’ to make them aware of the sessions. Some more formal promotion may also be used via the provision of posters/leaflets in community settings.

## Partnerships

- The development of partnerships with other community organisations is essential and should include those beyond the sport/leisure sector, such as Youth Services, the Police, Youth Offending Teams and Health sector. Partners can help develop sessions, provide joint funding, promote sessions or refer participants.
- Projects highlight a range of benefits from belonging to the StreetGames network which include:
  - Regular opportunities to share ideas, gain information on best practice and attend relevant training sessions.
  - A recognised brand/kit.
  - Support with volunteer development.
- Projects have suggested that additional NGB support would be helpful in terms of providing ‘hands-on-support’ in the early stages of a project for example by running guest sessions, providing club links and providing support and resources for volunteers.<sup>i</sup>



# Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

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A national partner of Sport England, StreetGames is creating networks at national and local levels to strengthen the commitment to doorstep sport, as well as seeking significant funding to make the StreetGames projects sustainable. StreetGames' ambition is to link new doorstep sport with sports clubs, National Governing Bodies of Sport programmes, local authority services, and primary care trust projects.

Recognised by the London 2012 Olympic & Paralympic Games Inspire Mark, StreetGames Legacy Leaders is creating a lasting legacy of doorstep sport in the UK.



[streetgames.org](http://streetgames.org)