



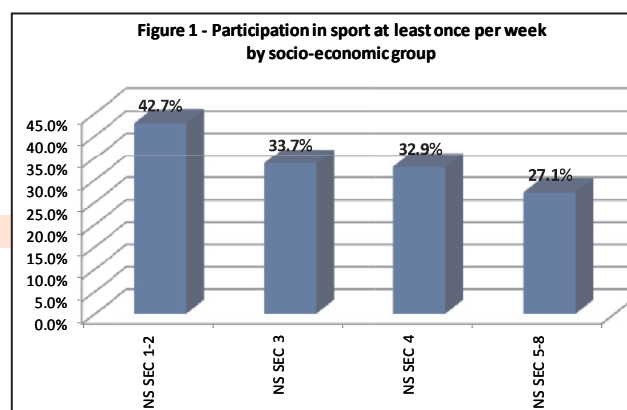
## Report Subject: Swimming participation and social class

### 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 sector projects.

<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. 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.

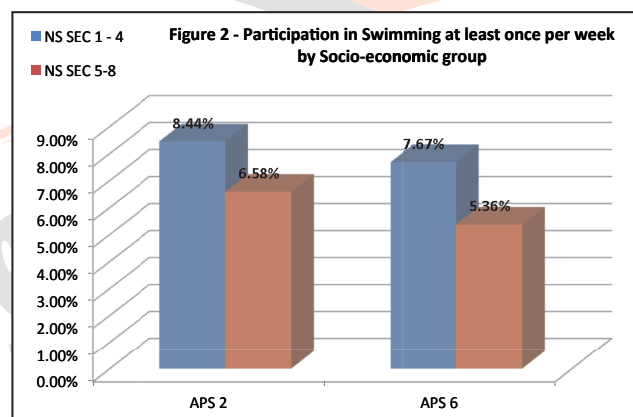


## Swimming

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

- 3,244,300 (7.83%) – APS2
- 2,933,100 (6.81%) – APS 6.

In terms of social class; as with overall sports participation, there are higher rates of participation in swimming amongst the highest socio-economic groups. APS 6 results show that whilst 1,455,300 (7.67%) adults from NS-SEC 1-4 participate in swimming at least once a week only 731,700 (5.36%) adults from NS-SEC 5-8 do so – See Figure 2 below.



(The remaining 746,200 swimming participants were from NS-SEC 9 which includes mainly full-time students and occupations not stated. Rates of participation in swimming within this group are 6.97%).

The results indicate that participation in swimming has shown a statistically significant decrease between APS2 and APS6; with the decline apparent across all socio-economic groups.

## 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.

Swimming is the 5th most popular sport of Jamie and the 2nd most popular sport for Leanne.

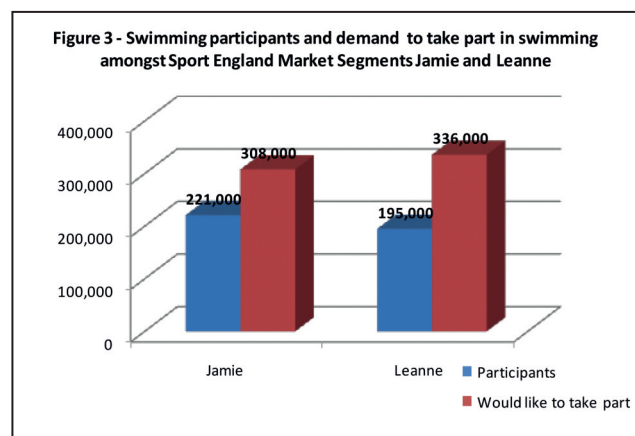
Both groups typically have lower participation rates in swimming than the more affluent segments within the 18-25 year old group (ie Ben and Chloe). However, their participation rates in swimming are still higher than many other market segments:

- 10.2% for 'Jamie'
- 18.0% for 'Leanne'.

These rates of participation translate to circa 416,000 swimming participants (circa 221,000 for 'Jamie' and 195,000 for 'Leanne').

# Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

In addition, there is demand from over 308,000 adults in the Jamie segment and 336,000 in the Leanne segment who 'would like to' participate in swimming, **indicating that there is substantial demand for swimming from these two segments.**



## Jamie

'Jamie' is typically active and takes part in sport on a regular basis (60% take part in sport at least once per week). 64% would like to do more sport and 14% want to do more swimming.

His main motivations for taking part in sport are for enjoyment (54%), to keep fit (37%) and to socialise (22%). Jamie would be encouraged to take part in sport more often: if he was less busy (40%), there were people to go with (23%), cheaper admissions (20%) and better facilities (13%).

## Leanne

'Leanne' is typically the least active of the 18-25 year old segments with 53% not taking part in any sport.

However, 72% would like to do more sport and 27% want to do more swimming.

Her main motivations for taking part in sport are for enjoyment (44%), to keep fit (34%) and to meet friends (15%). Leanne would be encouraged to take part in sport more often: if she was less busy (42%), cheaper admissions (28%), people to go with (21%), and longer opening hours (12%).

