

Evaluation of the Impact of Free Swimming

Year 1 report – annexes



Government and Public Sector

This is an independent evaluation report carried out by PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP and commissioned by the funders of the Free Swimming Programme:

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Department of Health

Department for Children, Schools and Families (now Department for Education)

Department for Work and Pensions

Communities and Local Government

Sport England

Amateur Swimming Association

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Glossary of terms

APS	Active People Survey
ASA	Amateur Swimming Association
BME	Black Minority Ethnic
CLG	Communities & Local Government
CSC	County Swimming Coordinator
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sports
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families
DH	Department of Health
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
FSP	Free Swimming Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HR	Human Resources
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LA	Local authority
MP	Member of Parliament
NHS	National Health Service
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PR	Public Relations
PwC	PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP
Q1	Quarter 1
Q2	Quarter 2
Q&A	Question & Answer
SE	Sport England
TCPS	Taking Part Children's Survey

Annex 1: Local authority monitoring data

Introduction

This Annex summarises the monitoring data that have been provided by or on behalf of LAs participating in the FSP, based on the quarterly Official Statistics which are published by DCMS. These statistics present the number of free swims recorded by all LAs participating in the Free Swimming Programme over its first twelve months. The data are presented for both those aged 60 and over and 16 and under, monthly, quarterly and by region. Information is also presented on the number of free swims per head of LA population in the two target age groups.

Each local authority was asked to provide details of the number of free swims provided as part of the FSP by people in each of the target age groups. The data were required to be provided for each of the participating swimming pools. It should be noted that these data do not measure the number of individual participants taking part in free swimming (i.e. the number of swimmers).

The remainder of this Annex provides:

- An overview of the number of free swims reported by LAs; and
- An analysis of the pattern of free swims disaggregated by region, per capita in each of the target age groups, per pool in each LA and per square metre of pool space in each LA.

Further details of the local authority monitoring data can be found at http://www.dcms.gov.uk/what_we_do/research_and_statistics/6274.aspx

Number of free swims

Table A1.1 shows the total number of free swims provided by LAs participating in the FSP by month for each of the two target age groups. It can be regarded as an estimate of the gross impact of the FSP to date.

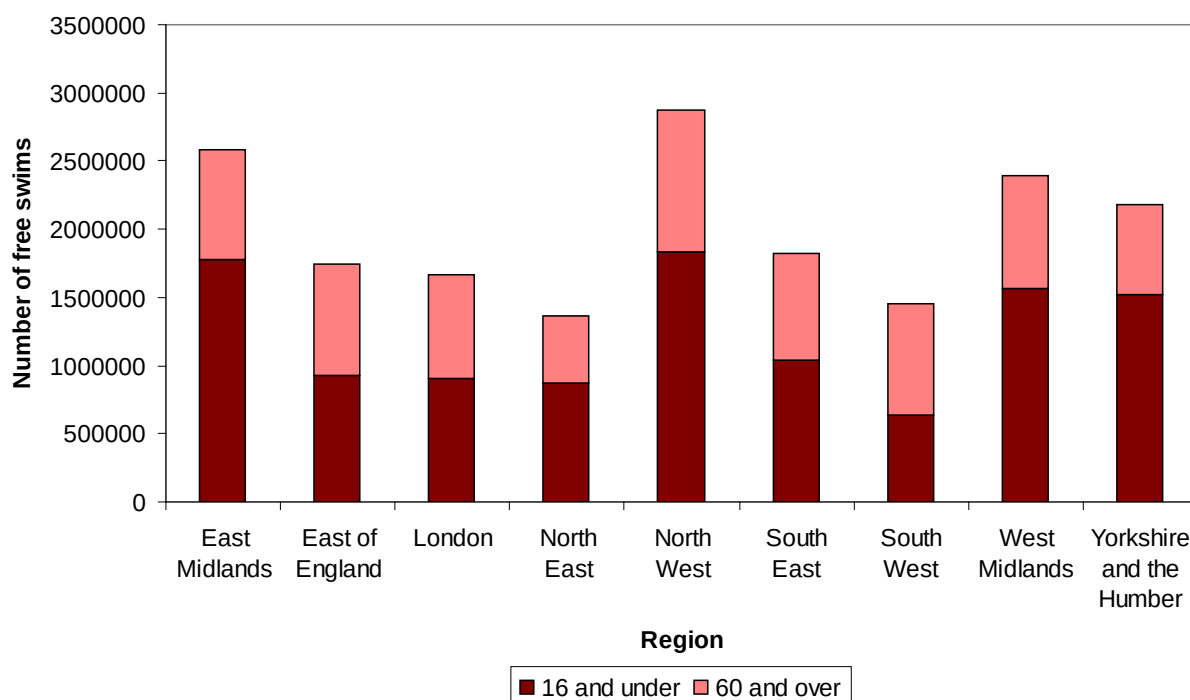
Table A1.1: Number of free swims (via the Free Swimming Programme) per month reported by LAs (April 2009 – March 2010)

Year	Month	60 and over	16 and under
2009	April	484,637	1,043,537
	May	530,511	1,031,481
	June	638,242	914,787
	July	682,245	1,344,315
	August	644,277	1,848,361
	September	619,060	871,169
	October	634,612	830,652
	November	623,834	580,277
	December	399,281	331,444
	January	470,856	571,505
	February	598,122	942,587
	March	661,621	776,730
Total		6,987,298	11,086,845

Figure A1.1 shows the overall number of free swims broken down by target age group:

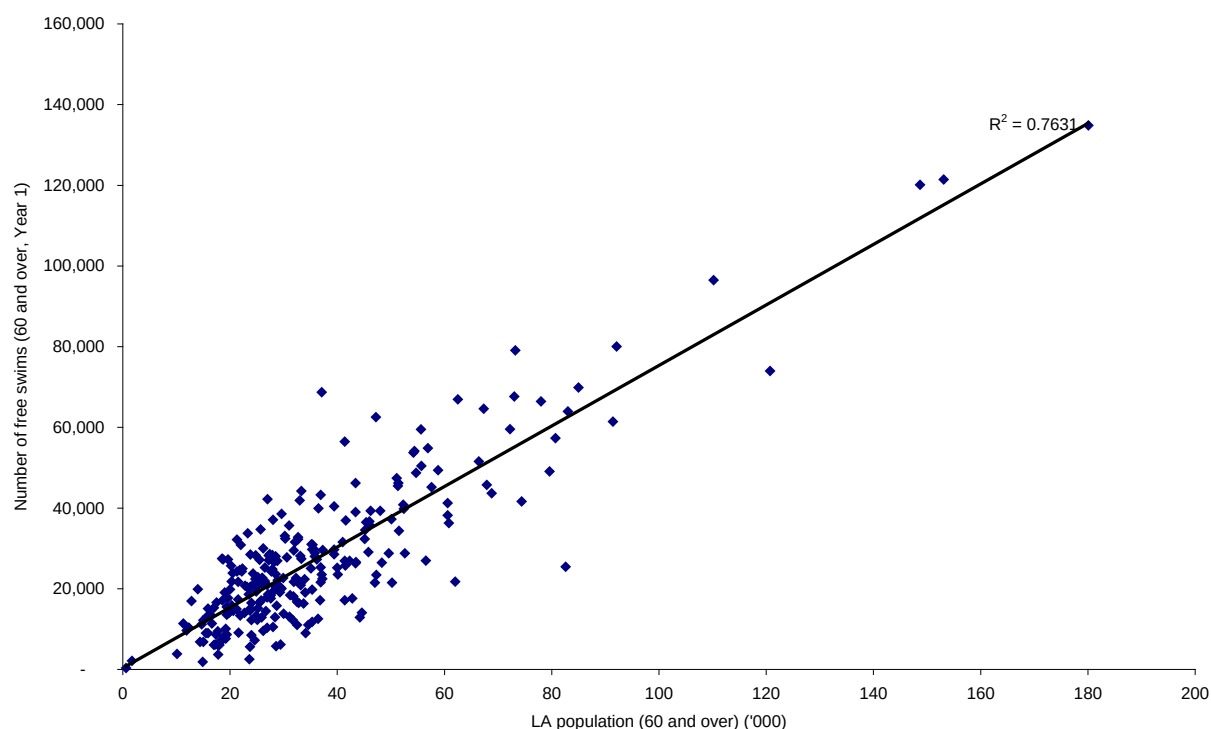
- The most free swims were undertaken by those aged 16 and under in the North West region (1,835,155) and in the East Midlands (1,774,598) whilst the most swims by those aged 60 and over were undertaken in the North West (1,041,126) and West Midlands (824,244).
- The smallest number of free swims amongst those aged 16 and under occurred in the South West region (637,828) whilst, for those aged 60 and over, the smallest number of free swims occurred in the North East (489,240).

Figure A1.1: Number of free swims by region (April 2009 – March 2010)



Figures A1.2 and A1.3 plot the number of free swims in each LA against the population of people aged 60 and over and 16 and under respectively. In each instance, there is a strong correlation between LA population in the two age groups and the total number of free swims undertaken. That said, there is a wide variation in the number of free swims per capita amongst those aged 60: Fylde generated 107 free swims per thousand population whereas North East Lincolnshire generated over 1,800 free swims.

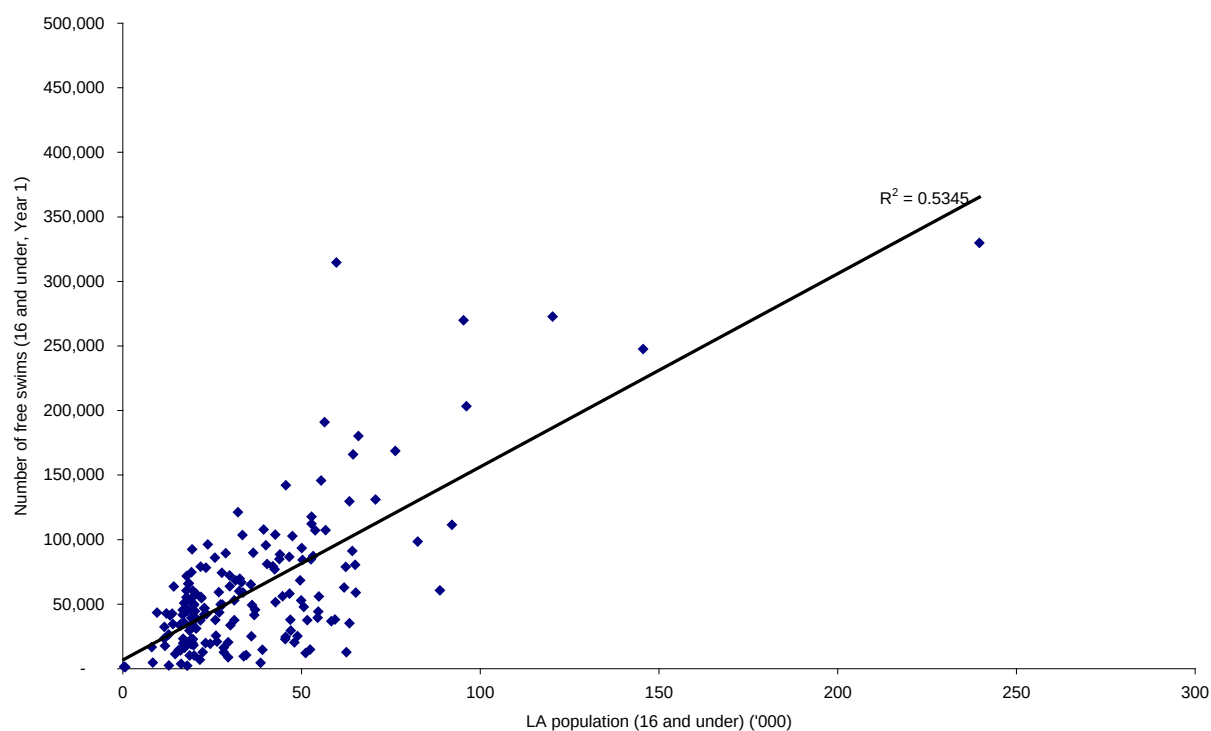
Figure A1.2: Number of free swims and population by local authority (60 and over)



Source: Analysis of Free Swimming Programme monitoring data

The range in terms of population and number of free swims per capita amongst those aged 16 and under varies from Camden, which generated 118 swims per thousand to Doncaster which generated over 5,200 swims per thousand population.

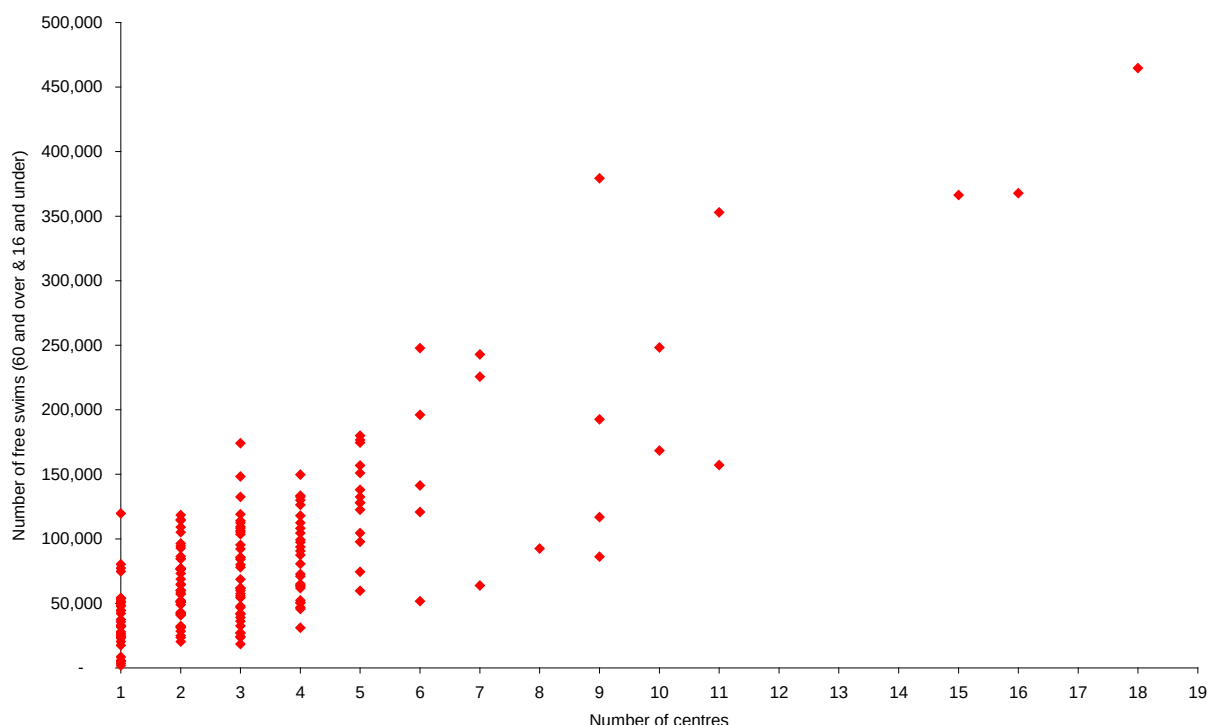
Figure A1.3: Number of free swims and population by local authority (16 and under)



Source: Analysis of Free Swimming Programme monitoring data

Figure A1.4 shows the number of free swims in each LA compared with the total number of free swimming centres in each LA. In general, a trend can be observed in that the greater the number of centres in an LA, the greater number of free swims have been delivered. There is, however, considerable variation in the number of free swims delivered between LAs with the same number of centres – for example both Bristol and Oldham have 6 centres, however Bristol has delivered 247,784 free swims to those in both age groups across the first twelve months of the FSP whilst Oldham has delivered 51,708.

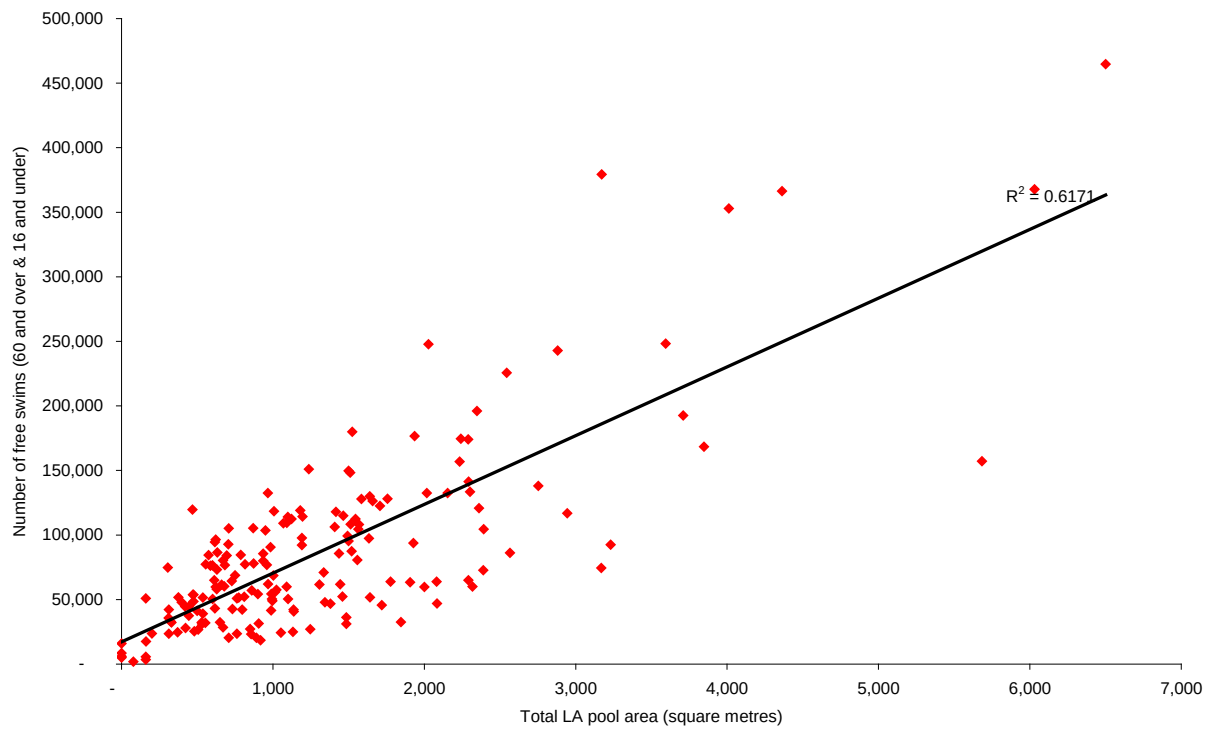
Figure A1.4: Number of free swims by number of free swimming centres (60 and over and 16 and under)



Source: Analysis of Free Swimming Programme monitoring data

Figure A1.5 shows the total number of swims per head compared with the available pool space across the regions. A trend can also be observed in that the greater the available pool area in an LA, the greater number of free swims have been delivered. However there is again some variation in the number of free swims delivered between LAs with similar space in terms of pool area. For example, Stockton has 1,181 square metres of pool space available and has delivered 119,140 free swims whilst Chiltern has 1,057 square metres of pool space and has delivered 24,907 free swims.

Figure A1.5: Number of swims per square metre of local authority pool space (60 and over and 16 and under)



Source: Analysis of Free Swimming Programme monitoring data

Annex 2: Active People Survey results

Introduction

This Section summarises the key results of our analysis of the Active People Survey (APS) datasets.

The APS is a large-scale survey across England which examines participation in sport and active recreational activities. The survey allows detailed analysis to be undertaken, such as how participation in various sports and recreational activities varies from place to place and between different demographic groups (such as the two target age groups which are the focus of the FSP).

Along with providing evidence to inform the evaluation of the Free Swimming Programme, the APS also provides the measurement for National Indicator 8 (NI8) – adult participation in sport and active recreation and the measure for the cultural indicators NI9, 10 and 11.

To date, three waves of this Survey have been completed whilst the fourth wave of the Survey is underway, as follows:

- APS 1 which began in October 2005 and was completed in October 2006;
- APS 2 which began on 15 October 2007 and was completed on 14 October 2008;
- APS 3 which began on 15 October 2008 and was completed on 14 October 2009; and
- APS 4 which began on 15 October 2009 and is due to complete in October 2010 (data from Quarter 1 of this wave of the APS are available to inform this evaluation).

Our analysis of the four waves of the APS considers the following:

- **Historic trends in swimming participation:** data are presented in terms of the number of people (aged 16, aged 17 to 59 and those aged 60 and over) who swam once per month in the four weeks preceding the survey and the number of people who swam at least once per week for at least 30 minutes at a moderate intensity. It also considers the number of occasions on which respondents swam for at least 30 minutes at a moderate intensity. Each element of the data in this section is disaggregated on a quarterly basis so that trends can be assessed;
- **Awareness of the FSP:** data are presented in terms of the number of people (aged 16, aged 60 and over and parents in the 17-59 age group) who had heard that free swimming in public pools was being offered for their age group (or to children under the age of 16, where parents were interviewed)
- **Participation in the FSP:** data are presented in terms of the number of free swims undertaken by respondents (aged 16, aged 60 and over and by the children of respondents in the 17-59 age group).

Historic trends in swimming participation

Table A2.1 shows the number of people (aged 16 and over) who have swum at least once in the month prior to completing the APS. This shows that swimming participation overall has increased slightly if data from the first quarter of each wave of the APS are considered (increase from 10.8% in Q1 of APS 1 to 11.9% in Q1 of APS 4). Whilst this increase in participation within the first quarter of each wave of the survey is evident for both those aged 16 (increased from 10.8% in Q1 of APS 1 to 14.4% in Q1 of APS 4) and those aged 60 and over (increased from 5.6% in Q1 of APS 1 to 11.9% in Q1 of APS 4), there has been a recent decline in participation amongst those aged 17 to 59 (whilst participation increased from 12.7% in Q1 of APS 1 to 13.7% in Q1 of APS 2 and APS3, this decreased to 13.3% in Q1 of APS4).

Table A2.1: Participation rates for those aged 16 and over who have swum at least once per month in England

Age	APS 1				APS 2				APS 3				APS 4
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
16	10.8%	12.8%	17.0%	22.2%	10.7%	12.9%	16.8%	22.8%	13.6%	14.4%	13.7%	18.5%	14.4%
17–59	12.7%	13.8%	15.7%	18.2%	13.7%	14.4%	15.5%	18.5%	13.7%	13.4%	15.1%	18.6%	13.3%
60+	5.6%	5.4%	6.1%	6.7%	6.6%	6.7%	7.4%	8.1%	7.0%	6.8%	8.0%	9.0%	8.0%
Total	10.8%	11.6%	13.2%	15.3%	11.7%	12.3%	13.4%	15.9%	11.9%	11.7%	13.2%	16.0%	11.9%

Source: Analysis of Active People Survey data (APS 1, APS 2, APS 3 and APS 4)

Table A2.2 shows the number of people (aged 16 and over) who have swum at least once a week in the four week period prior to completing the APS. This shows that once a week participation has steadily increased amongst those aged 16 and those aged 60 and over between each consecutive wave of the survey, whilst the picture amongst those aged 17 to 59 has been more mixed.

Table A2.2: Participation rates for those aged 16 and over who have swum at least once per week for at least 30 minutes at a moderate intensity in England

Age	APS 1				APS 2				APS 3				APS 4
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
16	6.9%	8.0%	9.7%	13.7%	5.4%	6.1%	8.9%	15.5%	7.0%	9.0%	7.6%	10.1%	9.1%
17 – 59	7.9%	8.6%	9.9%	12.1%	7.7%	8.1%	8.7%	10.9%	7.6%	7.4%	8.8%	11.0%	7.8%
60+	3.9%	3.9%	4.5%	4.9%	4.1%	4.3%	4.6%	4.9%	4.2%	4.0%	4.6%	5.2%	4.9%

Source: Analysis of Active People Survey data (APS 1, APS 2, APS 3 and APS 4)

The average swimming frequency for the three age groups across quarter 1 of each consecutive wave of the APS is shown in Table A2.3.

Table A2.3: Average swimming frequency amongst respondents within the last four weeks¹

Age	APS 1				APS 2				APS 3				APS 4
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
16	4.9	5.4	5.3	6.2	4.1	5.5	4.7	6.8	5.8	4.5	6.7	5.8	4.3
17–59	5.1	5.2	5.5	6.3	4.7	5.2	5.3	6.0	4.6	5.3	5.4	6.1	4.9
60+	6.1	6.2	6.9	6.7	5.4	6.3	6.4	6.6	1.8	5.9	6.0	6.5	5.3

Source: Analysis of Active People Survey data (APS 1, APS 2, APS 3 and APS 4)

Awareness of the Free Swimming Programme

This part of the Annex describes the level of awareness of the FSP within the general population (aged 16 and above) in England. Data presented in this Section are taken from APS 3 and APS 4 and, specifically, from a set of additional questions which were asked of respondents from March 2009 onwards (to coincide with the introduction of the FSP).

Table A2.4 below shows that, for those aged 60 and over who responded to APS 3 between March 2009 and October 2009 and who responded to APS 4 between October 2009 and January 2010, the level of awareness of free swimming peaked in April 2009 when it rose to 67.4% and has since fluctuated around 64-65%

¹ The number of occasions on which respondents swam is taken as an indicator for the number of sessions of swimming undertaken.

Table A2.4: Levels of awareness amongst people (aged 60 and over) who had heard that free swimming in public pools is being offered to people aged 60 and over (% aware)

APS 3							APS 4		
Mar 2009	April 2009	May 2009	June 2009	July 2009	Aug 2009	Sept 2009	Oct 2009	Nov 2009	Dec 2009
61.6	67.4	65.8	63.8	65.5	65.8	65.9	64.7	65.5	64.6

Source: Analysis of Active People Survey data (APS 3 and Q1 of APS 4)

Table A2.5 shows the change in the level of awareness regarding free swimming for those aged 16 and under amongst 16 year-olds who were surveyed as part of APS 3 and within Q1 of APS 4. This shows that awareness of the FSP at the outset was 31.2%, peaking in October 2009 when it had risen to 49.8%. However, as detailed in Annex 5, the LAs that we visited indicated that most marketing activity had taken place at the outset of the FSP, in April 2009. The most recent findings from APS 4 show that awareness amongst those aged 16 and over stood at 39.2%.

Table A2.5: Levels of awareness of the FSP amongst people (aged 16) who had heard that free swimming in public pools is being offered to people aged 16 and under (% aware)

APS 3							APS 4		
Mar 2009	April 2009	May 2009	June 2009	July 2009	Aug 2009	Sept 2009	Oct 2009	Nov 2009	Dec 2009
31.2	33.9	34.7	32.7	45.5	42.6	40.5	49.8	34.2	39.2

Source: Analysis of Active People Survey data (APS 3 and Q1 of APS 4)

In turn, Table A2.6 shows the change in the level of awareness of free swimming for those aged 60 and over and those aged 16 and under amongst the population of those aged 17-59 who were surveyed as part of APS 3 and within Q1 of APS 4. This shows that awareness of free swimming at the outset was 41.3%, peaking in September 2009 when it rose to 58.8%. The most recent findings from APS 4 show that awareness amongst those aged 17 to 59 stood at 54.0%.

Table A2.6: Levels of awareness of the FSP amongst people (aged 17-59) who had heard that free swimming in public pools is being offered to people aged 60 and over and 16 and under (% aware)²

APS 3							APS 4		
Mar 2009	April 2009	May 2009	June 2009	July 2009	Aug 2009	Sept 2009	Oct 2009	Nov 2009	Dec 2009
41.3	49.9	56.0	53.0	53.0	54.0	58.8	55.0	58.1	54.0

Source: Analysis of Active People Survey data (APS 3 and Q1 of APS 4)

Notably, the highest levels of awareness of free swimming (as measured by APS 3 and within Q1 of APS 4) were amongst those aged 60 and over, averaging 65.1% across the ten months of the survey. This compares to an average level of awareness of 38.4% amongst those aged 16 and 53.3% amongst those aged 17 to 59.

Pattern of swimmers, free swimmers and free swims

Free swimmers aged 60 and over

The tables below show the number of people aged 60 and over who had swum for free in the four weeks preceding APS 3 and the first quarter of APS 4 (since April 2009) and the number of free swims they had undertaken.

Table A2.7: Free swimming participation rates and average number of free swims undertaken by each free swimmer (aged 60 and over) in the last four weeks

	APS 3 (Q3) April to June 2009			APS 3 (Q4) July to September 2009			APS 4 (Q1) October to December 2009		
% of free swimmers aged 60+ in survey population	2.6%			3.4%			3.1%		
Number of free swims per swimmer	4.72	4.18	5.53	5.58	6.26	5.58	6.63	6.21	4.87

Source: Analysis of Active People Survey data (APS 3 and Q1 of APS 4)

² This question was only asked of those respondents who share a household with a child aged 15 or under.

Table A2.7 shows the total number of swims which were undertaken by those aged 60 and over who swam for free between April 2009 and March 2010. This shows that, of the total survey population of people aged 60 and over, 2.6% had swum for free in the preceding four weeks of the surveys in Quarter 3 of APS 3 whilst 3.1% had swum for free in quarter 1 of APS 4. We have also estimated the average swimming frequency.

Free swimmers aged 16

The tables below show the number of people aged 16 who had swum for free in the four weeks preceding APS 3 and Q1 of APS 4 (since April 2009 and excluding any school swimming) and the frequency at which they swam.

Table A2.8: Free swimming participation rates and average number of free swims undertaken by each free swimmer (aged 16) in the last four weeks outside school lessons

	APS 3 (Q3) April to June 2009			APS 3 (Q4) July to September 2009			APS 4 (Q1) October to December 2009		
% of those aged 16 in survey population	2.9%			5.2%			5.0%		
Number of free swims per swimmer	4.25	3.18	0.69	6.59	3.60	5.21	5.83	3.58	4.42

Source: Analysis of Active People Survey data (APS 3 and Q1 of APS 4)

Table A2.8 shows the total number of swims which were undertaken by those aged 16 who swam for free between April 2009 and March 2010. On the whole, the number of free swims completed has varied amongst the sample each month – the number of swims were lowest in June (9 free swims) and highest in July (178 free swims). We have also estimated the average swimming frequency.

Swimmers aged 15 and under - views of parents

The APS does not include anyone aged under 16; however, since April 2009, the views of parents with children aged 15 and under have been sought on swimming activity of those aged under 16, particularly with regards to free swimming. Parents were asked whether their child/children had undertaken any free swimming sessions in public pools in the last four weeks, and if the answer to this was positive, they were asked to estimate the number of occasions on which their child/children had swum for free.

Table A2.9: Free swimming participation rates and average number of free swims reported by households where the child or children aged 15 and under had swum for free in any public pools in the last four weeks outside school lessons

	APS 3 (Q3) April to June 2009			APS 3 (Q4) July to September 2009			APS 4 (Q1) October to December 2009		
% of survey population aged 17-59	1.1%			1.7%			1.4%		
Number of free swims per swimmer	2.16	3.39	3.48	3.97	4.44	3.86	4.08	3.35	3.75

Source: Analysis of Active People Survey data (APS 3 and Q1 of APS 4)

Table A2.9 shows the total number of swims which were undertaken by those aged 16 and under who swam for free between April and December 2009. On the whole, the number of swims completed has gradually risen, from 27 in April 2009 to its peak of 219 free swims in September 2009. We have also estimated the average swimming frequency.

Annex 3: Online survey results

Introduction

This Annex summarises the key results from the two waves of the online survey which were undertaken in November/December 2009 and April/May 2010. The findings from each wave of the survey are presented under the following headings:

- **Participation in the FSP:** which examines the pattern of swimmers and swims within the FSP;
- **Awareness of the FSP:** which assesses respondents' awareness of the FSP;
- **Impact of the FSP:** which uses the evidence from the survey to analyse the evidence of the impact of the FSP on respondents' behaviour;
- **Swimming lessons:** which considers the evidence from online survey regarding the value and effect of swimming lessons; and
- **Views of non-swimmers:** which analyses the views and attitudes of those who have not swum in the four weeks prior to the survey.

Participation in the Free Swimming Programme - pattern of swimmers and swims

The online survey showed that the overall proportion of swimmers within the respondent group in eligible areas increased slightly from 23.4% in the first wave to 24.0% in the second wave. This masks differences between the two age groups and between eligible and ineligible areas as Table A3.1 shows:

- Participation amongst those aged 60 and over in eligible areas was about 15% (compared with between 13.0% to 14.1% in ineligible areas). It declined slightly between November/December 2009 to April / May 2010, from 15.2% to 15.0%.
- Participation amongst those aged 16 and under in eligible areas was 42.3% in November/December 2009 and 44.1% in April / May 2010. By comparison, participation in ineligible areas declined from 43.5% to 40.7% over the same period.

Table A3.1: Number of swimmers (including those who paid a fee to swim and those who did not)³

	60 and over ^a		16 and under		Total	
	Nov/Dec 2009	April/May 2010	Nov/Dec 2009	April/May 2010	Nov/Dec 2009	April/May 2010
Eligible areas						
Swimmers	310	302	376	399	686	701
Non-swimmers	1,729	1,715	512	505	2,241	2,220
Total	2,039	2,017	888	904	2,927	2,921
Participation rate (%)	15.2%	15.0%	42.3%	44.1%	23.4%	24.0%
Ineligible areas						
Swimmers	66	74	251	230	317	304
Non-swimmers	439	452	326	335	765	787
Total	505	526	577	565	1,082	1,091
Participation rate (%)	13.0%	14.1%	43.5%	40.7%	29.3%	27.9%
All areas						
Swimmers	376	376	627	629	1,003	1,005
Non-swimmers	2,168	2,167	838	840	3,006	3,007
Total	2,544	2,543	1,465	1,469	4,013	4,012
Participation rate (%)	14.8%	14.8%	42.8%	42.8%	25.0%	25.0%

Source: Online survey

In order to be able to assess the overall number of swims undertaken, the online survey asked respondents how frequently they had swum in the four weeks prior to responding to the survey. The results are shown in Table A3.2. They show that on average:

- those in the 60 and over age group in eligible areas swam an average of 5.40 times in the most recent four week period; and
- those in the 16 and under age group in eligible areas swam an average of 4.10 times in the most recent four week period.

None of the differences between the eligible and ineligible areas is statistically significant.

Table A3.2: Comparison of swimming frequency (over a four week period) in eligible and ineligible areas

	Survey wave	Eligible areas		Ineligible areas		Difference	
		Survey findings	Average	Survey findings	Average	Survey findings	Average
60 and over	Nov/Dec 2009	5.59	5.50	4.79	5.11	-0.80	-0.39
	April/May 2010	5.40		5.43		+0.03	
16 and under	Nov/Dec 2009	4.09	4.10	3.98	3.95	-0.22	-0.02
	April/May 2010	4.10		3.92		-0.18	

Source: Online survey

Table A3.3 shows the location of each respondent's most recent swim in both the 16 and under and 60 and over age groups in eligible areas. The most common location across both waves and both age groups in eligible areas was public swimming pools. Those in the 60 and over age group were more likely (in both waves of the survey) to swim at a private pool or a swimming pool at a gym or club than those aged 16 and under. In addition, some of those who swam in a private pool or a pool at a gym or club actually did not have to pay a fee for this swim, as they had been provided with a voucher for a free swim. These vouchers are used relatively infrequently, and originate from a range of sources such as health services and also competitions or private sector sponsors (e.g. Kellogg's and British Gas).

³ Swimmers are defined as the number of people who have swum at least once in the previous four weeks in any LA.

⁴ For comparative purposes, it should be noted that the participation rate for those aged 60 and over within APS3 (final six months data) was 8.5%.

Table A3.3: Comparison of location of recent swim (over a four week period) – eligible areas

	Survey wave	Public swimming pool	A pool at a school open to the public	A private pool or pool at a gym or club	In the sea, a lake or river	Other	Not sure	Total
60 and over	Nov/Dec 2009	199 (64.2%)	4 (1.3%)	94 (30.3%)	7 (2.3%)	6 (1.9%)	0 (0.0%)	310 (100.0%)
	April/May 2010	189 (62.6%)	6 (2.0%)	94 (31.1%)	5 (1.7%)	0 (0.0%)	8 (2.6%)	302 (100.0%)
Voucher = 1								
16 and under	Nov/Dec 2009	303 (80.6%)	22 (5.9%)	44 (11.7%)	1 (0.3%)	5 (1.3%)	1 (0.3%)	376 (100.0%)
	April/May 2010	306 (76.7%)	29 (7.3%)	47 (11.8%)	2 (0.5%)	1 (0.3%)	14 (3.5%)	399 (100%)
Voucher = 1								

Source: Online survey

Table A3.4 shows the location of each respondent's most recent swim in both the 16 and under and 60 and over age groups in ineligible areas. Again, the most common location across both waves and both age groups in ineligible areas was public swimming pools, with those in the 60 and over age group were more likely to swim at a private pool or a swimming pool at a gym or club.

Table A3.4: Comparison of location of recent swim (over a four week period) – ineligible areas

	Survey wave	Public swimming pool	A pool at a school open to the public	A private pool or pool at a gym or club	In the sea, a lake or river	Other	Not sure	Total
60 and over	Nov/Dec 2009	42 (63.6%)	1 (1.5%)	17 (25.8%)	2 (3.0%)	4 (6.1%)	0 (0.0%)	66 (100%)
	April/May 2010	45 (60.8%)	3 (4.1%)	22 (29.7%)	2 (2.7%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (2.7%)	74 (100%)
Voucher = 0								
16 and under	Nov/Dec 2009	197 (78.5%)	21 (8.4%)	31 (12.4%)	1 (0.4%)	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	251 (100.0%)
	April/May 2010	160 (69.6%)	21 (9.1%)	40 (17.4%)	2 (0.9%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (3.0%)	230 (100.0%)
Voucher = 2								

Source: Online survey

In order to estimate the gross number of free swimmers, we can combine the analysis of the monitoring data provided by LAs along with the analysis of the online survey (in terms of number of swims per swimmer) for both groups. It should be noted that the figure for the average number of swims per swimmer from the online survey includes both those swimmers in eligible and ineligible areas for the FSP. This analysis is shown in Table A3.5.

Table A3.5: Estimation of gross number of free swimmers

	Survey wave	Gross number of free swims as recorded in monitoring data (Q1 – Q4)	Average number of gross swims per month (Q1 – Q4)	Average number of swims per swimmer (online survey)	Gross number of free swimmers per four week period (Q1 - Q4)
60 and over	Nov/Dec 2009	3,598,972	599,829	5.45	110,060
	April/May 2010	6,987,298	582,275	5.42	107,431
16 and under	Nov/Dec 2009	7,053,650	1,175,608	4.00	293,902
	April/May 2010	11,086,845	923,904	4.03	229,257

Source: Analysis of Free Swimming Programme monitoring data and online survey

Awareness of the Free Swimming Programme

The online survey asked respondents about their awareness of the FSP⁵. Table A3.6 highlights the change in levels of awareness of the FSP amongst those who swam for free in the previous four weeks. This includes those who swam for free in eligible and ineligible areas. The survey shows that overall awareness fell slightly from 89.0% in November/December 2009 to 86.8% in April 2010. Furthermore, around 10% of those who swam for free during their most recent swim were not aware that free swimming was available prior to that. This masks differences between the two age groups: although awareness of the FSP amongst those in the 60 and over age group rose from 89.7% in the first wave of the survey to 93.9% in the second wave, it declined amongst those in the 16 and under age group from 88.5% in the first wave of the survey to 81.6% in the second wave.

In both waves of the online survey, the difference between eligible and ineligible areas for those aged 16 and under was statistically significant at the 95% confidence level with those aged 16 and under in eligible areas having a greater level of awareness of the FSP than those in ineligible areas. Amongst those aged 60 and over, however, the differences in the proportions of the population who were aware were not statistically significant.

Table A3.6: Awareness that could swim for free amongst free swimmers⁶

	60 and over		16 and under		Total	
	Nov/Dec 2009	April/May 2010	Nov/Dec 2009	April/May 2010	Nov/Dec 2009	April/May 2010
Yes	130 (89.7%)	139 (93.9%)	146 (88.5%)	169 (81.6%)	276 (89.0%)	308 (86.8%)
No	15 (10.3%)	8 (5.4%)	12 (7.3%)	30 (14.5%)	27 (8.7%)	38 (10.7%)
Not sure	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.7%)	7 (4.2%)	8 (3.9%)	7 (2.3%)	9 (2.5%)
Total	145 (100.0%)	148 (100.0%)	165 (100.0%)	207 (100.0%)	310 (100.0%)	355 (100.0%)

Source: Online survey

Table A3.7 shows the price which those who had swum at any location other than a public swimming pool in the previous four weeks would expect to pay in a public pool. This showed that amongst those aged 60 and over, there was a split in terms of those who expected that a fee would be charged and those who thought that they could swim for free at a public pool. However, amongst those aged 16 and under, proportionately more respondents in both waves of the survey thought that they would be charged a fee to swim at a public pool. The only statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level between respondents in eligible and ineligible areas was for those aged 60 and over in the first wave of the online survey. Those in ineligible areas were more likely than those in eligible areas to think that they would have to pay a fee to enter a swimming pool (in November / December 2009).

Table A3.7: Expected cost of swimming in a public pool⁷

	60 and over		16 and under		Total	
	Nov/Dec 2009	April/May 2010	Nov/Dec 2009	April/May 2010	Nov/Dec 2009	April/May 2010
Free	54 (44.6%)	55 (43.7%)	17 (21.0%)	28 (25.9%)	71 (35.1%)	83 (35.5%)
Not free	55 (45.5%)	64 (50.8%)	51 (63.0%)	70 (64.8%)	106 (52.5%)	134 (57.3%)
Not sure	12 (9.9%)	7 (5.6%)	13 (16.0%)	10 (9.3%)	25 (12.4%)	17 (7.3%)
Total	121 (100.0%)	126 (100.0%)	81 (100.0%)	108 (100.0%)	202 (100.0%)	234 (100.0%)

Source: Online survey

⁵ Respondents were asked whether they knew they could swim for free before they went to the pool for their most recent swim.

⁶ Swimmers are defined as the number of people who have swum at least once in the previous four weeks in any LA area.

⁷ Swimmers are defined as the number of people who have swum at least once in the previous four weeks in any LA area.

Table A3.8 shows the level of awareness of the FSP amongst those who had not swum at all in the previous four weeks. It includes respondents based in eligible and ineligible areas. Overall, levels of awareness of the FSP fell from 43.4% in November/December 2009 to 39.0% in April/May 2010. A fall in levels of awareness occurred across both those aged 60 and over and those aged 16 and under. The differences between eligible and ineligible areas were statistically significant with non-swimmers in eligible areas being more likely than non-swimmers in ineligible areas to be aware of the FSP.

Table A3.8: Awareness of Free Swimming Programme amongst non-swimmers⁸

	60 and over		16 and under		Total	
	Nov/Dec 2009	April/May 2010	Nov/Dec 2009	April/May 2010	Nov/Dec 2009	April/May 2010
Yes	979 (45.2%)	858 (39.6%)	325 (38.8%)	315 (37.5%)	1,304 (43.4%)	1,173 (39.0%)
No	1,080 (49.8%)	1,185 (54.7%)	452 (53.9%)	460 (54.8%)	1,532 (51.0%)	1,645 (54.7%)
Not sure	109 (5.0%)	124 (5.7%)	61 (7.3%)	65 (7.7%)	170 (5.7%)	189 (6.3%)
Total	2,168 (100.0%)	2,167 (100.0%)	838 (100.0%)	840 (100.0%)	3,006 (100.0%)	3,007 (100.0%)

Source: Online survey

Impact of the Free Swimming Programme

This part of the Section uses the online survey findings to analyse the net impact of the FSP in terms of the additional number of swims, swimmers and participants in physical activity.

Reference case/counterfactual

The reference case or the counterfactual is defined as the change in the pattern of participation in swimming that would have happened anyway in the absence of the FSP. This is a difficult aspect to measure given the wide range of initiatives across the UK at present to encourage the population to become more physically active. This includes other initiatives, in particular those focused on increasing participation amongst the target age group such as Everyday Swim and so on.

The online survey asked respondents in both age groups the following question:

"Comparing your swimming now and your swimming before April 2009, are you swimming more often now, less often now, or about as often as you did before April 2009?"

The analysis in Tables A3.9 and A3.10 shows the changes in swimming frequency between the two waves of the survey. In the first wave of the survey undertaken in November/December 2009, a greater proportion of those aged 60 and over in eligible areas (28.1%) stated that they were swimming more often compared to those in ineligible area (24.4%). In April / May 2010, however, the reverse effect was observed: a greater proportion of those in ineligible areas (29.7%) stated that they were swimming more often compared to those in eligible areas. Amongst those aged 16 and under, higher proportions of those in eligible areas were swimming more often (38.6% and 42.1%) than at April 2009, compared with those in ineligible areas (33.1% and 38.3%). It should be noted, however, that for both age groups in both waves of the survey, a higher proportion of respondents are swimming more often since April 2009 than are swimming less often. This suggests that the frequency of participation has increased amongst the target groups since the FSP has been introduced. Our analysis of these findings shows that there were no statistically significant differences in swimming frequency between eligible and ineligible areas for both age groups.