## Popularity amongst young people

Other national survey data also highlights the popularity/potential demand for swimming amongst the StreetGames market (which mostly comprises young people aged 11-25 years). For example:

- Sport England Active People Survey 5 results show that swimming is the second most popular activity (after football) amongst young adults aged 16-24 years; with circa 479,000 adults within this age group estimated to be taking part in swimming at least once per week.
- The results of the Taking Part Survey conducted by the DCMS shows that swimming is the third most popular sports activity (after football and basketball) to take part in outside school amongst 11-15 year olds (28.8%)

## Swimming at StreetGames

At present the majority of StreetGames sessions comprise football, dance, basketball, tennis, athletics or multi-sports; with swimming becoming more popular.



# Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

Between October 2010 – September 2011 StreetGames projects provided just 36 swimming specific sessions which generated over 900 swimming attendances. Between October 2011 – September 2012 however, this has risen to 356 swimming sessions, generating 4,526 attendances and over 1,00 participants.

Key factors which our projects have found to be important when delivering doorstep sports sessions are detailed below.

## What works well in StreetGames settings

The key elements of doorstep sport (i.e. right time, right place, right price, right style) are of paramount importance when delivering within disadvantaged communities.

### Time

- Consultation with young people is essential in the planning stages to ensure that the sessions are provided at a convenient time and place and to avoid duplication of provision.
- Many StreetGames projects find evenings (including Fridays and Saturdays) prove popular and that later time slots often appeal to older teenagers (8-9.30pm); whilst other projects have provided learn to swim and improver lessons for young adults during weekdays and on weekends.

- In some areas, sessions are scheduled in consultation with local Police Officers in order to coincide with times that have been identified as 'hot spots' for high incidences of youth anti-social behaviour; in order to provide a positive, diversionary activity.

### Place

- A key element of doorstep sport, is the provision of activities within local neighbourhood facilities to try and negate a reliance on car travel.

- Naturally this may not be as easy in swimming as it is in other sports, which are able to adapt their sessions to use non sports specific facilities. However, ideally sessions need to be programmed using pools which are in close proximity to the disadvantaged area being targeted (*most users are unlikely to walk for more than 15 minutes to use a swimming pool*). This may mean, looking to access school pools out of hours.

### 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, Youth Services and external funding grants.



# Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

## Style

- StreetGames swimming sessions tend to focus on providing informal fun based sessions – using games and equipment to develop water confidence and encourage engagement rather than formal swimming lessons.
- Some projects have included swimming within a multi-sports programme, whilst others provide swimming specific sessions.
- Some projects have also provided learn to swim and improver swimming lessons for young adults. For example, in Ealing these lessons have proved particularly popular amongst Asian females who hadn't learn to swim as children. The project worked because it offered female only lessons, delivered by a female teachers in a female only environment; which helped to overcome the cultural barriers that many females face when taking part in sport and physical activity. In addition, lessons were provided at a discounted rate to enable access. Following 12 week courses, the females improved their water confidence and were sign-posted towards other appropriate activities such as female only swim sessions, intermediate swimming lessons, aqua aerobics classes or family swim sessions.

## Coaches and Volunteers

- The skills of those delivering the sessions are critical. Swim teachers and coaches need to have a good rapport and be able to interact well with participants, as well as having good delivery skills. For example, in the Ealing learn

to swim sessions the patience and understanding of the teacher was a particularly important factor, with one participant commenting that: *“The teacher was patient and provided individual coaching when required. She understood the fear that some of us had when we started and was very supportive throughout the course.”*

- There is more to coaching and managing doorstep sport sessions than delivering skills and drills sessions. In fact – a skills and drills session is unlikely to keep the attention of our target group, therefore, coaches and leaders need to be able to teach skills in creative ways.
- It may be helpful to provide delivery staff with additional support and training beyond their sports coaching qualifications; for example in areas such as managing challenging behaviour, the essentials of working with young people and conflict resolution.
- 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 relate well to those attending.

## Engagement and Retention

- Outreach work is often found to be the most effective means to promote and raise awareness of the sessions – with delivery staff and partner teams going out directly into the communities to engage with the target group. In



# Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

addition, attracting 'friendship groups' is likely to be a fruitful approach to engaging young people in StreetGames sessions.

- Drop-out rates tends to be highest within the first month; in our experience, once a participant has attended four or more sessions they are far less likely to drop-out. As such, coaches and leaders should be reminded of the importance of welcoming and integrating newcomers. For example; volunteers or established group members may be tasked to 'buddy' the newcomer and ensure they are invited to the next session. It may also be appropriate to consider adapting the game and explain ground rules/boundaries.

- The following factors have been found to be helpful, in terms of retention/minimising drop-out:

- Ensuring that the sessions are enjoyable and fun – so that participants want to turn up to every session and bring their friends
- Personal contact between the coach and participants to build relationships, provide positive feedback about performance, check they are coming to the next session
- The use of incentives such as medals, water bottles and t-shirts
- Including time within the sessions for participants to socialise and build friendships within the group
- Provision of varied progression/exit routes – such as referral onto other local water based sessions or clubs where appropriate and also into volunteering, leadership and coaching roles.<sup>1</sup>

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