⁸ Non-swimmers are defined as those people who have not swum at all in the previous four weeks in any LA area.

Table A3.9: Comparison of swimming frequency in the 60 and over age group pre and post April 2009

Change in swimming frequency since April 2009	November/December 2009		April/May 2010	
	Swimmers aged 60 and over in eligible areas	Swimmers aged 60 and over in ineligible areas	Swimmers aged 60 and over in eligible areas	Swimmers aged 60 and over in ineligible areas
More often	87 (28.1%)	16 (24.2%)	82 (27.2%)	22 (29.7%)
Less often	56 (18.1%)	12 (18.2%)	53 (17.5%)	19 (25.7%)
About as often as before	167 (53.9%)	37 (56.1%)	166 (55.0%)	33 (44.6%)
Not sure	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.5%)	1 (0.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Total	310 (100.0%)	66 (100.0%)	302 (100.0%)	74 (100.0%)

Source: Online survey

Table A3.10: Comparison of swimming frequency in the 16 and under age group pre and post April 2009

Change in swimming frequency since April 2009	November/December 2009		April/May 2010	
	Swimmers aged 16 and under in eligible areas	Swimmers aged 16 and under in ineligible areas	Swimmers aged 16 and under in eligible areas	Swimmers aged 16 and under in ineligible areas
More often	145 (38.6%)	83 (33.1%)	168 (42.1%)	88 (38.3%)
Less often	60 (16.0%)	40 (15.9%)	46 (11.5%)	30 (13.0%)
About as often as before	168 (44.7%)	127 (50.6%)	181 (45.4%)	109 (47.4%)
Not sure	3 (0.8%)	1 (0.4%)	4 (1.0%)	3 (1.3%)
Total	376 (100.0%)	251 (100.0%)	399 (100.0%)	230 (100.0%)

Source: Online survey

Leakage

Leakage is defined as the extent to which the benefits of the FSP impact on residents from non-participating LAs. As discussed previously, leakage is of less significance from a national perspective but more important from a local perspective because of its potential effect on the ability of LAs affected by it to successfully deliver the FSP. Our estimation of the level of leakage in terms of those aged 60 and over, and for those aged 16 and under from non-participating local authority areas which participated in the FSP is set out below for information.

The online survey conducted as part of this evaluation asked respondents in both age groups the question below. The findings from this question are then analysed to assess the number of swimmers in ineligible areas who did not pay any fee for their recent swim, in order to assess leakage to ineligible areas.

"When you swam most recently, can you recall what admission charge, if any, you paid to swim?"

Findings from this question showed that leakage amongst those aged 60 and over has decreased across the two waves of the survey, changing from 7.6% in November/December 2009 to 5.4% in April/May 2010. In contrast, leakage amongst those aged 16 and under has increased across the two waves of the survey, changing from 13.9% in November/December 2009 to 17.9% in April/May 2010.

Table A3.11: Estimation of leakage to ineligible areas

Element of estimation	60 and over		16 and under	
	November/December 2009	April/May 2010	November/December 2009	April/May 2010
Number of free swimmers who are resident in ineligible areas	11	8	23	37
Number of free swimmers who are resident in eligible areas	134	140	142	170
Total number of free public swimmers	145	148	165	207
% of free public swimmers in ineligible areas compared with total	7.6%	5.4%	13.9%	17.9%

Source: Online survey

Deadweight

Deadweight is defined as the extent to which those individuals who swam for free would have been willing to pay and, thus, are unlikely to have altered their decision to swim as a result of the FSP offer.

The online survey conducted as part of this evaluation asked respondents in both age groups the following question:

"How likely is it that you would have gone swimming at this pool even if you had not been able to swim for free?"

In the first wave of the survey undertaken in November/December 2009, a four point scale of responses was used, ranging from "very likely to have swum anyway" to "very unlikely to have swum anyway". Analysis of these findings presented some difficulties, in that there was uncertainty around the degree to which those who stated that they were "very likely to have swum anyway" would actually have gone swimming. Therefore, following the first wave of the online survey which was undertaken in November/December 2009, a sensitivity analysis was undertaken to assess the range which the true level of deadweight could fall within, based on the following assumptions:

- **Scenario 1:** 100% of those who stated that they were 'very likely' to have swum plus 100% of those who stated that they were 'quite likely' to have swum;
- **Scenario 2:** 100% of those who stated that they were 'very likely' to have swum plus 75% of those who stated that they were 'quite likely' to have swum; and
- **Scenario 3:** 80% of those who stated that they were 'very likely' to have swum plus 50% of those who stated that they were 'quite likely' to have swum.

Using these assumptions, it was found that the level of deadweight for those aged 60 and over was likely to lie between 53.5% and 79.3%, and the level of deadweight for those aged 16 and under was likely to lie between 56.2% and 84.8%.

In order to reduce the uncertainty regarding the 'true' level of deadweight, the response scale was clarified within the second online survey administered in April/May 2010. We gave respondents the opportunity to select a response on a sliding scale according to the likelihood that they would have swum anyway: where a respondent indicated that they were 'very likely to have gone swimming', this was taken to mean that they were 100% certain to have swum anyway whereas if they indicated that they were 'very unlikely to have gone swimming', this was taken to mean that there was no possibility that they would have swum anyway.

Tables 3.12 and A3.13 show our estimates of the level of deadweight. Deadweight was therefore found to be 82.5% for those aged 60 and over and 72.9% for those aged 16 and under.

Table A3.12: Sensitivity analysis of deadweight amongst those aged 60 and over (all areas)

Response scale	November/December 2009			Response scale	April/May 2010		
	Number of respondents	Estimated number of swimmers	Level of deadweight		Number of respondents	Estimated number of swimmers	Level of deadweight
Very likely	67	Level of deadweight at 100% of 'very likely' and 100% of 'quite likely' (maximum)		Very likely to have gone swimming (100% likely)	85	85	100%
Fairly likely	48	= (67 x 100%) + (48 x 100%) = 115 swimmers Level of deadweight at 80% of 'very likely' and 50% of 'quite likely' (minimum) = (67 x 80%) + (48 x 50%) = 77.6 swimmers		Fairly likely to have gone swimming (75% likely)	37	27.8	75%
Not sure	5	Level of deadweight at 0% = (5 x 0%) = 0 swimmers		Neither likely or unlikely have gone swimming (50% likely)	14	7	50%
Fairly unlikely	19	Level of deadweight at 0% = (19 x 0%) = 0 swimmers		Fairly unlikely to have gone swimming (25% likely)	9	2.3	25%
Very unlikely	6	Level of deadweight at 0% = (6 x 0%) = 0 swimmers		Very unlikely to have gone swimming (0% likely)	3	0	0%
Total	145	Between 77.6 and 115	53.5% - 79.3%	Total	148	122.1	82.5%

Source: Online survey

Table A3.13: Sensitivity analysis of deadweight amongst those aged 16 and under (eligible areas)

Response scale	November/December 2009			Response scale	April/May 2010		
	Number of respondents	Estimated number of swimmers	Level of deadweight		Number of respondents	Estimated number of swimmers	Level of deadweight
Very likely	76	Level of deadweight at 100% of 'very likely' and 100% of 'quite likely' (maximum)		Very likely to have gone swimming (100% likely)	74	74	100%
Fairly likely	64	= (76 x 100%) + (64 x 100%) = 140 swimmers Level of deadweight at 80% of 'very likely' and 50% of 'quite likely' (minimum) = (76 x 80%) + (64 x 50%) = 92.8 swimmers		Fairly likely to have gone swimming (75% likely)	84	63	75%
Not sure	6	Level of deadweight at 0% = (6 x 0%) = 0 swimmers		Neither likely or unlikely have gone swimming (50% likely)	13	6.5	50%
Fairly unlikely	14	Level of deadweight at 0% = (14 x 0%) = 0 swimmers		Fairly unlikely to have gone swimming (25% likely)	29	7.3	25%
Very unlikely	5	Level of deadweight at 0% = (5 x 0%) = 0 swimmers		Very unlikely to have gone swimming (0% likely)	7	0	0%
Total	165	Between 92.8 and 140	56.2% - 84.8%	Total	207	150.8	72.9%

Source: Online survey

We have also calculated the confidence intervals around these estimates of deadweight at the 95% level. For those aged 60 and over, the lower confidence limit is 74.0% and the upper confidence limit is 90.0%. For those aged 16 and under, the lower confidence limit is 65.5% whilst the upper confidence limit is 80.2%.

Displacement /substitution

Displacement/substitution can be defined as the extent to which the FSP has displaced existing swimmers and swimmers from outside the two target age groups. Since the online survey does not cover the 17-59 age group, it is not possible to measure directly whether the FSP has displaced existing swimmers outside the target groups. We have, however, examined trends in swimming participation in this age group using the Active People Survey (see Annex 2).

Displacement/substitution for the FSP can also be considered in terms of the number of swimmers who, despite now swimming more often, spend less time or have stopped participating in other sports or recreational activities as a result of increasing their swimming frequency.

The online survey asked respondents in both age groups the following question:

"Has swimming more often meant that you are spending less time these days on other sports or recreational physical activities than you did before April 2009?"

Table A3.14 shows the level of displacement/substitution of swimming for other activities amongst those who have participated in free swimming. It shows that over 80% of free swimmers had not altered the time they spent undertaking physical activities. Of those free swimmers who indicated that they were spending less time on other activities, less than one in ten said that they had stopped their other physical activities.

Table A3.14: Estimation of displacement/substitution of swimming for other physical activities

Element of estimation	60 and over		16 and under	
	November/December 2009	April/May 2010	November/December 2009	April/May 2010
Respondents who stated that they were spending less time on other physical activities	9 (8.7%)	10 (9.6%)	33 (14.5%)	29 (11.3%)
Respondents who stated that they were not spending less time on other physical activities (despite swimming more often)	91 (88.3%)	89 (85.6%)	182 (79.8%)	209 (81.6%)
Respondents who stated that they completely stopped doing these other physical activities	Question not asked	3 (2.9%)	Question not asked	12 of 256 (4.9%)
Respondents who were unsure	3 (2.9%)	5 (4.8%)	13 (5.7%)	18 (7.0%)

Source: Online survey

Of the 9.6% of swimmers aged 60 and over, and 11.3% of swimmers aged 16 and under, who stated that they were now spending less time on other physical activities within this question, it cannot be assumed that the overall level of displacement is 100%. We assume that 50% of swimmers who are spending less time on other activities may have stopped as a result of swimming more often. On this basis, the level of displacement associated with swimmers spending less time on other physical activities is likely to be 6.3% for those aged 60 and over and 8.2% for those aged 16 and under (see Table A3.15).

⁹ A question asking those respondents who indicated that they were swimming more often was added to the second wave of the online survey was included in addition to that used previously to assess displacement/substitution. This question was "Has swimming more often meant that you have completely stopped any other sports or recreational physical activities that you did before April 2009?"

Table A3.15: Sensitivity analysis of displacement of swimming for other physical activities

Element of estimation	Level of displacement	60 and over		16 and under	
		November/December 2009	April/May 2010	November/December 2009	April/May 2010
Respondents who stated that they have completely stopped doing these other activities	100%	Question not asked	3 (2.9%)	Question not asked	12 (4.9%)
Respondents who stated that they were spending less time on other physical activities	At 100%	9 (8.7%)	7 (6.7%)	33 (14.5%)	17 (6.6%)
	At 50%	Question not asked	3.5 (3.4%)	Question not asked	8.5 (3.3%)
		Level of displacement	6.3%	Level of displacement	8.2%

Source: Online survey

We have also calculated the confidence intervals around these estimates of displacement / substitution at the 95% level. For those aged 60 and over, the lower confidence limit is 18.9% and the upper confidence limit is 50.7%. For those aged 16 and under, the lower confidence limit is 36.9% whilst the upper confidence limit is 57.2%.

Another element of potential displacement/substitution is those free swimmers who have started to use public swimming pools in order to access the FSP when previously they would have used a private pool or another type of pool (where free swimming is not available). The online survey asked respondents in both age groups the following question.

"Has your ability to swim for free at this pool changed your use of private swimming pools that you may have used before April 2009?"

Table A3.16 shows the extent to which those swimming in public pools did so at the expense other pool types. It shows that displacement/substitution is 7.9% for those aged 60 and over and 15.4% for those aged 16 and under. This is not, however, factored into the overall estimate of displacement/substitution on the grounds that it has no direct impact on the health benefit.

Table A3.16: Estimation of displacement/substitution of swimming in public pools activities for private (and other) pools

Element of estimation	60 and over		16 and under	
	November/December 2009	April/May 2010	November/December 2009	April/May 2010
Respondents who had not used private pools before April 2009	79 (60.8%)	89 (64.0%)	66 (45.2%)	88 (52.0%)
Respondents who stated that they were using private pools less now than pre April 2009	18 (13.8%)	10 (7.2%)	20 (13.7%)	22 (13.0%)
Respondents who stated that they were using private pools more now than pre April 2009	3 (2.3%)	6 (4.3%)	17 (11.6%)	11 (6.5%)
Respondents who stated that they were using private pools as often when compared with pre April 2009	22 (16.9%)	23 (16.5%)	26 (17.8%)	22 (13.0%)
Other/not sure	8 (6.2%)	11 (7.9%)	17 (11.6%)	26 (15.4%)

Source: Online survey

When the statistical significance of these findings were analysed for each wave of the online survey, it was found that in the majority of cases no statistically significant differences between eligible and ineligible areas for those aged 16 and under. For those aged 16 and under, the second wave of the panel survey (undertaken in April / May 2010) highlighted a statistically significant difference in terms of use of private pools since April 2009. This means that those aged 16 and under in eligible areas were more likely to have used private pools less recently than prior to April 2009 than those of the same age group in ineligible areas.

Wider effects

For the purposes of this evaluation, the wider effects of the FSP are the knock-on effects whereby the benefits of the Programme are spread beyond the two target age groups (for example, if children are accompanied by parents while swimming, thus increasing the activity levels of the family as a whole).

This can be measured by the impact of the FSP on uptake of paid swims by wider friends and family members, linked to free swimmers. The online survey asked respondents in both age groups the following questions:

"When you swam most recently, did you go with anyone else, such as a group of friends or a member of your family?" and

"Of the people you went swimming with most recently, how many, apart from yourself, paid an admission fee to swim?"

It should be noted that our estimate of multiplier effects does not take into account the number of people accompanying the free swimmer where the respondent has stated that two or more people accompanied them (we have assumed in such instances that they were accompanied by only two people). In addition, a number of these additional swimmers who accompanied the 'free swimmer' may have swam anyway (i.e. there would be a level of deadweight associated with this). As our survey only asked questions directly of those who had swam in the previous four weeks (and did not include any friends or family members who may have swam with them), this could not be assessed.

The survey showed that wider effects associated with those who have swum for free bringing other paying friends or family members with them have increased over the last six months within the survey sample. Amongst those aged 60 and over, multiplier effects were assessed to be 30.4% in April/May 2010, an increase from 22.8% in November/December 2009. Similarly, amongst those aged 16 and under, the wider effects were assessed to be 100.0% in April/May 2010, an increase from 76.4% in November/December 2009.¹⁰

Table A3.18: Estimation of wider effects of FSP

Element of estimation	60 and over		16 and under	
	November/December 2009	April/May 2010	November/December 2009	April/May 2010
Respondents' who swam with someone else	74 (51.0%)	76 (51.4%)	155 (93.9%)	198 (95.7%)
Respondents' who were accompanied by someone who paid an admission fee to swim	23 (31.1%)	31 (40.8%)	76 (49.0%)	118 (59.6%)
Cross-tabulations of wider effects				
Cross-tabulation: number of respondents who swam with one other person who paid an admission fee to swim (A)	13	17	26	29
Cross-tabulation: number of respondents who swam with two other people who paid an admission fee to swim (B)	10	14	50	89
Total number of additional swims through wider effects (A+B)	33	45	126	207
Multiplier effect (additional swims through wider effects divided by the number of free swimmers)	22.8%	30.4%	76.4%	100.0%

Source: Online survey

Sustainability

Whilst sustainability is not a factor which contributes to the estimation of additionality, and thus in estimating the net impact of the FSP, it is an important factor in the longer term success of the Programme.

As part of this assessment, respondents were asked whether they had noticed any important changes at the pool recently, as clearly the environment associated with swimming has the potential to influence the future behaviour of swimmers. Responses categorised changes either as improvements, deteriorations, a combination of both or no change at all. The findings in response to this question across both waves of the survey are shown in Table A3.19. Interestingly, in both age groups the proportion of respondents who thought that changes for the better had taken place had increased between the two waves of the survey whilst the proportion of respondents who thought that changes for the worse had taken place also rose slightly. However the majority of respondents in each wave of the survey and in each age group

¹⁰ Given the complex way in which the wider effects have been estimated, and the assumptions we have had to use, we have not calculated the confidence intervals around the overall scale of the wider effects although we have examined some of the individual components of the estimate.

stated that no changes which were important to them had taken place. In both survey waves and age groups, a much higher proportion of respondents thought changes for the better had taken place than changes for the worse.

Table A3.19: Respondent views on changes to pools (sustainability)

Element of estimation	60 and over		16 and under	
	November/December 2009	April/May 2010	November/December 2009	April/May 2010
Respondents' who thought that changes for the better had taken place	55 (24.4%)	55 (25.6%)	113 (22.3%)	134 (29.5%)
Respondents' who thought that changes for the worse had taken place	9 (4.0%)	16 (7.4%)	24 (4.7%)	24 (5.3%)
Respondents who thought that both changes for the better and changes for the worse had taken place	12 (5.3%)	9 (4.2%)	33 (6.5%)	25 (5.5%)
Respondents who thought that no changes important to them had taken place or who were not sure	149 (66.2%)	135 (62.8%)	336 (66.4%)	271 (59.7%)

Source: Online survey

The qualitative explanations to the survey questions associated with changes to pools were analysed within the survey undertaken in April/May 2010 to explore the reasons underlying the responses detailed in Table A3.19. The five most frequently cited findings in each case are shown in Table A3.20.

Table A3.20: Explanation of changes to pools (sustainability)

Changes for the better observed	No. of responses	Changes for the worse observed	No. of responses
Physical improvements, refurbishment or modernisation	76	Decreased cleanliness	18
Improvements to the changing facilities (including lockers and showers)	60	Poor pool times or session availability	14
Reduced cost or free swimming	22	Deterioration of changing facilities	13
Improvements to cleanliness	19	Lack of activities in the pool itself	8
New centre or new pool	18	Changes to the physical environment and crowding (joint fifth)	7

Source: Online survey

The online survey asked respondents in both age groups the following questions as an indicator of sustainability of their swimming over the past 12 months (April 2009 to March 2010) and also plans over the next 12 months (April 2010 to April 2011):

"Comparing your swimming now (November 2009) and your swimming before April 2009, are you swimming more often now, less often now, or about as often as you did before April 2009?"

"During the next 12 months, do you expect to spend at least as much time taking part in sports and recreational physical activities as you do now?"

Responses to these questions showed that 27.7% of those aged 60 and over were swimming more often in April/May 2010 than in April 2009, and 40.7% of those aged 16 and under were swimming more often than previously. In addition, nearly 90% of those aged 60 and over and 16 and under expect to spend at least as much time taking part in sports and recreational physical activities in the next 12 months. These findings are shown in detail in Table A3.21.

Table A3.21: Estimation of sustainability amongst those who had swum at least once in the last four weeks

Element of estimation	60 and over		16 and under	
	November/December 2009	April/May 2010	November/December 2009	April/May 2010
Respondents who are swimming more often than before April 2009	103 (27.4%)	104 (27.7%)	228 (36.4%)	256 (40.7%)
Respondents who expect to spend at least as much time taking part in sports and recreational physical activities over the next 12 months	337 (89.6%)	337 (89.6%)	532 (84.8%)	557 (88.6%)

Source: Online survey

In addition, an additional two questions were added to the online survey in April/May 2010 to assess respondents' likely future behaviour in relation to swimming once the Free Swimming Programme ends in March 2011. Specifically, the questions focused on swimmers' likely willingness to pay to swim. The following questions were asked in relation to sustainability:

"In future, how much would you be prepared to pay per session to swim in your local public swimming pool?"
 "Would you still swim as often if you could not swim for free?"

The findings from the online survey responses to these questions are shown in Table A3.22.

The responses to these questions show that most of those who have swum for free would be willing to pay a fee in the future (although this is the case to a greater extent amongst those aged 60 and over than those aged 16 and under). A smaller proportion of these respondents indicated that they would swim more often once the Free Swimming Programme ends (11.6% of respondents aged 16 and under and 8.1% of respondents aged 60 and over). Most respondents, therefore, indicated that they would be likely to swim less often once the Free Swimming Programme ends: 63.8% of respondents aged 16 and under said that they would swim less often and 70.3% of respondents aged 60 and over said that they would swim less often. Indeed, 3.4% of those aged 16 and under and 1.4% of those aged 60 and over stated that they would not swim at all if they could not swim for free.

Table A3.22: Sustainability and willingness to pay when the FSP ends

Element of estimation	60 and over	16 and under
	April/May 2010	April/May 2010
Respondents who would be willing to pay a fee per session to swim in their local public swimming pool	603 (95.9%)	340 (90.4%)
Respondents who would not be willing to pay a fee per session to swim in their local public swimming pool	26 (4.1%)	36 (9.6%)
Respondents who would swim more often once the Free Swimming Programme ends	12 (of 148) (8.1%)	24 (of 207) (11.6%)
Respondents who would swim less often or not at all once the Free Swimming Programme ends	106 (of 148) (71.6%)	139 (of 207) (67.1%)

Source: Online survey

Role of swimming lessons

A number of questions were asked of respondents in each wave of the online survey to assess the impact of swimming lessons (both those which participants pay a fee for and those which are free) in driving participation. The findings are shown in detail in Tables A3.23 and A3.24.

Table A3.23: Access to swimming lessons and free swimming lessons amongst those who had swum at least once in the last four weeks

Element of estimation	60 and over		16 and under	
	November/December 2009	April/May 2010	November/December 2009	April/May 2010
Respondents who had a swimming lesson to help them feel more confident in the water	9 (2.4%)	12 (3.2%)	95 (15.2%)	97 (15.4%)
Respondents who had a swimming lesson to help them improve their skills as a swimmer	8 (2.1%)	8 (2.1%)	245 (39.1%)	273 (43.4%)
Total number of respondents who had a swimming lesson	17 (4.5%)	20 (5.3%)	340 (54.2%)	370 (58.8%)
Number of respondents who did not pay a fee for the lesson or coaching	3 (of 12) (25.0%)	7 (of 12) (58.3%)	74 (of 295) (25.1%)	83 (of 297) (27.9%)

Source: Online survey

On the whole, participation in swimming lessons is much higher amongst those aged 16 and under than those aged 60 and over although the number of respondents aged 60 and over who had had a swimming lesson to help them feel more confident in the water increased between the two waves of the survey (from 2.4% in November/December 2009 to 3.2% in April/May 2010). It should however be noted that the number of respondents who indicated that they had undertaken a swimming lesson in the previous four

weeks is small, and hence this should be considered in the interpretation of the results. In addition, the number of respondents aged 60 and over who had undertaken a swimming lesson but did not pay a fee for this lesson increased from 25.0% in November/December 2009 to 58.3%, and also increased from 25.1% to 27.9% for those aged 16 and under.

Table A3.24: Access to swimming lessons and free swimming lessons

Element of estimation	60 and over		16 and under	
	November/December 2009	April/May 2010	November/December 2009	April/May 2010
More likely to continue swimming as a result of taking lessons	9 (75.0%)	9 (75.0%)	221 (74.9%)	236 (79.5%)
Less likely to continue swimming as a result of taking lessons	0 (0.0%)	1 (8.3%)	10 (3.4%)	9 (3.0%)
Not affected likelihood to continue swimming as a result of taking lessons or unsure	3 (25.0%)	2 (16.7%)	64 (21.7%)	52 (17.5%)

Source: Online survey

The vast majority of those respondents who indicated that they had a swimming lesson in the two waves of the online survey stated that this made them more likely to continue swimming as a result. This was consistently 75.0% of respondents aged 60 and over, and rose to 79.5% amongst those aged 16 and under in the April/May 2010.

Views of non-swimmers

The online survey also asked those respondents who had not undertaken any swimming in the previous four weeks a range of questions to ascertain their prior levels of participation in swimming and their views on the sport, as well as their awareness of the FSP. The following tables outline the responses from these questions amongst respondents in both eligible and ineligible areas.

Table A3.25: Past participation in swimming amongst non-swimmers

Question		60 and over		16 and under	
		November/December 2009	April/May 2010	November/December 2009	April/May 2010
Last time swimming	Since April 2009	451 (20.8%)	471 (21.7%)	528 (63.0%)	521 (62.0%)
	Between April 2008 and April 2009	362 (16.7%)	384 (17.7%)	173 (20.6%)	195 (23.2%)
	A long time ago, but not certain when	1,066 (49.2%)	1,014 (46.8%)	119 (14.2%)	103 (12.3%)
	Never	289 (13.3%)	298 (13.6%)	18 (2.1%)	21 (2.5%)
	Total	2,168 (100.0%)	2,167 (100.0%)	838 (100.0%)	840 (100.0%)
Number who used a public swimming pool the last time they went swimming (based on the responses above from those who had indicated that they had been swimming since April 2009 or between April 2008 and April 2009).		883 (47.0%)	938 (50.2%)	651 (79.4%)	680 (83.0%)

Source: Online survey

Table A3.25 shows that most non-swimmers in the 60 and over aged group last swum “a long time ago” in both waves of the survey (i.e. before April 2008). Amongst those aged 16 and under, however, most had last swum since April 2009 in each wave of the survey. The picture across both waves of the online survey is very similar.

Table A3.26: Swimming ability amongst non-swimmers

Swimming ability	60 and over		16 and under	
	November/December 2009	April/May 2010	November/December 2009	April/May 2010
Non-swimmers who <u>can</u> swim well enough to feel comfortable in the water	1,351 (62.3%)	1,344 (62.0%)	685 (81.7%)	672 (80.0%)
Non-swimmers who <u>cannot</u> swim well enough to	817	823	153	168

Swimming ability	60 and over		16 and under	
	November/December 2009	April/May 2010	November/December 2009	April/May 2010
feel comfortable in the water	(37.7%)	(38.0%)	(18.3%)	(20.0%)
Non swimmers who have considered having swimming lessons or coaching at a public pool	100 (12.2%)	124 (15.1%)	51 (33.3%)	69 (41.1%)

Source: Online survey

Of the non-swimmers, most of the respondents in both age groups were able to swim well enough to feel comfortable in the water, although proportionately more respondents aged 16 and under felt comfortable in the water (81.7% and 80.0% in each wave respectively) compared to those aged 60 and over (62.3% and 62.0% in each wave respectively). Between the two waves of the survey, the proportion of non-swimmers who cannot swim well enough to feel comfortable in the water, but who have considered having a swimming lesson or coaching rose from 12.2% to 15.1% of respondents aged 60 and over and 33.3% to 41.1% of those aged 16 and under. This may be due to a number of factors, potentially including increased awareness of lesson availability.

The online survey asked respondents for the reasons why they did not use a public swimming pool. The results are similar in both waves of the survey as detailed in Table A3.27. The four most commonly cited explanations of non-usage of public swimming pools amongst non-swimmers were the same in the two waves of the survey.

Table A3.27: Reasons for non-use of public swimming pools

Response	November/December 2009 (n= 3,005)	April/May 2010 (n= 3,007)
Local public pools are crowded, noisy and confusing	1,136 (37.8%)	853 (28.4%)
Local public pools are unpleasant to use – too cold, not clean, pool changing	714 (23.8%)	557 (18.5%)
Admission fees at local public pools are too high for me	564 (18.8%)	388 (12.9%)
Local public pools do not seem welcoming, friendly or helpful	549 (18.3%)	375 (12.5%)

Source: Online survey

Table A3.28 shows that the number of non-swimmers in eligible areas who had seen or heard of the Free Swimming Programme in the 60 and over age groups declined between the two waves of the online survey, whilst the number who had heard about the Programme increased amongst those aged 16 and under (from 49.6% to 51.1%).

When the statistical significance of these findings were analysed between the two waves of the online survey for people in eligible areas compared with those in ineligible areas, it was found that there was a statistically significant difference in knowledge of the FSP for those aged 60 and over (meaning that those aged 60 and over in eligible areas were more likely to be aware of the FSP than those in ineligible areas), but no statistically significant difference amongst those aged 16 and under.

Table A3.28: Knowledge of the FSP amongst non-swimmers in eligible areas

Level of knowledge of the FSP	60 and over		16 and under	
	November/December 2009	April/May 2010	November/December 2009	April/May 2010
Non-swimmers who had seen or heard of the Free Swimming Programme	847 (49.0%)	746 (43.5%)	254 (49.6%)	258 (51.1%)
Non-swimmers who had not seen or heard of the Free Swimming Programme	798 (46.2%)	879 (51.3%)	220 (43.0%)	208 (41.2%)
Non-swimmers who were unsure if they had seen or heard of a Free Swimming Programme	84 (4.9%)	90 (5.2%)	38 (7.4%)	39 (7.7%)

Source: Online survey

Table A3.29 shows that the number of non-swimmers in ineligible areas who had seen or heard of the Free Swimming Programme in both age groups declined between the two waves of the survey, but to a greater extent amongst those aged 60 and over (from 30.1% to 24.8%).

When the statistical significance of these findings were analysed between the two waves of the online survey for people in eligible areas compared with those in ineligible areas, it was found that there were no statistically significant difference in the level of knowledge of the FSP amongst either age group.

Table A3.29: Knowledge of the FSP amongst non-swimmers in ineligible areas

Level of knowledge of the FSP	60 and over		16 and under	
	November/December 2009	April/May 2010	November/December 2009	April/May 2010
Non-swimmers who had seen or heard of a Free Swimming Programme	132 (30.1%)	112 (24.8%)	71 (21.8%)	57 (17.0%)
Non-swimmers who had not seen or heard of a Free Swimming Programme	282 (64.2%)	306 (67.7%)	232 (71.2%)	252 (75.2%)
Non-swimmers who were unsure if they had seen or heard of a Free Swimming Programme	25 (5.7%)	34 (7.5%)	23 (7.1%)	26 (7.8%)

Source: Online survey

Finally, Table A3.30 highlights the three most commonly cited ways in which respondents across both target age groups had seen or heard of the FSP. Interestingly, this shows that the ways in which non-swimmers became aware of the FSP has not changed across the two waves of the survey, with most made aware of the Programme via information delivered to their home via leaflet, a news letter or other sources.

Table A3.30: Most common ways in which non-swimmers had seen or heard of the FSP

November/December 2009	No. of responses	April/May 2010	No. of responses
Information delivered at home in a leaflet, news letter or other sources	487 (37.3%)	Information delivered at home in a leaflet, news letter or free	381 (32.5%)
Word of mouth	332 (25.5%)	Word of mouth	314 (26.8%)
Publicity for free swimming at the centre where a pool is located	240 (18.4%)	Publicity for free swimming at the centre where a pool is located	253 (21.6%)

Source: Online survey

Annex 4: Case study evidence - non-participating local authorities

Introduction

This Annex summarises the findings from a series of interviews which we undertook with LAs (LAs) that opted not to participate in the Free Swimming Programme. These interviews were completed in November 2009.

The case studies with non-participating LAs were structured around a series of (common) questions which focused on the key issues likely to have been experienced by these authorities in coming to a decision as to whether or not to participate in free swimming, and the impact of this decision over the first six months of the FSP (from April to September 2009). The topic guide used as a focus for the interviews can be found in Annex 8.

Areas covered

Letters were sent to around half of the 67 LAs which had chosen not to participate in the FSP at September 2009. A number of these LAs have since joined the FSP – for example, of the 18 LAs which were interviewed, Wokingham has since joined the Programme¹¹. The sample of LAs interviewed represented the characteristics of the wider group of non-participating LAs in terms of:

- Geography and regional spread;
- Population density; and
- Deprivation.

Table A4.1: Non-participating LAs interviewed

Local authority	Deprivation tercile	Population tercile	Type of LA	Region
Harlow	Middle	Upper	Non-metropolitan district	East
Ipswich	Lower	Upper	Non-metropolitan district	East
North Hertfordshire	Upper	Middle	Non-metropolitan district	East
Rochford	Upper	Middle	Non-metropolitan district	East
Rossendale	Lower	Middle	Non-metropolitan district	North West
Bracknell Forest	Upper	Middle	Unitary authority	South East
Epsom and Ewell	Upper	Upper	Non-metropolitan district	South East
Havant	Middle	Upper	Non-metropolitan district	South East
Tandridge	Upper	Middle	Non-metropolitan district	South East
Tonbridge and Malling	Upper	Middle	Non-metropolitan district	South East
Vale of White Horse	Upper	Lower	Non-metropolitan district	South East
Wokingham	Upper	Middle	Unitary authority	South East
Bournemouth	Lower	Upper	Unitary authority	South West
East Dorset	Upper	Lower	Non-metropolitan district	South West
Mendip	Middle	Lower	Non-metropolitan district	South West

¹¹ In addition to Wokingham, the following LAs have also joined the programme or increased their level of offer from just 60 and over to both since April 2009: Barnet, Boston, Broxtowe, Croydon, East Hampshire, Eden, Gloucester, Mansfield, Mole Valley, Reading, South Kesteven, Stoke on Trent, Surrey Heath and West Lindsey.

Local authority	Deprivation tercile	Population tercile	Type of LA	Region
Lichfield	Upper	Lower	Non-metropolitan district	West Midlands
East Riding of Yorkshire	Middle	Lower	Unitary authority	Yorkshire
Scarborough	Lower	Lower	Non-metropolitan district	Yorkshire

Findings

The findings from our case studies with non-participating LAs are presented under the following headings:

- Awareness of the Free Swimming Programme;
- The decision-making process;
- Impact of the decision;
- Swimming uptake and participation;
- Perceptions of the Free Swimming Programme;
- Suggestions for improvement; and
- Conclusions and lessons learnt.

Awareness of the Free Swimming Programme

In November 2009, all of the LAs interviewed were aware of the swimming element of the FSP but less than half of the non-participating LAs were aware of the availability of support for swimming lessons and capital grants.

"We understand that it (the FSP) is the provision of free swimming for those aged 16 and under and 60 and over and its aim is to increase physical activity in the run up to the 2012 Olympics." (Interview with non-participating LA)

"I have heard of the capital grants but not about the free swimming lessons." (Interview with non-participating LA)

The majority of LAs recalled receiving letters or circulars from the DCMS informing them of the FSP at the outset. Several interviewees also mentioned the media as a source of information, including radio and a television announcement made by a Government minister.

Other sources of information included:

- A letter received from the Government during the summer holidays;
- Radio advertisements;
- E-mails received from government departments; and
- The Amateur Swimming Association (ASA).

A number of difficulties were highlighted by non-participating LAs when receiving information on the FSP. For example, one local authority received the letter from the DCMS over the summer holiday period and, due to staff being off during this time, found itself with little time to make an informed decision as to whether or not to participate in the FSP.

Overall, understanding of the FSP was consistent across LAs with most LAs being aware of the approach adopted by the Government to a good degree of detail.

"We understood that the Programme had to be completely free and could not be limited in any way (e.g. until the funding was exhausted or for certain months of the year)." (Interview with non-participating LA)

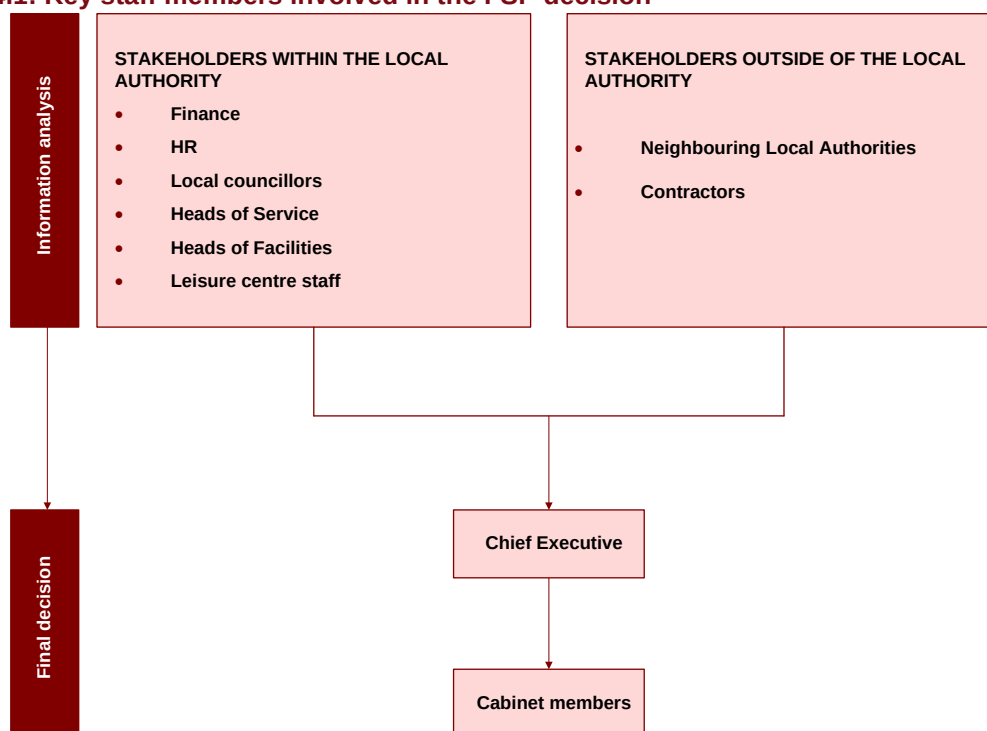
"We went to the Government with an offer of doing the Programme for 60 and overs at key periods during the day, however, the Governments approach was 'all or nothing'." (Interview with non-participating LA)

Despite a high overall level of understanding, a small number of LAs stated that they had posed queries to DCMS and had experienced difficulties obtaining a response within the time frame required for decision making.

The decision making process

Each local authority involved a range of staff in the decision making process with regards to the FSP. Figure A4.1 identifies the key staff members typically involved in making the decision regarding participation in the FSP.

Figure A4.1: Key staff members involved in the FSP decision



Source: Interviews with non-participating local authorities

In general, LAs approached the decision whether or not to participate in either the 60 and over and/or 16 and under age groups in a similar way by looking at current usage figures for each group. Their aim was to assess the impact of free swimming in terms of foregone revenue and to analyse the results against the level of funding available for each group for free swimming. The majority of LAs examined the potential impact on those aged 60 and over first (as this was the 'core' offering required by DCMS).

Where it was found that the grant funding available for those aged 60 and over was expected to be less than the foregone revenue, a decision was often made not to join the FSP. Consequently, limited or no analysis was undertaken on the grant funding available for those aged 16 and under compared with potential foregone revenue from this group.

Table A4.2 presents the key questions which LAs sought to address in deciding whether or not to participate in either the 60 and over and/or 16 and under elements of the FSP.

Table A4.2: Key questions addressed in the decision-making process

Key questions taken by LAs in deciding whether or not to participate in the FSP
• Does the grant match/exceed level of potential demand? • Does the FSP meet the objectives of the local authority? • Would the capital grant offset any difference in uptake and the revenue grant? • Have pilots of free swimming in other LAs been successful? • Could local PCTs assist where a shortfall in funding was identified? • Would the FSP attract new swimmers in the area?

Source: Interviews with non-participating local authorities

The majority of non-participating LAs identified finance as the biggest barrier to participation in the FSP, particularly the large funding shortfall they expected if they joined the FSP. The following table identifies the approximate financial losses that LAs estimated that they would suffer if they had participated in the FSP.

Table A4.3: Estimated annual financial losses of participating in the FSP

Local authority	60 and over	16 and under
A	£135,000	Not assessed
B	£60,000	£250,000
C	£60,000	£240,000
D	None	£465,000
E	£35,000 - £40,000	
F	£66,000	£346,000
G	£50,000	£110,000
H	None	£10,000

Source: Interviews with non-participating local authorities

A number of LAs did not anticipate an increase in secondary spend (i.e. customer spending beyond the payment of an entrance fee, such as on food or other swimming) as a result of free swimming and, therefore, did not consider that this would cover the shortfalls in funding which they had identified.

In addition, several LAs felt that participating in the FSP would create capacity issues (through increased demand) resulting in increased staffing costs. For example, some LAs, in particular those which were experiencing financial pressures, felt that parents of 16 and under would see the FSP as a “free childcare facility” which in turn would increase demand for free swimming as well as increase the costs for the local authority.

“We ran our own form of free swimming programme a few years ago during a February mid-term break and found that our costs had increased as usage increased – mainly due to increased staff costs and more chemicals being needed to keep the pool clean. Therefore, we felt that we stood to lose revenue and face increased costs.” (Interview with non-participating LA)

Another key consideration in the decision regarding the FSP was the uncertainty over what would happen following the initial two year funding period and whether further funding could be guaranteed.

“We decided not to participate as we were concerned that it would create an expectation among the public that 60 and overs would be entitled to free swimming indefinitely – and the Council were unsure they would receive further funding beyond that two year period.” (Interview with non-participating LA)

A few LAs suggested that the funding provided should be based on swimming pool usage rather than population. This was particularly relevant in holiday resorts where the summer months experience a rapid increase in population and pool usage. These LAs tended to receive a low grant offer from DCMS due to their low resident population despite higher figures at peak times.

A further factor influencing non-participation in the FSP was the definition of free swimming set out by the Government (i.e. that it should be offered to everyone (including non residents) during all public swimming sessions). Several LAs suggested that they would have participated if they could offer free swimming to those aged 16 and under only or restrict free swimming to their own residents or at off peak times. This suggestion was rejected by the Government in line with the objectives of the FSP.

“Our Council would have been more likely to offer free swimming to those aged 16 and under – we can understand the rationale behind that – it would keep kids off the streets and reduce obesity. We found it harder to justify spending money to give free swimming to those aged 60 and over who are not going to be participating in the Olympics.” (Interview with non-participating LA)

Other reasons cited for not participating included the (short) timescales involved in turning around an application, the extent of the monitoring data required and the (limited) benefits of the FSP (in terms of secondary spend) being generated for leisure contractors and not the local authority.

Impact of the decision

The majority of LAs have experienced a low to mild adverse reaction from local stakeholders to their decision not to participate in the FSP. However, the majority of these LAs would still make the same decision not to participate in the FSP if they were asked again today. Only two non-participating LAs interviewed as part of these case studies have since chosen to join the FSP: one participated in a telephone interview whilst the other stated that its participation in interviews would not be relevant now that they had joined the FSP.

Table A4.4 highlights the reactions from the public, elected local authority members and other public sector organisations towards LAs' decisions not to participate in the FSP.

Table A4.4: Reactions to the decision not to participate

By the public...

- Limited complaints with the majority of complaints received relating to the FSP for those aged 60 and over *"There have been a few complaints from the public although council officers have explained the rationale of the decision to them. A handful of these complaints were regarded as vociferous."*
- Some LAs explained their decision not to participate in the local media to prevent complaints *"The council made a media push to head off any negative publicity. The PR involved highlighting the concessionary programmes that the council had already in place."*
- One council was prepared for a greater reaction to its decision *"The authority had expected more of a reaction to our decision and had prepared Q&A sheets for receptionists at the leisure centre in the event that members of the public asked questions about it – but these were rarely used."*

By elected members...

- The majority of LAs experienced little opposition and few complaints from their members. Most were supportive due to the finance implications, and were involved in the decision-making process from the outset.
- Some local authority members were disappointed that the FSP did not target those communities most in need within their area instead of solely those 16 and under and 60 and over.

By other public sector organisations...

- Several LAs discussed the FSP with their local PCTs to seek additional funding. Most PCTs were unable to justify spending large amounts on swimming, however, in one particular authority the PCT wanted to join the FSP (and was willing to provide some funding) but the local authority did not.
- One authority approached its local housing association as its PCT was unable to commit funding. *"As we could not show that the FSP was specifically targeting their residents in areas of deprivation, the housing association could not link the Programme to their objectives and, therefore, could not access any funding."*

Source: Interviews with non-participating local authorities

Swimming uptake and participation

In terms of the level of uptake/participation in swimming in the non-participating LAs there has been a mixed experience since the introduction of the FSP across England in April 2009. The same number of LAs had experienced an overall increase in usage (for both those aged 16 and under and those aged 60 and over) as those which had experienced a decrease in usage. A number of LAs also indicated that their level of usage had remained the same.

Within other groups, such as men and women and BME communities, non-participating authorities were not aware of any noticeable change in uptake/participation rates as this information was not typically recorded.

A number of comments made by interviewees can be seen in Table A4.5

Table A4.5: Impact of decision on swimming participation

Those experiencing an increase in uptake/participation

"The leisure provider have told the LA that membership is "flying out the door". They are currently looking into why that is. One of their thoughts is that it may be because people are switching away from expensive leisure activities i.e. they are no longer joining "David Lloyd style health and fitness clubs" and are using their cheaper LA pool instead." (Interview with non-participating LA)

Those experiencing a decrease in uptake/participation

"Overall participation rates have dropped off and this is felt to be because residents are using neighbouring authority's pools to avail of the free swimming." (Interview with non-participating LA)

Those experiencing no noticeable change in uptake/participation

"The level of swimming is holding up pretty well – there hasn't been a noticeable change in participants." (Interview with non-participating LA)

Source: Interviews with non-participating local authorities

Expected difference in participation if the FSP was on offer

The non-participating LAs were asked if they thought that the level of swimming participation would have been different if they had chosen to participate in the FSP. The majority stated that offering the FSP within their local authority would have increased participation: however, they also felt that it would have led to problems such as increased cost due to higher demand and a decrease in paying adult customers

as the pools would become too busy. The remainder felt that their level of swimming participation would have stayed the same, and none thought that swimming participation would have decreased.

"Participation would have increased – it potentially would have really benefitted the area – but it was prohibitively expensive to do so." (Interview with non-participating LA)

"The level of participation would have increased in those aged 16 and under and 60 and overs but there would probably be a reduction in swimmers in the middle i.e. adults (aged 17 to 59)." (Interview with non-participating LA)

Other work undertaken to encourage participation in swimming

The majority of non-participating LAs provided evidence that they had undertaken initiatives to increase participation in swimming whilst the Programme was in operation. Notably, some of these initiatives were long running and pre-dated the introduction of the FSP including:

- Discounted rates;
- Free swimming (e.g. for 16 and under only);
- Membership/leisure schemes;
- Partnerships with other organisations (e.g. libraries/theatres); and
- Provision of free swimming lessons.

Table A4.6 highlights the work that non-participating LAs were undertaking to increase participation in swimming in their LA.

Table A4.6: Work undertaken to increase swimming participation/uptake

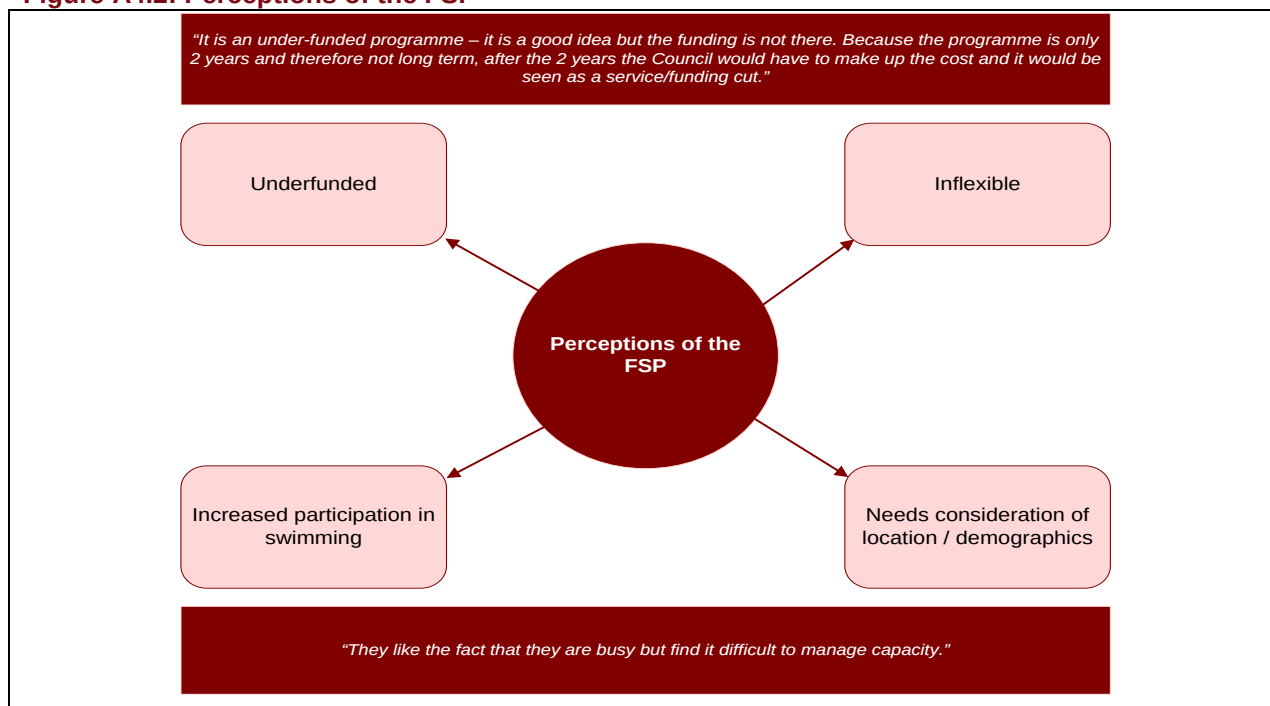
Removing cost barriers	Removing the barrier of not being able to swim	Encouraging swimming more often	Improving quality
Discounted swims/lessons for carers, disabled, cared for people, older people and 16s and under.	Swimming lessons/learn to swim programmes for all age groups.	Promotional work with schools, libraries and theatres e.g. five visits to a theatre/library results in a free swim.	Upgrading/maintaining current facilities e.g. changing rooms/showers/toilets.
	Working in partnership with local swimming clubs.	Fun days/events with hard to reach groups e.g. Mothers & Toddlers sessions.	Investment in new centres.

Source: Interviews with non-participating local authorities

Perceptions of the Free Swimming Programme

Based on what the non-participating authorities had seen or heard about the FSP from elsewhere, a number of perceptions were noted. One perception was that participating LAs had not been able to cover their increased costs (through increased demand) with the grant provided from the DCMS. There was also a perception that the FSP has increased participation/uptake in swimming although it had led to a number of issues such as increased costs (e.g. staffing, maintenance, cleaning) and difficulties in managing capacity.

Figure A4.2: Perceptions of the FSP

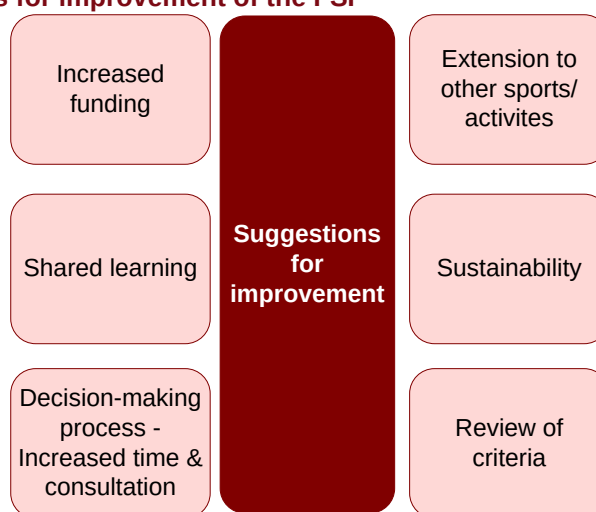


Source: Interviews with non-participating local authorities

Suggestions for improvement

There were a number of suggestions as to how the FSP could be improved to encourage uptake by more LAs. These are summarised in Figure A4.3 and discussed in more detail below.

Figure A4.3: Suggestions for improvement of the FSP



Source: Interviews with non-participating local authorities

The majority of non-participating LAs stated that there should be increased funding on offer so that it would more closely align with the costs expected to be incurred through participating in the FSP. In addition, it was suggested that an equivalent scheme should be rolled out for other sports/activities available since this could encourage people who are more comfortable with other activities to participate in physical activity: it was felt that some individuals had a fear or were self-conscious when it came to swimming and these factors deterred them.

"There needs to be dialogue with all local authorities on the cost of the Programme and to discuss if swimming is the right sport to promote." (Interview with non-participating LA)

It was also suggested that clarity on how the FSP should or will be sustained would provide LAs with

greater confidence to participate in the FSP. In addition, a number of LAs felt that there should have been more consultation at the outset between each local authority and DCMS, including greater clarity about the form of the FSP (such as the availability and scale of capital grants and funding for free swimming lessons). It was also suggested that the FSP should have been more flexible. Some LAs wanted to be able to offer the FSP to those aged 16 and under without offering it to those aged 60 and over. Others wanted to focus the FSP on particular deprived groups within the LA. Other considerations were:

- **Seasonality:** some coastal authorities did not participate as they would have experienced an influx of non-residents during holiday periods and the funding did not take seasonal factors into account;
- **Target groups:** target groups which would benefit most from free swimming provision (e.g. areas of deprivation); and
- **Flexibility:** it was suggested that the FSP currently adapts a 'one size fits all' approach, whereas a more flexible approach (e.g. by allowing free swimming in selected sessions) would encourage greater uptake across LAs.

"We would like local authorities to be able to tailor the Programme to meet the needs of their community as one size does not fit all and they know best about the needs of the area. I do not see the point of having existing swimmers being able to swim for free. Additional grant would also be helpful." (Interview with non-participating LA)

Several LAs suggested that more notice should have been given of the need to decide whether or not to participate in the FSP. Some LAs felt that the deadline for deciding whether to participate or not was too tight.

"...Increase the deadline for decision making – The Council first became aware of the Programme in July and had to make a decision on it by 1st September. Given the summer holidays this was a very short period in which to make a decision on whether to participate – as a result local authorities will decide just not to go for it." (Interview with non-participating LA)

An element of shared learning from other similar programmes that have been offered in Wales (16 and under and 60 and over) should be explored in terms of lessons that could be learned moving forward. It was felt that the experiences of similar schemes could help resolve problems experienced within the FSP. One such lesson included the need to ensure that monitoring and evaluation processes are set up from the outset and were simplified as far as possible.

Conclusions and lessons learned

A key objective of this evaluation is to consider *"what works, how, in what context and for whom?"* The interviews with the non-participating LAs have allowed us to examine the FSP in its first six months from the perspective of these authorities, particularly in terms of their reasons for non-participation and the implications of this. The key conclusions from the interviews with non-participating LAs are as follows:

Awareness of the FSP

- All non-participating LAs had a good level of awareness of the free swimming aspect of the FSP, but fewer were aware of the availability of capital grants and free swimming lessons at the time when they were making a decision whether or not to participate; and
- The timing of the decision making process was difficult and was affected by non-availability of key staff over the summer holiday period.

The decision making process

- On the whole, a range of staff were involved in the decision not to participate in the FSP. The financial impact tended to be the key factor in this decision; and
- Many non-participating LAs would have preferred an approach whereby grant funding was based on a targeted approach or on swimming pool usage figures. They would have been willing to participate if the requirements of the FSP could have been tailored further to suit local circumstances (e.g. being able to offer the FSP to those aged 16 and under only or to specific populations from deprived areas within the LA).

Impact of the decision

- Most authorities had experienced little adverse reaction to their decision not to participate, although

some had proactively approached this by providing information on their non-participation via question and answer sheets for local residents and articles in the local media.

Swimming uptake and participation

- Across the 18 non-participating LAs, there had been no change on the whole in overall levels of swimming participation, although all felt that uptake would have increased had they participated in one or both elements of the FSP; and
- All non-participating LAs had other incentives in place to encourage swimming participation, although these were available both before and since the introduction of the FSP.

Perceptions of the FSP

- The main perceptions held by non-participating LAs with regards to the FSP tended to be positive in terms of increasing participation and less positive in relation to financial issues experienced by participating LAs (in terms of a shortfall between the grant funding received and lost income) and also difficulties in managing capacity (particularly amongst 16s and under).

Suggestions for improvement of the FSP

- Four main suggestions for improvement were put forward by non-participating LAs. These were to increase the amount of grant funding available (and the period for which this would be available), or to revise the criteria for participation (for example, by allowing free swimming during off peak sessions only). They also wished to hear about where the FSP had been successful in other areas. They wanted the FSP to be expanded to include other sports or activities. Finally, they would have liked more guidance to be available on how the FSP would be sustained in the longer term so that expectations could be managed.

Annex 5: Case study evidence - participating local authorities

This Annex summarises the two waves of case studies which we have undertaken as part of preparing the Year 1 report.

First wave of case studies

Two themes were explored during the first wave of 12 case studies: the financial implications of the FSP and how LAs have promoted awareness of the Programme.

A representative cross-section of LAs were invited to participate in the case study visits, ensuring a range in terms of levels of deprivation and population density, type of LA, regional representation, offer type and number of free swims per capita. The case studies which were selected based on these criteria are shown in the table below.

Table A5.1: LAs which participated in case studies (Autumn 2009)

Local authority	Deprivation tercile	Population tercile	Type of LA	Offer	Region	Uptake per '000 ¹² persons aged 60 and above
Birmingham	Lower	Upper	Metropolitan district	Both	West Midlands	748.6
Chorley	Middle	Middle	Non-metropolitan Authority	Both	North West	1,196.1
Corby	Lower	Middle	Non-metropolitan Authority	Both	East Midlands	1,007.3
Gloucester	Middle	Upper	Non-metropolitan Authority	Both	South West	792.8
Guildford	Upper	Middle	Non-metropolitan Authority	60+	South East	376.2
Lambeth	Lower	Upper	London Borough	Both	London	1,150.8
Malvern Hills	Upper	Lower	Non-metropolitan Authority	60+	West Midlands	910.7
Mid Suffolk	Upper	Lower	Non-metropolitan Authority	Both	East	1,141.2
Northumberland	Middle	Lower	Unitary Authority	60+	North East	770.6
Nottingham	Lower	Upper	Unitary Authority	Both	East Midlands	797.0
Selby	Upper	Lower	Non-metropolitan Authority	60+	Yorkshire	386.0
Warrington	Middle	Middle	Unitary Authority	Both	North West	636.7

Source: PwC analysis

¹² Figures are based on monitoring data (uptake) and 2008 mid year population estimates for each target group.

Findings

The findings from this wave of case studies are presented below.

Outcomes

Systems in place to monitor outcomes

Almost all of the LAs we visited in the first round of case study visits, used some form of electronic card system to collect and monitor the uptake of free swimming. Most of the LAs were using their current membership card system and those eligible for free swimming could register to receive a swipe card. However, Warrington and Gloucester Borough Councils issued a specific free swimming card to eligible customers. Both LAs felt that this would provide a better system to monitor the number of free swimmers taking part in the FSP for their own internal monitoring purposes so that uptake of swimming year on year could be considered. It also provides a mechanism to control behaviour as cards could be withdrawn from disruptive swimmers.

"Swimmers know that if they are disruptive in the pool, they could have their free swimming card withdrawn – preventing them from swimming for free again". (Interview with participating LA)

The application form that applicants completed to obtain a free swimming card in Gloucester contained specific questions which allowed the Leisure Trust (operator) in the local authority to gather information about this group of swimmers. Questions asked included, had they swum before, how often did they go swimming etc.

Selby monitored its free swimming programme without use of electronic cards arguing that:

"Many surrounding leisure centres are providing application forms to apply for a 'free swim' card, however, applications forms for use of free swimming at this Leisure Centre are not required. Photographic ID is required to monitor eligibility for free swimming (i.e. to prove that the swimmer is aged 60 and over) for every visit, which could include a bus pass or drivers licence." (Interview with participating LA)

Expected outcomes

Within each case study visit we asked LAs what outcomes they expected as a result of taking part in the FSP. The most common responses are shown below:

An increase in usage in the target groups

All participating LAs assumed that the FSP would result in an increase in usage by both 16 and under and 60 and over groups.

"GLL (leisure trust) estimated that usage would increase by 15%." (Interview with participating LA)

"The Council expected to see an increase in the number of children accessing the swimming pools in the local authority." (Interview with participating LA)

Although an increase in usage was the overarching expected outcome, this was not the only outcome anticipated. A number of other outcomes were expected including:

A decrease in adult usage

While Nottingham Council expected to see an increase in the number of children accessing their swimming pools, they also expected to see a general decrease in the number of adults using their pools due to pools getting too busy. This was then expected to decrease the level of fees generated from this age group.

Healthier communities

Birmingham hoped that by 2011 it would be able to increase participation in sport by 3% (as measured by numbers accessing activities in the Council's leisure centres) and, therefore, ensure that 17% of adults are doing enough exercise on a weekly basis. In addition, Nottingham believed that participation in the FSP would see *"more people, more active, more often"*.

Increased costs

The majority of the LAs (nine) anticipated an increase in costs as a result of taking part in the FSP. Some

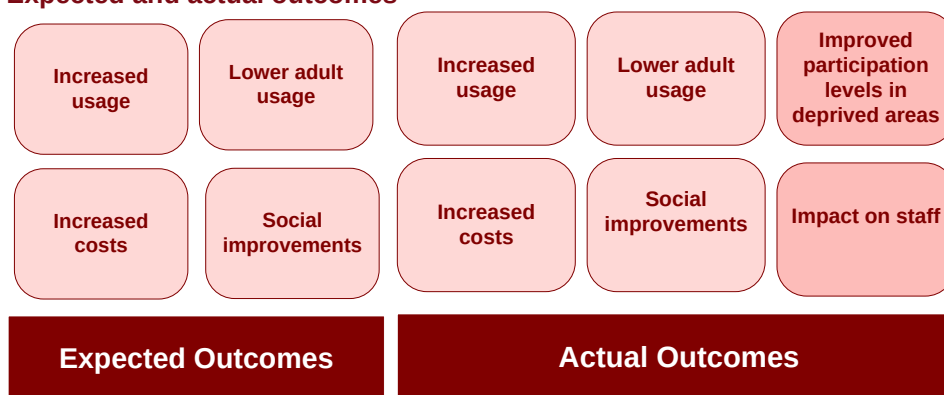
estimated that they would need more lifeguards if there were more people swimming and more chemicals if the pools were busier. Some were also concerned that they would face increased security costs if their leisure centres started to attract more youths. The statement below from the Aspire Trust in Gloucester illustrates this.

"The Trust looked at the cost of participating. Our calculations showed that we could absorb the cost of running the Programme for the 60 and overs but it would cost £54,000 for the first year of the Programme if we included 16 and unders. The £54,000 relates to the loss in revenue from the 16 and unders and the extra expenditure that would be required as a result of attracting greater numbers of swimmers for example, increased lifeguards, chemicals for the pool etc." (Interview with participating LA)

Actual outcomes

The outcomes that were actually achieved mirrored the outcomes that were expected prior to the FSP commencing. This is shown in the diagram below and discussed further in the paragraphs that follow.

Figure A5.1: Expected and actual outcomes



An increase in usage in the target groups

The table below shows participation levels in Q1 and Q2 in the twelve local authority areas that we visited. Whilst it would be useful to consider the impact of the FSP in each of these LA areas by analysing participation data prior to the FSP commencing, this is unfortunately not possible, as analysis of the APS at LA level is difficult due to small numbers of respondents in each area and few operators or LAs kept details of participation numbers in this way prior to free swimming becoming available.

Table A5.2: Actual outcomes¹³

Local authority	Free Swimming Monitoring Data			
	Q1		Q2	
	16 and under	60 and over	16 and under	60 and over
Birmingham	90,318	33,679	115,937	40,105
Chorley	14,295	7,992	21,191	7,494
Corby	1,630	995	22,100	2,793
Gloucester *	629	3,983	17,415	5,308
Guildford	Not applicable	1,860	Not applicable	3,813
Lambeth	2,494	4,990	5,702	16,614
Malvern Hills	Not applicable	1,225	Not applicable	3,529
Mid Suffolk	10,041	5,044	15,465	5,426
Northumberland	Not applicable	15,936	Not applicable	18,961
Nottingham	16,723	9,238	18,199	10,023
Selby	Not applicable	1,604	Not applicable	2,022
Warrington	19,127	7,177	30,764	7,287

* Asterisk denotes that the local authority joined the 16 and under element of the Programme late.

¹³ Given the seasonal nature of swimming participation, comparison of the change in the number of swims within each LA area would be more meaningful between data for April and October 2009 with that from the same period in 2008. However, none of the LAs interviewed provided data for swimming participation rates in 2008 and therefore it is difficult to make comparisons in this way.

Source: Free Swimming Programme monitoring data

All eight LAs which offered the FSP to the 16 and under group experienced an increase in usage, some by a considerable margin for example, Gloucester (where in particular this authority was late to join the scheme for 16 and under).

Of those that offered free swimming to both groups, all but one local authority stated that they had experienced an increase in both groups. Chorley experienced a slight decrease from 7,992 in Q1 to 7,494 in Q2 in the number of those aged 60 and over who were swimming.

For those that offered free swimming to those aged 60 and over only, they too have experienced an increase in participation rates. In some cases the increase in uptake has been substantial. For instance, in Guildford, the number of free swims more than doubled from Q1 to Q2 (1,860 free swims to 3,813 free swims), and in Malvern Hills participation by the 60 and overs has increased by 188% between Q1 and Q2. However, the change in uptake in Northumberland and Selby has been less significant.

Some LAs had experienced a decrease in the number of adult swims (aged 17-59). However as LAs are not required to monitor usage amongst this age group (as they are not included within the target groups for the FSP) this is difficult to demonstrate via data. However, for example Chorley stated that it has experienced:

"A decrease in our regular paying customers when the Programme commenced. This was because the pool is too busy as free swimming was being offered at all pool opening times." (Interview with participating LA)

All LAs found that their leisure centres are busier as a result of taking part in the FSP with the majority of centres being able to cope with this increase in demand by organising their swimming programmes carefully and ensuring that capacity was not exceeded.

Increase in swimmers from deprived areas

Some LAs experienced an increase in non-swimmers from deprived areas within the authority. Within Gloucester, for example, the FSP has:

"Successfully reached some of the city's most deprived areas with 64% of eligible 16 and unders in the Westgate ward registering to swim" (Interview with participating LA)

Mid Suffolk also found that many children were coming into the centre from deprived areas. Birmingham has targeted a number of BME communities and areas of deprivation (through targeted outreach by the FSP co-ordinator) and, although not quantifiable, managers within the LA felt that this approach has had some degree of success in terms of uptake, with leisure centre managers noting an increase in participation amongst some ethnic groups.

Malvern Hills has also been targeting its programmes, including the FSP at its most deprived areas. The Pickersley ward is one of the top 10% most deprived wards in England. The Leisure Provider at Malvern Hills, MHDC, is working with the Local Strategic Partnership in Pickersley and it is drafting a regeneration plan which has associated funding allocated for the area over a five year period. They may do some specific work with those aged 60 and over there, in terms of providing targeted outreach initiatives such as including bus transport for this age group once a week to encourage further uptake of free swimming.

Impact on staff

Almost all LAs felt that the FSP had impacted their staff during the launch period. However, most stated that since the initial launch, the burden on staff has decreased substantially and staff are now coping well with the increased numbers of swimmers. However, some LAs felt that the FSP is still negatively impacting their staff and has led to an unanticipated increase in costs.

"Over the summer period, the Free Swimming Programme was a nightmare. The Council received a number of complaints from staff due to stress and a number of Council staff were drafted in to help cope with the level of demand associated with the opening of the pool and the Free Swimming Programme." (Interview with participating LA)

"There has been a noted increase in the number of adults swimming as it is now free for them to take their children along, however, the increase has meant increased costs of £12,000 in terms of staffing." (Interview with participating LA)

In some areas, the FSP has actually had a positive impact on staff. In Gloucester, the Trust has noticed that staff sickness has fallen and they felt that staff have really got behind the Programme. Busier, livelier leisure centre have improved staff morale. Mid Suffolk felt that the FSP had a negative impact on receptionists during the Programme launch (they required receptionists to process registration cards). However, now that most people have a card, the FSP is seen as less burdensome on staff and additional shifts have not been needed.

Social outcomes

Birmingham, Northumberland and Warrington have experienced a slight increase in the levels of anti-social behaviour within their leisure centres due to the increase in numbers of 16s and under participating in the FSP. In Corby there have been negative reports about children's behaviour. It was noted, however, that there has been a positive impact in terms of reducing crime within Corby although the extent to which this can be attributed to the FSP is not clear. This was also the case in Gloucester where crime in the area fell when FSP was introduced.

Cost increases

Three LAs indicated that they have experienced an increase in costs ranging from an increase in staffing costs to an increase in chemical and cleaning costs. For example, Warrington experienced an increase of 15% in pool chemical and cleaning costs between April and October 2008 and the same period in 2009 and an increase of 8% in staffing costs. Within Nottingham representatives stated that it has experienced an increase in staffing costs as well as an increase in the cost of water treatment and maintenance costs while Chorley also cited the same reasons for increased costs.

Unanticipated outcomes

There were a range of unanticipated outcomes of participating in the FSP that were experienced by the LAs. These unanticipated outcomes are summarised in the table below.

Table A5.3: Unanticipated outcomes experienced by local authorities

Unanticipated outcomes	Local authority examples
Administration costs higher than expected	Chorley experienced higher than expected administration costs which they did not account for. For example, they did not consider the high costs of producing the free swimming cards, application forms, postage, production time and staff time to register free swimmers.
Cost for re-issuing cards higher than expected	Lambeth Council has issued their FSP registration cards for free, however, they did not expect to have to re-issue a lot of lost cards. They stated that they believe that <i>"people don't value the card because it costs them nothing."</i>
Reduction in those taking swimming lessons	Mid Suffolk experienced a fall in the retention of those aged 16 and under who were taking free swimming lessons. Before the FSP began Mid Suffolk offered free swimming during the summer to those who were taking lessons. However, with free swimming being offered all year, the number of 16s and under who previously attended lessons has fallen. Mid Suffolk are looking again at how they may re-incentivise 16s and under to take paid lessons (although had not yet considered the option of providing free swimming lessons).
Negative reports about children's behaviour	Corby Borough Council received a number of negative reports about children's behaviour that they did not anticipate. They pointed out that children become bored if they are in the water long enough, especially during traditional lane swimming sessions.

Source: Case study interviews

Case study 1: Birmingham City Council

Overview of Local Authority:

Birmingham City Council services a population of approximately one million residents. Approximately 23% of the resident population is under 16 while 19% are over 60. The city contains a high proportion of BME residents (30%) with 70% from a white background. 20% of the population have limiting long term illnesses with 40% is economically inactive.

The area has 47 leisure centre facilities with 15 of these centres providing swimming facilities. The number of free swims by those aged 60 and over increased from 11,711 in April 2009 to 11,754 in November 2009 while the number of swims by those aged 16 and under decreased from 33,764 to 17,531 in the same period.

Promotion activities and marketing awareness:

Birmingham City Council's free swimming programme is provided within the context of its wider *Be Active* programme which is funded in association with the Health and Wellbeing Partnership/Local Strategic Partnership, three PCTs and the City Council itself. The promotional activities carried out within Birmingham included:

- Distribution of leaflets to schools in the summer about free swimming and leisure (endorsed by the Head of Education at the Council);
- Street posters at leisure centres, parks and libraries: these posters carried messages about the fact that swimming is free, fun but also that it should be safe;
- The Summer Times newsletter produced by the Council each year which is delivered to all houses in the area: this had information on Be Active and the FSP;
- Four "pool parties" which were sponsored by BRMB radio: the radio station played a series of trailers in the week preceding each event advertising the party at the pool concerned and brought along its radio presenters and promotional staff; and
- Man-made "Beach" in the City Centre over the summer period - FSP and water safety was promoted during this event.

The Council had a budget of £15,000 for marketing the FSP to those aged 16 and under. It was used this to update its existing leaflets on swimming, maintain the website, distribute materials to schools, supply street posters and banners, provide prizes for swimming lessons, buy promotional time on BRMB, generate a press release for distribution, develop other corporate publications and a staff briefing.

Since those aged 60 and over were a new target group for the FSP, more marketing was undertaken for this group: children had been targeted since 2004. The marketing budget was £25,000.

Various forms of targeted marketing were used:

- Most marketing activities was carried out in the run up to the holidays and over the summer with the target being those aged 16 and under.
- Birmingham linked free swimming for those aged 60 and over into a message about health and the social aspects of swimming.
- Information about the FSP and Be Active was provided in a number of BME publications such as *Vine* magazine, particularly to promote swimming in the area.
- The Council developed t-shirts for staff to promote the FSP.

Financial impact:

- The *Be Active* scheme in the area consists of £9.3m funding from a range of stakeholders for a two year period – this includes the funding received from central Government for the FSP. The PCTs provided just under £5m in funding as they have a focus on preventative healthcare.
- All pools are owned and run by the Council. The structure of Sports and Leisure within the Council has, however, changed over time. It is an area of discretionary spend. This has had a negative impact on sports and leisure provision as some areas have poor provision and some services have been cut back due to budgetary pressures.
- The Council has been able to access capital monies through the FSP and it has found these beneficial. It is currently looking at the provision of two temporary pools and is looking to put these

into areas with no existing provision (e.g. Winley Leisure Centre).

- The Council has used its revenue funding to provide instructors and also to help cover the running costs of the Programme.

Good practice examples:

The Council has linked free swimming for those aged 60 and over into a message regarding the health and the social aspects of swimming. It held a formal launch event at Fox Hollies Leisure Centre and linked this event into an over 50s swimming group which was already in existence there. At this event, Anita Lonsborough, who was an Olympic gold medal winner in swimming in the 1960s came along, and one of the council members got in to the pool to promote swimming. In addition, a radio presenter was in attendance who could not swim; this was developed into a series in which the presenter later went on to compete in a triathlon.

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 2: Chorley Borough Council

Overview of Local Authority:

Chorley Borough Council had a population of 20,500 children aged 16 and under and 23,800 adults aged 60 and over. Chorley's population consists of predominantly 'white' people with only 2.1% BME.

Chorley Borough Council has two leisure facilities which offer free swimming to both target age groups (those aged 16 and under and those aged 60 and over). These are the All Seasons Leisure Centre and Brinscall Pool. Between April 2009 and September 2009, Chorley reported 35,486 free swims by those aged 16 and under and 15,486 by those aged 60 and over.

Promotion activities and marketing awareness:

Chorley Borough Council developed an extensive marketing plan to promote the Free Swimming Programme and spent approximately £2,000 on its campaign using the following initiatives:

- A leaflet and poster campaign using a leading image of a young girl having fun in the pool – this has become a recognised brand for the Programme;
- Local media and press releases used to give registration information to the public;
- Advertisements in 'Chorley Smile' magazine which can be accessed by all members of the public;
- Advertisements on the Council's website and social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter; and
- Advertisements at the Council's annual summer picnic and through other sports in the area.

The marketing manager feels that its campaign has been successful in increasing awareness of the Programme and has strongly influenced uptake of the FSP.

Financial impact:

Chorley Borough Council received a revenue grant of £61,486 for those aged 60 and over and £121,206 for those aged 16 and under.

The Council receives additional funding of £25,000 per year from its local PCT which allows the additional costs of the Programme to be absorbed. Without this additional funding the Council would be operating in deficit.

Chorley has experienced increased costs since joining the Programme as a result of increased pool usage. An additional £50,000 has been spent on energy, £5,000 on chemicals and £12,000 on staff. The Council has also spent £5,000 more than anticipated on application forms.

In addition to the revenue grant, Chorley Borough Council has received capital funding of £31,426. The Council has, however, spent £36,000 on repairs and maintenance (£5,000 more than anticipated). The Council has not seen any benefits in terms of increased secondary spend in the area as the pools are sub-contracted to its partners 'Active Nation' under a 15 year contract.

Good practice examples:

Chorley Borough Council participated in a programme called 'Active Generation' which targets those aged over 50 and aims to increase their sports participation. The Council mentioned that Active Generation has been very proactive in getting non-swimmers to start swimming and this, combined with the FSP, has resulted in an increase in participation amongst this group.

Other:

Chorley Borough Council has noted an increase of 65% in its swimming figures compared to the previous year since the FSP was launched. 14% of its swimmers have come from outside the Chorley local authority area (i.e. they have travelled from the surrounding LA areas) which was not previously accounted for by the Council when it was planning the scheme.

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 3: Corby Borough Council

Overview of Local Authority:

Corby Borough Council has a population of 55,000 of which 28% is under 16 and 19% is over 60. Corby's population consists of predominantly 'white' people with only 1.7% from BME groups. Corby is well located with an excellent road network and is only an hour's drive from four international airports.

The Council has two leisure centre facilities of which one - Corby International Swimming Pool - offers free swimming for both target age groups (i.e. those aged 16 and under and those aged 60 and over). It was recently built at a cost of £20 million and opened in July 2009. Corby is one of only eighteen local authorities in England which boasts a 50 metre pool. From April 2009 through to September 2009, Corby recorded 23,730 free swims by those aged 16 and under and 3,788 by those aged 60 and over.

Promotion activities and marketing awareness:

Corby Borough Council does not have a formal marketing plan and did not specify a formal budget for marketing the FSP. It has, however, have promoted the Programme through the following initiatives:

- A series of local press campaigns (e.g. Corby Evening Telegraph);
- Information provided in brochures and leaflets at Council Facilities such as the Lodge Park fitness centre and the One Stop Shop;
- Circulating information to schools and to the general public;
- A high profile opening of the new swimming pool by Olympic medallist, Mark Foster who undertook a timed swim at the facility; and
- Staff members informally advertise to clients, particularly their direct debit customers.

Financial impact:

Corby Borough Council received a grant of £50,300 for the FSP, however, this was spent within the first six months. Corby will, therefore, be running the Programme at a deficit for the remaining six months of the financial year. It is estimated that Corby could have raised £59,000 in foregone revenue between April and October 2009.

Corby Borough Council owns the swimming pool and operates it itself. The FSP has increased pressure on council staff and created the need for additional support throughout the summer. This was not budgeted for and, therefore, caused additional finance problems for the Council. In addition, Corby's new pool received £372,000 in capital funding in the form of grant funding from CIF, ASA, Sport England, the FSP and the Department of Health.

Good practice examples:

Corby Borough Council is a member of the Sports Facilities Access Group which operates across all five Borough Councils in Northamptonshire. The Groups meets to discuss common issues and to share good practice. For example, since joining the FSP, Northampton Council has reported issues with anti-social behaviour. The Group is now working together and learning from each other to overcome issues like these.

Other:

As Corby offers one of eighteen 50 metre swimming pools in England, it hopes to promote the use of its pool for pre-Olympic training for the 2012 Games which should have a positive impact on the area.

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 4: Gloucester City Council

Overview of Local Authority:

Gloucester's population is 110,000 of which 7.5% are from BME communities. Gloucester is largely urban and covers a small geographical area of 4,050 hectares (15 square miles). The age structure of the population is similar to that of England and Wales with 32% of the population being under 25 and 15% being over 65.

Gloucester has one Leisure Centre which is called GL1. GL1 sits in the middle of the second most deprived ward in the South West.

On 1st October 2008, management of GL1 transferred to Aspire Sports & Cultural Trust which manages a range of public sector sports and leisure facilities. An independent charitable trust, its goals span a range of social targets for public sports and leisure participation.

Outcomes:

More than 10,000 people have signed up for the FSP. More than half of those who signed up for new membership cards had never used GL1 previously. The number of free swims per month by those aged 60 and over increased from 1,022 in April to 1,750 in October (an increase of 71%). The number of free swims per month by those aged 16 more than doubled from 1,922 in April 2009 to 4,026 in October 2009.

Promotion activities and marketing awareness:

The FSP is a central part of what GL1 delivers. This is evidenced in all its promotional activities. It has heavily marketed the FSP internally with the result that staff are fully behind FSP and driving its success. One of the most successful marketing initiatives was a float which was entered into the local carnival parade: 4,000 leaflets were distributed that day which led to a surge in uptake of the FSP.

Financial impact:

The FSP was expected to cost £54,000 in Year 1. The Trust obtained £46,000 from the Council: this was money that had been set aside in the event that the previous leisure centre operator folded. Given this money was no longer needed, the Trust persuaded the Council to put the money into the FSP. A small fee has also been charged to those swimming for free to cover costs associated with registration, which has generated some income for the centre.

The Trust estimates that the Programme will cost £45,000 in Year 2. It is currently trying to secure funding from its partners (e.g. the City Council, the County Council, the PCT, Age Concern) but has concerns that the funding may not be secured, thus potentially impacting on its ability to offer the scheme.

Good practice examples:

GL1 introduced a registration card for those that wanted to take part in the FSP. This gave the operator the ability to collect a lot of useful information on its users: for example, it identified who had never swum before and who was new to GL 1 Leisure Centre. These data and the statistics that can be generated from them have enabled it to monitor, improve and develop the Programme. In addition, it has provided evidence of the success of the Programme which the Trust can use when bidding for further funding from its partners.

Crucially, 42% of enrolments for the registration card were online. This reduced paperwork and alleviated administrative pressures at reception. Automated registration saved staff costs and improved customer convenience. Jacquie Douglas, the Brand Director at the Trust, has said: "Online access is particularly valuable ...many customers expect and prefer to do things this way." It also helped to alleviate queues as the burden on the front desk was reduced.

Other:

The scheme has successfully reached some of the city's most deprived areas: 64% of those aged 16 and under in the Westgate ward registered to swim. Crime in the area fell by 9% in the summer months. Although direct causality is difficult to establish, staff at GL1 felt that the Programme was a contributory factor. In addition, the Trust has noticed that staff sickness has fallen as staff have really got behind the Programme and the busier, more lively leisure centre has improved staff morale.

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 5: Guildford Borough Council

Overview of Local Authority:

Guildford has a population of approximately 130,000 people. A 40 minute train journey to London Waterloo makes Guildford an attractive option for commuters. The typical resident earns 17 per cent more than the national average.

Guildford's one local authority leisure centre - Guildford Spectrum Leisure Complex –is a national prizewinning sports centre that includes a variety of pools for leisure and for serious swimming.

Promotion activities and marketing awareness:

Guildford Borough Council has used a 'viral' marketing campaign (i.e. advertising through e-mails). The Centre's active card allows the local authority to keep track of customers and what they are doing at the complex on each visit (e.g. swimming, ice skating, gym etc). The Council uses this information to send out vouchers for money off their next visit and believes that form of marketing represents good value for money. In addition to its viral campaign, Guildford Borough Council has advertised its swimming programme in the local media and provided vouchers in the Surrey Advertiser (the local newspaper) which can be redeemed by readers for a free swim.

The local radio and the Council's websites have also been used to promote the Programme: they have received approximately 7,000 visits.

Financial impact:

The reason for offering free swimming to those aged 60 and over was because the Council expected that the revenue grant would approximately cover the foregone revenue. On this basis, it thought it would be better to offer some customers free swimming rather than none at all. It was the adverse impact on income generation that prompted the decision not to participate in free swimming for those aged 16 and under.

Guildford Borough Council has approximately 300,000 junior swims per year; however, the revenue grant offered was only £60,000. The Council could not afford to absorb the implied shortfall in revenue – the leisure centre is usually a revenue earner for the Council, but with increased competition in the leisure market, the closure of the ice rink for 13 weeks, cuts in its budget and the prospect of a £400,000 deficit (as opposed to the usual surplus of £1 million), the Centre was not prepared to fund the cost of providing free swimming for young people.

Overall rating of the project and suggestions for improvement:

The Council rated the FSP at 6½ out of 10: it would have been more positive if the revenue grant had been based on pool usage rather than population. The Council also suggested that the Government would have been better advised to subsidise transport to and from swimming pools and to offer free swimming to schools during school time. It also observed that there had been a recent decline in the number of schools offering swimming to their pupils as part of the curriculum. The Council suggested that this is because it is too expensive for schools to bring children swimming and they, therefore, could not afford to offer it.

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 6: London Borough of Lambeth

Overview of Local Authority:

The London Borough of Lambeth is one of a ring of fourteen LAs which constitute Inner London. Lambeth is one of the most densely populated Inner London boroughs and has a population of around 270,000.

In 2007, the London Borough of Lambeth entered into a 15 year partnership with GLL to manage all the council's leisure centres in Lambeth. The partnership has a strong focus on increasing participation and the leisure centres have attendance targets that they have to meet.

GLL operates indoor pools in Clapham Leisure Centre, Brixton Leisure Centre and, until recently, Streatham Leisure Centre. Streatham Leisure Centre was closed after investigations by structural engineers raised concerns about the condition of the building. The Wetside Changing Rooms and Health Suite at Brixton were closed for refurbishment from 18th January until 15th March 2010.

Promotion activities and marketing awareness:

The following activities were undertaken by Lambeth to promote the FSP:

- 10,000 application forms were sent out to all schools in the borough;
- Banners advertising the Free Swimming Programme were installed in leisure centres and libraries across the Borough;
- Advertisements were placed in Lambeth Customer Service Centres;
- On line applications were enabled for those aged 16 and under using GLL's website;
- The FSP was advertised through Lambeth's website;
- Two 'Family Free Swimming Weeks' where parents could swim with their children for free provided the child had a free swimming card;
- An article appeared in Lambeth Life which is delivered free every fortnight to 136,000 homes;
- Application forms were placed in all Leisure Centres;
- Press releases were issued to the South London Press and Streatham Guardian;
- The FSP was advertised and promoted by GLL staff at the Lambeth Country Fare and at Lambeth Active Sports open day;
- A Free Swimming lessons programme was implemented in September for those age 60 and over to encourage non-swimmers and swimmers who have not swam for a period of time: specific strategies were used to target the marketing to that group (i.e. contacting the local derby group).

The Council used a "soft launch" marketing approach to avoid an influx of people in the first few weeks that they could not handle.

The Council still has people signing up for the FSP and continues to promote the Programme through the leaflets/banners. It has produced promotional literature in large print, Braille, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Bengali, Twi and Yorbu so that all members of the community can access the Programme.

Financial impact:

The pools in the area already offered free swimming to those aged 60 and over. The grant for the FSP has covered the shortfall in revenue from swimming and providing swimming lessons. In addition, the Council received £450,000 of capital expenditure for Brixton Leisure Centre.

Good practice examples:

The key success factors to this programme have been:

- Extensive marketing; and

Effective programming of the pool to maximise participation.

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 7: Malvern Hills District Council

Overview of Local Authority:

Malvern Hills District Council serves a population of approximately 75,000, of which 14,400 are aged 16 and under and 22,800 are aged 60 and over. Malvern Hill's total BME population is 5.9%.

The Council has two leisure centres offering free swimming only to those aged 60 and over – Malvern Splash Leisure Complex, which provides for 37,000 people, and Tenbury Swimming Pool, which provides for 3,500 people. Over the course of the first 12 months of the FSP, this local authority has provided 20,763 free swims.

Promotion activities and marketing awareness:

Malvern Hills District Council has used the same marketing approach since April 2009 which has been delivered through the Head Office of its contractor, SLM. While this has not been a massive effort, it has used a number of different initiatives:

- It has highlighted free swimming in the local press (e.g. Malvern Gazette and Worcester Evening News);
- It has advertised on local radio throughout the county and raised awareness with local elected members;
- It has used targeted e-mails through the PCT Health Improvement team to older people in groups such as Age Concern;
- It has used the Centres' bi-annual newsletters to all of their members;
- It has sent marketing posters and leaflets to participating centres and local sites such as libraries and schools: Malvern Splash pool received 5,000 A5 flyers and 100 A4/A3 posters and Tenbury pool received 2,000 A5 flyers and 50 A4/A3 posters; and
- It has advertised on the Council's website giving people the option to register online.

The Council believes that its marketing approach has increased free swimming: the number of free swims has been increasing each month. The Council is considering updating its plan after the first year.

Financial impact:

Malvern Hills District Council received a revenue grant of £29,700 for both swimming pools; this compares with income generated from those aged 60 and over of approximately £43,500. Malvern decided to fund the gap itself as it felt it would be unfair to offer free swimming in only one pool. Malvern Hills Council's contractor, SLM, agreed to provide free swimming if it received the full grant for the Malvern Splash pool. Over and above this, SLM agreed to absorb any other losses. The approach was the same at Tenbury where the £8,500 grant was passed to SLM on the basis that any additional costs would be absorbed by SLM. In terms of those aged 16 and under, the Council calculated that foregone revenue was £120,000 resulting in a deficit of approximately £90,000. The funding gap was viewed as too large and, therefore, Malvern decided not to offer free swimming to those aged 16 and under. As a result, the Council is unable to receive capital funding; however, it has recently spent £120,000 on the pool.

Good practice examples:

Malvern Hills District Council received Community Investment Funding for the 'Everyone Active' scheme which targets several groups such as "Inclusive" for rural and low income groups, "Count me In" for the disabled and "Walking Revolution" for others in the community. There are also initiatives for the those aged over 55. The Council has also targeted the Pickersley ward which is one of the top 10% most deprived wards in England. It is working with the LSP in Pickersley and is drafting a regeneration plan which has funding allocated for the area over a five year period. In addition, it is offering assisted swims and lessons to residents there and providing discounts for the use of its facilities. Residents in the area are also invited to a parent and toddler swim session organised by the Council.

Other:

Malvern Hills District Council offers free swimming lessons targeted at 13 to 17 year olds. It expects the uptake of lessons to increase in January and February, however, its Tenbury pool has a particularly good uptake of free swimming lessons.

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 8: Mid Suffolk District Council

Overview of Local Authority:

The Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre in Stowmarket and Stradbroke Swimming Pool are currently operated by SLM working in partnership with MSDC. The council area has 18,500 people aged 16 and under, and 24,800 people aged 60 and over. In total, 94,541 free swims have been taken in this area over the first 12 months of the FSP.

Promotion activities and marketing awareness:

The following marketing initiatives worked well:

- The Council posts letters to all 42,000 households in the District explaining Council tax changes and agreed to send a flyer promoting the FSP along with this. This massively increased awareness of FSP.
- Leaflets about free swimming lessons for those aged 60 and over were distributed during the bowling season. Many people who played bowling subsequently took up the free swimming lessons.
- The 16 and under element of the FSP was successfully launched over the Easter holidays which was seen as a good time to do it.
- The FSP was also advertised through other media (e.g. newspapers, radio and website).

Financial impact:

The leisure centre operator – SLM - estimated that it would cost £8,000 more than the grant offered to provide free swimming to those aged 16 and under. The cost of the 60 and over element was expected to be covered almost entirely by the grant. The operator and the Council agreed to jointly fund the deficit. Initial expectations of the cost of the FSP have proved to be reasonably accurate: the FSP has not cost any more than expected, nor has it brought any more revenue from secondary spend than was expected.

Outcomes:

Out of the six nearby LAs that also participate in the FSP, Mid Suffolk attracted the greatest number of participants in the first six weeks of the Programme. Participation has particularly increased in the Under 16 category. Many children come to the Centre from deprived areas.

The FSP is seen as having reduced the take up of swimming lessons as children that took swimming lessons have switched to free swims in the pool.

Overall view on FSP/suggestions for improvement:

Overall, both the Council and SLM felt that the FSP was a good idea and there was adequate funding for their area. The Council did question whether it might have been better to have means tested free swimming for those aged 60 and over. The Leisure Centre suggested that instead of offering free swimming lessons, the Government should subsidised a range of sports for those aged 16 and under to get them interested in sport and involved from an early age.

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 9: Northumberland County Council

Overview of Local Authority:

Northumberland County Council serves a population of approximately 310,600 of which about 24% are under 19 and 23% are over 60. Northumberland's total BME population is only 5.8%.

The Council operates nine leisure centres which offer free swimming only to those aged over 60. A number of the leisure centres have, however, been earmarked for potential closure. Since joining the FSP, the number of people swimming has increased from July and, in particular, the Council has noticed an increase in the number of new swimmers aged 60 and over. The number of free swims reported by the Council between April and September 2009 was 34,627.

Promotion activities and marketing awareness:

The Council has not used an extensive marketing campaign and the majority of its marketing has come off the back of the launch information generated by central government. In particular, the Council has displayed posters internally and has had some local press coverage. The Council felt that a marketing the scheme would increase its costs and there was no incentive for this.

Financial impact:

The Council estimated that the grant they would receive through the FSP would be around £181,000 less than the cost of providing free swimming for those aged 16 and under based on historical usage. It was also aware that it would be likely to need an even greater amount than this to effectively "police" the Programme if it was open to those aged 16 and under. The Council felt that it could not make up this amount of foregone revenue, whereas the grant for those aged 60 and over was approximately equal to the level of lost revenue. As a result, the Council could not access capital grants. The Council has a mixed operating model in terms of ownership; however, this did not affect its decision not to participate in the 16 and under category.

Good practice examples:

The Council operates an 'Exercise on Referral' scheme and 'Fitness Works' scheme which has been doing exceptionally well. It is seen as a demonstration of best practice in the areas of health and employability.

Other:

The Council felt that demand for swimming has increased year on year, particularly with free swimming, however it has noticed some displacement of junior swims from the Northumberland area across into border areas which are offering free swimming. Its income from juniors has decreased.

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 10: Nottingham City Council

Overview of Local Authority:

Nottingham City Council has a population of over 250,000 of which 20% are aged 16 and under and 18% are 60 and over. Free swimming is offered to both target age groups: those aged 16 and under and those aged 60 and over. The number of free swims provided for those aged 60 and over and those aged 16 and under was 92,578 over the first 12 months of the FSP.

There are currently ten local authority maintained leisure centres in Nottingham of which eight offer swimming facilities, while a new state of the art facility is due to be opened in April 2010.

Promotion activities and marketing awareness:

Between January and March 2009, Nottingham City Council promoted the FSP extensively throughout the area as part of a wider "Get Fit for Free" Campaign in partnership with Nottingham City PCT, which offered free access to a number of activities including swimming for those aged 16 and under 16 and those aged 60 and over. A total of £18,000 was spent on this campaign using the following methods:

- Postcards promoting the FSP which were sent to those aged 16 and under and 60 and over;
- Five articles about the FSP in the 'Arrow' magazine in 2009, the City Council's information brochure;
- Radio, poster, and bus advertising;
- Press releases;
- The Nottingham City Council website with a specific web page dedicated to the FSP; and
- Pop up banners (installed in reception areas at each swimming pool) and external banners (installed on the external railings at each swimming pool).

As part of its 'We're on your side' campaign, the City Council offered help and support to city residents during the difficult financial times. The FSP was incorporated as part of this campaign which led to further promotion (e.g. external lamppost banners through the city centre).

Between September 2009 and March 2010, the City Council is producing a leaflet for the those aged over 50 offering free swimming and free lessons as well as other activities. There will be a total of 19 free swimming lesson courses running. The courses will target those aged 50 and over, young people aged 11 - 17 with disabilities or additional needs and ladies only. The free lessons, which are available to Nottingham City residents only, are targeted at non swimmers/beginners.

Financial impact:

In early 2008, the PCT decided to fund an offer of free swimming for those aged under 16 and over 60. The funding covered the gap between cost and revenue. Free swimming started in January 2008 (with the "Get Fit for Free" Campaign). Beyond this, the Council then joined the main FSP and used some of the additional funding available via DCMS to undertake the following activities:

- The City Council invested (£18,000) in marketing but has incurred an increase in the costs of water treatment, maintenance costs, and staff costs. The grant from central government has covered the lost income but has not covered all the costs (i.e. the increase in resources).
- The capital funding which Nottingham has received has enabled it to improve its facilities (e.g. it has bought equipment to be used by children, pool side equipment, improved changing/disabled facilities and treatment systems). This has helped encourage attendance at sessions.
- Since 2002, it has spent approximately £32 million refurbishing old facilities as well as opening new facilities and making them fit-for-purpose as part of a rejuvenation programme.

Good practice examples:

The Council ran a campaign aimed at those aged over 50 called "We're on your side". This campaign looked at ways the Council could help people in the current economic climate including through the provision of free swimming for those aged 16 and under and 60 and over. £20,000 was spent on this along with Nottingham City PCT which involved a direct mail-out to residents aged over 50 in the city, as well as bus advertising and a radio advert. It was hoped that this campaign would help the Council to achieve its objective to see "more people, more active, more often". In April 2009 there were 2,948 swims taken by those aged 60 and over compared to 3,213 in October 2009, an increase of 8%.

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 11: Selby District Council

Overview of Local Authority:

Selby District Council provides for a population of approximately 75,000 of which about 21% is 16 and under whilst 20% is 60 and over. Selby contains a small proportion of BME residents (1%) with the remaining 99% from a white background. 16% of the population has limiting long term illness and the unemployment rate is 2%.

The District has two leisure centres but only one provides swimming facilities. Free swimming is only offered to those who aged 60 and over. The number of free swims increased from 438 in April 2009 to 587 in November 2009, with a peak number of free swims in July 2009 of 728.

Promotion activities and marketing awareness:

Selby has had a limited approach to marketing the FSP. It has not conducted direct targeted marketing but has tended to use the following methods:

- In-house through the Council's website;
- Local press releases;
- Posters at Abbey Leisure Centre; and
- By word of mouth.

In order to participate in the free swimming, those aged 60 and over are only required to provide proof of age (e.g. bus pass/driving licence). They are tied in with community groups and have an "inclusion officer" in place targeting those aged 60 and over who conducts focus groups with users such as disability groups and those which are hard to reach. The Council has found several barriers that prevent those aged 60 and over from swimming such as:

- Transport for some groups especially the disabled and elderly as they cannot drive. In Selby, there are many rural villages and transport is not easy as there is not a high demand; and
- Fear of swimming – fear of the water, injury or drowning.

To address these issues Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust (which runs Selby's Leisure Centres) has put free swimming lessons in place. It is also working in partnership with Age Concern regarding travel provision for the elderly.

Financial impact:

Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust took over the running of Selby's Leisure Services in September 2009 in a ten year deal. It is improving facilities in Abbey Leisure Centre and is investing £1.1 million in upgrading facilities. This work is due to commence in January 2010 where the gym will be doubled in size, and it will have a new 'social' area which will include a bar, crèche and play area.

No extra staff have been required as costs have been matched.

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 12: Warrington Borough Council

Overview of Local Authority:

Warrington Borough Council provides for a population of approximately 190,000. Approximately 21% of their population is under 16, while 19% are over 60. The City contains a small proportion of BME residents (2%) with the remaining 98% from a white background. 18% of the population have limiting long term illness and an unemployment rate of 3%.

The area has five leisure centre facilities with four of these centres providing swimming facilities. For over 60s participating in free swimming, there has been an increase from 1,587 in April 2009 to 2,581 in October 2009, while under 16s free swims has decreased from 6,721 to 6,110 in the same period.

Promotion activities and marketing awareness:

Warrington Borough Council has adapted a mixed approach to the marketing of the Free Swimming Programme. They have undertaken a number of initiatives, whilst spending £10,000, including:

- Local newspaper advertisements - free swimming advertisements in the lead up to the FSP and during the programme;
- Full page advert in the Warrington Worldwide Magazine for six months over a year;
- School newsletters distributed within school bags for kids pre summer and in September. Within this, an application form for free swimming was given;
- Brochure stating activities that are on within the centres – FSP was promoted within this;
- Outreach events in the summer e.g. when the English half marathon was held in Warrington this summer they distributed leaflets to promote the FSP;
- Leaflets were used in Council buildings;
- One week radio advertisement campaign to 59,000 adult listeners of a local rugby league teams radio station; and
- Information re the FSP at all centres and on the LA/centre website.

They have extended the FSP to include those who are aged up to 18 and still involved in full time education and have also looked to target those in deprived areas as well as targeting schools that are located within the area through their leaflet advertisements.

Financial impact:

The pools within Warrington are funded directly by the Council with no sub-contractor involvement;

Across all leisure centres in the LA they estimate that they have lost income of £55,300 between April and November 2009;

Between April to October 2008 and April to October 2009, pool chemicals and cleaning costs increased by 15% and staffing costs increased by 8%;

The grant has not been sufficient to cover costs. They received a grant of £175,000 but will probably lose £100,000 in income over 12 months due mainly to the increase in staffing costs;

All centres have spent a total of £78,000 on staffing since April 2009 while also spending approximately £10,000 on marketing and an extra £5,000 on pool chemical costs; and

The LA provides £40,000 each year to boost their programme for summer initiatives including the provision of free swimming - this funding has continued even with the FSP.

Good practice examples:

In April 2010 the Council plan to run a “Bluetooth Proximity Marketing” campaign which will target anyone going past a Council building with access to a mobile phone. If an individual has Bluetooth enabled they can accept a text which will provide details about the FSP. This campaign is aimed specifically for the under 16 age group but will also have appeal to all Warrington residents who possess a mobile phone.

The local rugby league team (Warrington Wolves) made it into a major cup final in the summer (2009). The team have their own radio station and in the lead up to the final the LA ran a one week radio advert at the start of August to promote the FSP. The station gets approximately 59,000 adult listeners each week (30% of the population).

Source: PwC analysis

Second wave of case studies

Two different themes were explored during the second wave of case studies: the impact of CSCs and the impact of free swimming lessons.

The second wave of case studies was identified on a regional basis. Within each of the ASA's nine regions, we identified one SCSC/CSC as the focus of the case study and then invited them to identify a particular LA or pool where they had supported the delivery of free swimming lessons.

Table 5.4 sets out the areas that we explored as part of each case study. We also show the key interviewees within each case study: these people were selected because they were seen as well placed to support the gathering of information as part of case studies.

Table A5.4: Areas covered

Thematic area	Key interviewees	Key areas for discussion
The impact of CSCs (Spring 2010)	- CSC Director - Senior County Swimming Coordinators - County Swimming Coordinators - Local authority staff including Head of Leisure Services and Leisure Services staff/providers - Teaching staff in pools	- Views on the recruitment and training process. - Role and remit of the CSCs in each area including discussion of operating plans or targets which they are required to meet through their work. - What has been achieved to date and what CSCs expect to achieve in the remainder of their post. - What has worked well in terms of promoting swimming: examples of success stories in particular LAs or pools. - What has not worked so well: key issues, challenges, obstacles encountered and lessons learned.
The impact of Free Swimming Lessons (Spring 2010)	- Leisure services providers - County Swimming Coordinators - Swimming teachers - Participants	- Views on the application process for lessons, including those pots for lessons in July/August 2009 and September 2009 onwards. - How participants were attracted, including activities to market and promote these lessons. - Practical lessons from the delivery of lessons, e.g. to encourage take-up, retention and suitable outcomes in terms of swimming ability/water confidence. - Participants' experience of lessons, including propensity to continue swimming in the future.

Findings

The findings from our case study visits are presented below.

Impact of County Swimming Co-ordinators (CSCs)

Background

The ASA has a network of 49 County Swimming Co-ordinators (CSCs) across the country. Most CSCs were found to have a background in the sports industry (such as sports development officers, working in operational roles, private sector operators, or as leisure centre managers) and some had a prior interest in swimming and aquatics (many had been swimming teachers or swam competitively themselves). Some of the CSCs (particularly the SCSCs) had been working for the ASA prior to a recent restructure, working as Regional Development Officers.

CSCs stated that they had been attracted to the role predominantly because of the social outcomes associated with it. Most were keen to play a role in improving the health and well-being of those in their area. As mentioned above, some CSCs had held a passion for aquatics from a young age, and therefore were interested in the role as it provided an opportunity to promote swimming and raise its profile. Others were drawn to the position as they felt it would present a real challenge and would provide job variety. Finally, some were interested in the role as they wanted to gain public sector experience.

Recruitment and training process for CSCs

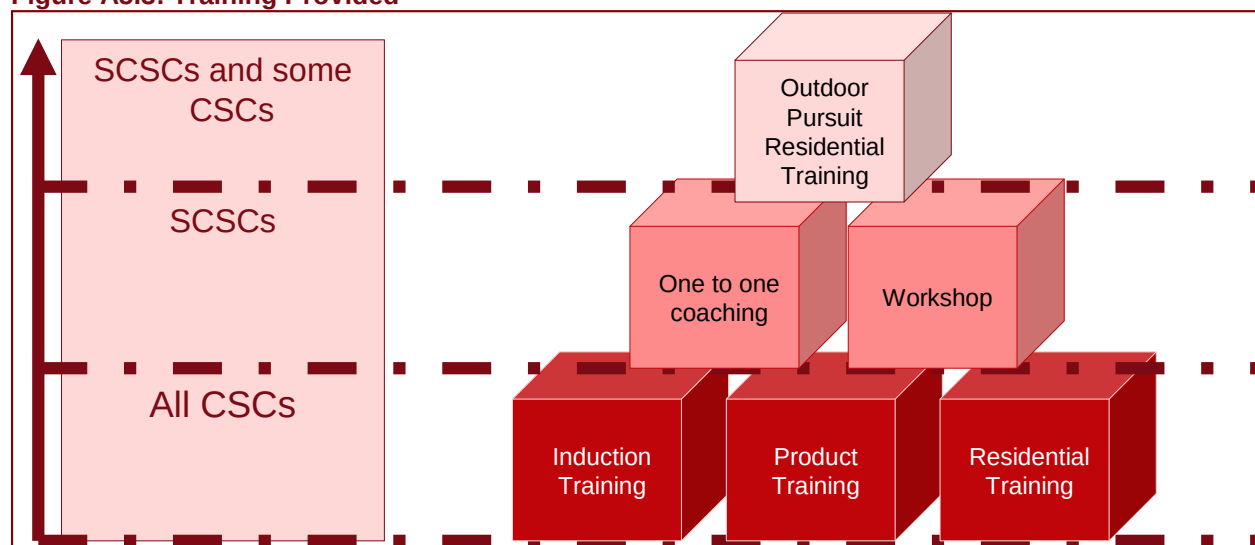
The CSCs mostly became aware of the posts via swimming magazines or via the Sport England or ASA website. On completion of an application form, candidates were shortlisted for interview. The interview

involved an unseen presentation and a number of scenario based questions, which CSCs felt were helpful in testing their persuasive skills.

For those that were currently within the ASA as Regional Development Officers, it was communicated at a conference that this role was changing. The Regional Development Officers were informed that they could apply for the roles of SCSC/ CSC. A few of CSCs felt that the process of recruiting in certain areas was too long and a swifter recruitment process would have been helpful.

Once CSCs were recruited into the role they stated that they were provided with a comprehensive training programme. The components of this programme for CSCs and SCSCs are illustrated in the diagram below and are discussed later in this section:

Figure A5.3: Training Provided



Given the variation in prior experience, the training was designed to cater for those who came to the posts without any prior experience, so that all CSCs started with the same level of knowledge. As a result, the training was very new and important to some and was more of a 'refresher' for others. Some frustrations were therefore felt by those with more prior knowledge and experience, particularly given the time spent away from base.

The SCSCs indicated that they were provided with some additional training which received positive feedback, as follows:

- Six one-to-one coaching sessions;
- A two day workshop in Bath; and
- They participated in a three day outdoor pursuit management training course in the Peak district (in addition, approximately half of the CSCs were nominated to take part in this course).

Some suggestions for improving the training on offer were put forward as follows:

- While the two day product training was adequate when they started, some CSCs felt that they would benefit from further product training now, not least because the products they are expected to deliver upon has expanded; and
- The location of training events should be considered given that some had to travel extensively to reach Loughborough. The CSCs indicated that it would be helpful to vary where the training is held, choose a more central location or use technology such as Skype, to avoid travelling long distances.

Role and remit

Whilst the CSCs are managed by the ASA, they described the main focus of their role as working with partners to promote swimming. They highlighted that they are the first point of contact for their partners within their county; therefore they are the "face" of the ASA in their area. Senior CSCs also act as CSCs within their area but have the additional responsibility of managing and mentoring a team of CSCs throughout a region.

CSCs highlighted that their roles involve undertaking work that was previously undertaken by regional development officers, education officers and business managers, and thus is wide and varied. In addition,

CSCs highlighted that due to inherent differences between regions, the role has tended to vary and develop differently, although this was accepted and appreciated by CSCs. One CSC commented:

"There is enough flexibility to make the role your own. It's has been great that the flexibility has existed to be able to change and adapt the role to your region" (Interview with CSC)

The role of the CSCs was described as being based around the delivery of a dashboard of five key targets at a national, regional and county level which are reflective of the targets of the CSC's funders (DCMS, Sport England, and the ASA). In our interviews, all of the CSCs were able to describe these targets along with their impact on their everyday work. The targets are to:

- Provide free swimming lessons;
- Grow participation;
- Enhance education/ workforce development (based on the number of people going on coaching courses);
- Learn to Swim (based on the number of awards/ badges sold); and
- Increase the number of Swim 21 club accreditations;

Some CSCs played a greater role in negotiating their own county targets based on the overall national and regional targets than others. In other areas a more formulaic approach was adopted. Many CSCs commented that the targets (and budgets) were not finalised until late into Year 1 and they found themselves 'chasing their tail' as a result. Overall, CSCs were confident that they were aware of their targets for Year 2 and most thought that they would be achieved.

"With respect to the targets around free swimming lessons there is ultimately a national target that we are all feeding into. Our targets have been based on the number of pools within the participating LAs but there has been a bit more negotiation with our senior CSC in agreeing our local targets. I don't feel like they have been given to me without any negotiation – I feel I have input into the targets and will deliver against them." (Interview with CSC)

CSCs commented that they have to work with partners to achieve targets – for example, they cannot provide free swimming lessons in themselves but need to encourage LAs/ pool operators to put the lessons on, and thus building relationships with these partners was seen as pivotal in delivering upon the range of targets set

"Some targets had proved more challenging than others, for example in one area we found that here had been no education officer in post for around six to nine months and as a result educational courses were weak within the region. Having a full team in place has helped the region meet all targets." (Interview with CSC)

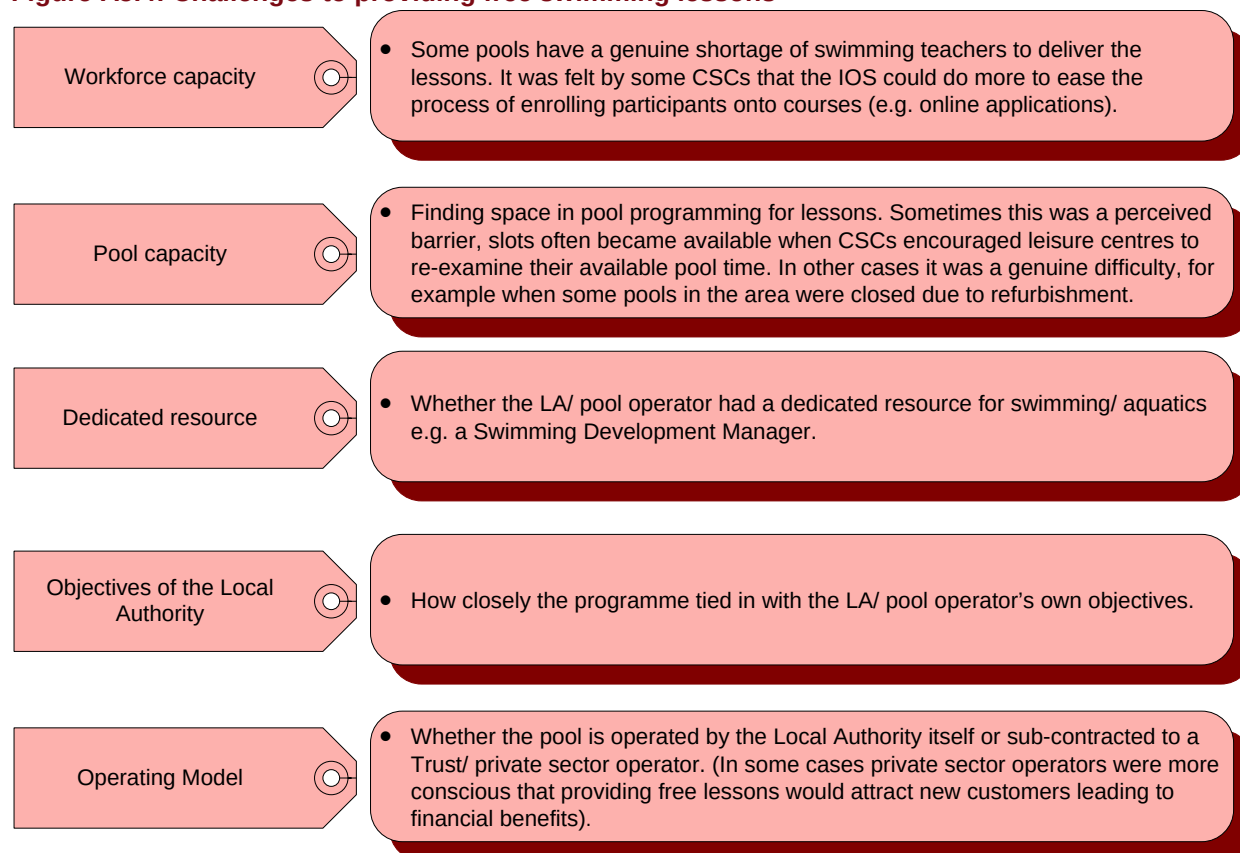
Support available and challenges

Overall, CSCs viewed that support for the Free Swimming Programme and for lessons was generally good. In some areas CSCs highlighted that the LAs had gone over and beyond what DCMS has funded. For example, the CSCs highlighted that in Durham, the local authority now provides free swimming up to the age of 18 and Gateshead provides free swimming up to the age of 17. For those LAs that didn't participate, the CSCs agreed that this was generally because the LA could not afford to (the potential loss in revenue was greater than the grant available).

With respect to free swimming lessons, whilst most areas are now providing lessons, some CSCs had expected the LAs to take up the offer quicker than they had. However the CSCs have taken steps to address slower than anticipated take up in a number of different ways. For example, some visited Chief Executive's of Councils personally, to ensure the message was clearly communicated and they have moved away from the perception of the initiative being 'small scale' by encouraging LAs to apply for funding for a bulk number of lessons, rather than making individual applications for funding for a small number of lessons.

The CSCs stated that whilst support from LAs was generally good, there was some variation even within LAs. Some factors were found to influence how receptive leisure centres were to providing free swimming lessons, as shown in Figure A5.4:

Figure A5.4: Challenges to providing free swimming lessons



In the last year CSCs explained that they had 'knocked on all doors' but for Year 2 they stated that they planned to focus more on providing opportunities for the most proactive areas. They are moving away from "pushing against closed doors" to trying to get the biggest providers of free lessons to do even more and provide further support to them to deliver.

Whilst part of the role of CSCs is to promote the Free Swimming programme, some CSCs said that they spend much more time driving free swimming lessons than working with partners on free swimming. This is perhaps because free swimming lessons were being launched at the time many CSCs were starting whereas free swimming was up and running.

Projects/Initiatives

We asked the CSCs what specific projects or initiatives they have supported in relation to free swimming/ free swimming lessons in their region and to provide examples, or any particular success stories around delivering free swimming lessons. Each region was able to share a number of success stories and good practice examples with us, and a selection of these is included in Annex 5.

Impact of CSCs

The resounding opinion from CSC and pool operators alike was that CSCs were crucial to the success of the free swimming lessons. A number of reasons were given to explain this:

- CSCs spent time encouraging the LAs to provide free lessons through investing time with them, explaining what was on offer and the benefits of taking part;
- CSCs have been able to provide wider support to LAs, over and above funding. This support has allowed the LA to ask questions, obtain ideas from them and benefit more widely from their expertise;
- CSCs were viewed as providing additional support which would not have been available to the same extent under the previous structures. One CSC explained that under the old ASA structures, one regional development officer was responsible for nearly 600 pools in their region and therefore it would not have been possible to maintain the level of personal contact and support which the CSCs have provided; and
- The CSCs stated that in their absence, while information could be circulated by email, this would not

have been as effective. This is perhaps best illustrated when we look at Coventry, as shown by the example below.

"The Programme is, in my opinion, undersold and misunderstood. This is not the case with the lessons. The difference is that the CSCs have been able to invest time in providing a clear message about the lessons." (Interview with CSC)

"The Coventry area did not have a representative CSC in their area until late last year (due to difficulty in getting a CSC appointed to that particular post). Last year, Coventry did not provide any free swimming lessons. This year the CSC has been working closely with the Coventry City Council and they have now provided over 1,000 lessons and are promoting it, along with their partners, on the web under the heading 'Splash with no cash'." (Interview with CSC)

What impacts have been achieved?

Table A5.5 summarises the impacts that most CSCs felt they had achieved.

Table A5.5: Impacts achieved

More people learning how to swim and participating in swimming	Most CSCs pointed to the increase in the uptake of swimming lessons and the general increase in participation that has occurred. This was achieved by encouraging LAs to take part and by getting them to reflect on their current pool programming (some had not re-examined their current offer for years).
Greater partnership working	CSCs encouraged LAs to join up with their key partners. In most regions there is now a Steering Committee. This normally includes the Chief executive of the LA, the Pool Operator, representatives from Sport England and the PCT. Prior to the CSCs being involved; these groups would not have come together, or at least not as frequently as they do now. This greater joined up thinking has helped to drive FSP.
Form of regulation	One interesting point made was that the CSCs "kept the LAs honest." It ensured that LAs didn't access the funding and then not put on lessons, or market them effectively. The CSCs were actively involved in encouraging their partners or promote FSP and in particular the lessons. In doing this, the whole profile of swimming has been increased.

From our discussions with the CSCs, most felt that the impact of their work would be more evident and even greater in Year 2 of the programme. This was felt to be due to the following factors:

- Partner relationships have been built and developed within Year 1;
- There is now a full team in place who understands the targets they need to reach;
- They are able to plan better what they will do; and
- They have made some changes to their approach which has already generated a commitment from LAs to provide substantially more lessons.

Conclusions, lessons learned, and future plans

Generally CSCs found that it took longer to get lessons up and running than they had expected. LAs did not get on board as quickly as they had anticipated and in most cases the approach to communicating with them had to be changed so that the benefits of participating were clearer. Once the LA was on board, CSCs found that did not necessarily translate into swimming lessons running or swimming lessons being at full capacity.

"One leisure trust last year did not deliver on four contracts which had been set up for lessons – the leisure trust has been undergoing a restructuring process. Whilst we (the CSC team) have met with this Trust, they have still not been able to deliver the results which were set for them." (Interview with CSC)

"We had supported a lot of LA bids for free swimming lessons, such as for Asian girls and Chinese older people which, although approved for funding, didn't actually get underway. In the future, it will be important to keep up the contact with the LA or a spokesperson within the target group on a regular basis." (Interview with CSC)

"The take up has not been as good as expected – mostly because the people in the centres won't take the time or haven't taken the time to promote the programme. This is frustrating as it is an opportunity that a lot of people are missing out on as a result of leisure centres lack of interest in promoting the programme." (Interview with CSC)

The CSCs felt that having worked with the partners for a year, they understood their issues better and having shared best practice stories with their colleagues, they were in a better position to know how to overcome these.

"Through working closely with one LA, I (the CSC) became aware that the policy within that Authority was that any funding they applied for over a certain level had to be signed-off by a senior member. This meant huge delays in getting the application signed off and getting the lessons up and running. Therefore we haven't pushed the LA to apply for bulk lessons and I am happy with them applying for funding for a few lessons at a time as it means the classes can be delivered without a lengthy wait." (Interview with CSC)

"We have learnt from those that have been delivering the lessons about what works best, for example, one LA pool found that it was hard to fill lessons offered to groups of 11-17 year olds. When they split the lessons so that lessons were provided to 11-14's, and 15-17's the take up was higher." (Interview with CSC)

In terms of future plans, while the CSCs plan to work across all target areas they will focus more on those areas where performance against target has been lower to date. For example, one SCSC was on track to achieve their targets around providing swimming lessons and participation; therefore they planned to focus their efforts on the other three targets in Year 2.

"We are confident we will meet our Swim21 target and the participation target, so we will place more of an emphasis on our workforce development target in the forthcoming year." (Interview with CSC)

Many CSCs plan to promote an 'industrialised' approach in the forthcoming year, as some had already realised the benefits of this approach in their region, and others had heard that this had been successful elsewhere. This involves encouraging their most proactive operators to increase the scale of the lessons they are providing, adopting a whole free swimming package rather than a few lessons. This is a significantly different approach to what they did previously, i.e. asking LAs to provide 6 hours worth of swimming lessons for 8-12 people for £250. The revised approach cuts down on administrative costs also as LAs only have to submit one application, as opposed to one application for each programme they run.

"Others need to think bigger and work with providers on a much larger scale than they do currently to make the project sustainable –in other areas, a lot of money has been spent with little thought. If 10,000 new people learn to swim in an area, this would barely have an impact on APS, and LAs and operators must be encouraged to change this." (Interview with CSC)

Private sector pool operators and Trust run leisure centres seem particularly keen on the 'industrialised' approach. For example, the operator in the Bolton area explained that now the 'pilot' is completed, they want to roll out the programme and work on a bigger scale. Given that Bolton has a population of 262,000 people and that 40%-50% cannot swim, the pool operator feels that this market is still relatively untapped and an industrial approach is required. Islington managed to get 3,500 people in swimming lessons this year by adopting the industrialised approach.

Linked to this approach, the CSCs felt that in the last year they have done a lot of work to attract hard to reach groups. The investment in time to do this was felt to be significant, and many success stories were evident, but CSCs found this approach attracts a small number of people than may be possible otherwise. While they will continue to do try and attract hard to reach groups next year, more attention will be given to running a national campaign and attracting a mass audience in order to achieve the range of targets set.

Finally, one of the key things that CSCs plan to do next year is to develop case studies of best practice within their area and share this with all other CSCs. This will help CSCs identify a few targeted initiatives that they can implement in their own area. These case studies are likely to focus on sustaining participation i.e. sign-posting those currently enrolled in lessons on to another exit routes through providing structured sessions (e.g. Aqua Jog, Aqua Circuit etc.) These 'exit routes' will offer better value for money than, for example, the former voucher scheme.

Impact of free swimming lessons

The reference case scenario

Prior to free swimming lessons being offered, the CSCs and pool operators who we spoke to indicated that most swimming pools provided swimming lessons which were taught in line with the ASA National Plan for Teaching Swimming (NPTS). Swimming lessons were generally geared towards babies (parent

and baby session) or young children and the demand for these lessons was typically high. Lessons were also provided in some LAs for adults, although the adult lessons tended to run in the late evening times, in the middle of the week. CSCs and operators characterised these lessons as low volume, high price and were generally treated as secondary to children's swimming lessons.

While in most cases lessons were expensive, discounts were offered in some areas. For example, in some pools discounts were provided if the swimmer was a member of the leisure centre, or if the swimmer was an older person or from a deprived area. Other areas provided concessionary rates for those undertaking lessons at off-peak times. In Bolton, the Council in partnership with Bolton Community Leisure Trust, had launched free swimming lessons for under 17 year olds in July 2008.

Provision of free swimming lessons

From our discussions with CSCs and operators, a typical set of free swimming lessons was found to involve:

- Time commitment: six hours worth of lessons or six 30-40 minute lessons;
- Course duration: usually a six week course (one hour sessions) or a twelve week course (half hour sessions) was on offer. Half hour sessions were preferred by many swimming teachers for teaching younger children, due to their concentration span;
- Teaching: lessons are provided by a Level 2 Swimming Teacher, but in cases where the group was large or consisted of difficult groups to teach (e.g. disabled non-swimmers) an additional Level 1 Teacher was on hand to provide assistance.

All CSCs viewed six hours as insufficient for anyone to become a competent swimmer, but the lessons were seen as 'taster/starter sessions' which would get people involved in taking more. The groups that have been targeted have been dependent on the profile of the area where the lessons are being provided.

"We have a large BME community, a lot of work was done to target these groups and there have been many success stories in terms of, for example, delivering lessons to Asian ladies." (Interview with participating LA)

"There are pockets of deprivation in our LA. We have targeted people from lower income and have got them in swimming." (Interview with participating LA)

CSCs were found to have worked with partner organisations in each LA area, such as the PCT, Community Groups, County Sports Partners and schools to identify which groups of people would benefit most from these lessons and have targeted them accordingly. Lessons have been provided to groups such as children with autism, young people, people living in rural areas and people with disabilities.

CSCs gave a number of examples of how LAs and operators had targeted certain groups. Where LAs wanted to target 11-17 year olds, they would contact the schools co-ordinator who would pass out information to school pupils about the initiative. Hard to reach forums were used to target a range of groups. Access to hard to reach forums would be obtained through, for example, the PCT, Sports Development Officers or community groups.

In terms of attracting a wider audience for lessons, most pools did not spend a lot of money on marketing. The main methods used included advertising through the local press, on the radio, in papers and by placing banners/ posters in the leisure centre and outside. Word of mouth was cited as one of the most effective methods of promotion, particularly amongst the older age groups.

Some of the national operators were found to have launched larger advertising campaigns but this was mostly at the outset of the free swimming lessons offer and has not occurred on an ongoing basis. The London region and the Bolton area had particular success with their marketing campaign, as illustrated below:

"GLL developed a press release (London wide and also Borough specific) with regards to the free swimming lessons and encouraged potential participants to sign up online via their own website. They used with signposting to the GLL website via LA partner websites to allow potential participants to register interest and highlighted the scheme within an LA newsletter. They attracted 3,500 expressions of interest online within the first 10 days of the scheme. This is in contrast to a previous marketing approach, whereby GLL used the Metro newsletter (at a cost of £7,500 per advert), with a much lower rate of success. (Interview with CSC)"

The Bolton area ran a three week marketing campaign costing £4,000. It included a four page spread in the 'Bolton Scene' the local newspaper; advertising on billboards; and printing leaflets that were available in leisure centres. Within ten days of the marketing campaign, the Bolton pool operators had 1,000 people signed up to take swimming lessons. (Interview with participating pool operator)

Although it was recognised that while CSCs had provided ASA promotional and marketing material to LAs and pools directly, it was felt that this was delivered too late and there were issues with downloading the material to distribute. The general view was that the swimming lessons would benefit from a co-ordinated national marketing campaign delivered by the ASA in Year 2.

Support for free swimming lessons

LAs and pool operators which we spoke to during the case study visits thought that the CSCs were excellent in terms of providing support for getting lessons underway. A large majority of LAs said that without their funding and support, they simply could not have delivered the lessons and thus could not have had the same level of impact on the communities who have benefitted from this provision.

In terms of financial support, most operators indicated that they had received funding for the successful completion of swimming lessons, with a higher level of funding provided for hard to reach groups. The CSCs through the ASA have also provided for free, CPD training for some of the teaching staff who coach sessions.

Equally important for LAs and operators was the non-financial support provided by the CSCs. The South West region and the Bolton area highlighted some of the practical support they obtained.

"We (the LA) received a lot of support early on from the CSC in order to agree a plan of FS lessons. The CSC now leaves us to put in application forms for further lessons, as trust has been built up. We still receive day to day support from the CSC with regards to promotion and marketing." (Interview with participating LA)

"We (the Pool Operator) were having a meeting with the PCT about free lessons. Our SCSC was willing to come to the meeting and make a presentation on the lessons. This was really helpful." (Interview with participating pool operator)

Overall LAs and pool operators commented how invaluable it was to have someone they could contact to ask questions, to share ideas with and discuss how to overcome obstacles. They said that the CSC has a level of knowledge and expertise they could tap into (which was found to be particularly helpful for Sports Development Officers that do not necessarily have a swimming background). For many of the LAs and operators, ASA backing for the free swimming lessons was important to them, given that CSCs were viewed to have a level of credibility as they are part of the national governing body.

Impact of free swimming lessons

Overall the free swimming lessons were seen as a success, however in some areas it was viewed to be too early to say what the impact has been. In London for example, the first set of "industrialised" lessons started on 19th April and it will be a few more weeks until these are completed. There will therefore be a lagged effect.

Some of the evidence on the impact of free swimming lessons is anecdotal but in a small number of pools operators have undertaken evaluations of how the scheme is working. For example, several pools in areas such as the East Midlands and the North East carried out a survey of swimmers before and after each course. In addition, participants in lessons in the South West were encouraged to keep a 'swim diary' which provided the team with valuable feedback on the lessons.

On the whole, the evidence (anecdotal or otherwise) is that free swimming lessons are having a very positive impact and there is a strong demand for lessons. They were thought to be successfully attracting hard to reach groups (the Pot C funding has been instrumental in this) and they are felt to be attracting new customers to the Leisure Centres, particularly more people who have never swam before.

Operators and the CSCs stated that the vast majority of participants are completing the courses on offer. There was a small drop out rate, although it was felt that this was because the lessons were free that there was no incentive to continue to turn up (particularly during winter months). It was suggested that paying a fully refundable deposit at the start of the course of lessons would address this. A number of pools followed up with participants to find out why they discontinued the lessons which has proved insightful.

In addition to completing the course, pool operators and CSCs said that participants were swimming in

between lessons and that incentives like discounted future lessons have meant that people are coming back and swimming more regularly – pools are busier. CSCs and pool operators have said that in addition to improving their swimming skills, the lessons have played an important social role for the participants as the following comments show:

"Enjoying the lessons. I have made new friends and overcome my fear of the water." (Participant – North East)

"Older people love the social element of the free swimming lessons." (CSC – South East region)

"Confidence in the local community has definitely increased and people feel a great sense of camaraderie i.e. they feel they are coming to the centre to actively participate in something with other people." (Facility Manager – Leisure Centre, East Midlands)

Evidence of impact of lessons from other sources

Evidence from the online survey undertaken as part of this wider evaluation showed that:

- Since April 2009, 190 people (27.1% of people who swim and living in a participating LA) have had a swimming lesson or teaching to help them improve their skills as a swimmer. A further 91 people who swim but don't live in a participating LA took lessons for this reason.
- Since April 2009, 68 people (9.7% of people who swim and living in a participating LA) have had a swimming lesson or teaching to help them feel more confident in the water. A further 41 people who swim but don't live in a participating LA took lessons for this reason.
- For those that did take lessons, 79% of respondents aged 16 years and 75% of respondents aged 60 years and over said that it meant they were more likely to continue swimming as a result.
- Since April 2009, 41% of respondents aged 16 years and 15% of respondents aged 60 years and over said that they have considered having swimming lessons or teaching at a public pool in their local area to help them feel more comfortable in the water.

Lessons learned, future plans and sustainability

Feedback from the case study visits is that CSCs, LAs and operators felt they were on a learning curve in the first year and they are still learning about the best approach to take to the delivery of such lessons. The main lessons learnt are summarised in the table below.

Table A5.6: Lessons learned

Provide greater time for planning	<i>"Operators should plan to allow time for marketing; time to inform staff about the scheme; and time to set up tracking mechanisms to monitor the progress and outcomes from those that take part in the free swimming lessons/ the FSP."</i>
Appoint a project manager	<i>"The reports we have conducted to date indicate that the most pro active providers and the highest deliverers are the organisations with a swimming development officer, the relationship between the CSC's in these areas are also the most productive. The recommendation to the facilities in our region is to develop/introduce these posts and they will have a financial return through the income and structure/programme development, the post also supports the swimming instructors providing quality management and specific training, supporting swimming clubs and the overall increase of participation."</i>
Manage expectations re: capacity	<i>"What has worked not so well is the fact that the demand is too high for our level of capacity in terms of pool space and also the number of instructors. The centre has a waiting list of 150 people who want to attend free swimming lessons. If you offer something that is free to your community and then are unable to deliver it you will have issues."</i>
A friendly approach is important	LAs and pool operators learnt that a personal/ friendly approach was key to the success of the lessons. Approaches adopted to generate a 'safe/ friendly' environment included: • Sending out a letter to the participants in advance; • Instructor meeting the participants at the front of leisure centre/ reception; • The instructor getting into the water with the group; and • Following up by arranging to have tea/ coffee with the group after the lesson. Smaller class sizes for nervous adults were also recommended by some of the CSCs we spoke to.
Need evidence to monitor impact	Most CSCs, LAs and operators that we spoke to thought it was important to track participants more closely to see whether they completed their course, enrolled on another course and were swimming more regularly.

	Some operators followed up with participants that did not complete the course to find out why they had missed lessons. This provided valuable feedback for them.
Carefully consider marketing when trying to attract new customers	Some LAs and pool operators told us that it was easy to fall into the trap of using the same marketing techniques when what was required was a new approach. The following comments were made: <i>"Areas should carefully consider marketing, particularly who, how, what and where they want to target, and move away from just targeting existing customers."</i> <i>"There is no point putting leaflets up in the leisure centre if we want to attract new customers."</i>

The LAs and operators that we spoke to plan to concentrate on one or more of the following over the next year:

- Increase the number of overall lessons delivered - over the next six months, all of the current programmes will still be continuing and more will be starting. Operators indicated that they want to ensure that they are using all spare slots within the programme for lessons.
- Increase the scale of the lessons provided (industrialised approach) – As mentioned previously, some LAs/operators plan to “snowball the programme” and begin to deliver lessons on a much wider scale.
- Sign-post swimmers enrolled in current lessons onto further lessons/ structured programmes – previously the ASA supported LAs by providing vouchers that participants could use to enrol in a further set of lessons. Next year however some LAs and pools plan to sign-post participants to these ‘exit routes’ when they are nearing completion of their swimming lessons. Examples of the intervention programmes that have proved to be effective are:
 - Aqua fit – aerobic exercise in water. It promotes fitness for life and aims to maintain stamina, strength, and suppleness. It is also good at reducing stress levels.
 - Structured Swimfit sessions – is designed to provide a gym-style programme for the pool time.
 - Women sessions – any aquatics class advertised for women only. Market segmentation and local needs will determine the focus age group and therefore the appropriateness of the activity to offer.
 - Aquatic Youth Group – Aimed at young people, 14-18 yrs, the aquatic group will motivate young people to take part within a ‘club’ environment without being in a competitive swimming club.

One CSC commented that these interventions will generate sustainability only if the pool operators “get the environment right.” The CSC explained:

“Providing free swimming lessons has been a great way of attracting new people to the pool. Whether they decide to come back and continue to swim in the future will be dependent on how positive their experience is. The pools have to be on their best behaviour. It is the simple things that are important – friendly reception staff, clean facilities, a pool at the right temperature... These things will shape the customer's experience – and if they have a good experience they will come back.” (Interview with CSC)

Participating authorities

When undertaking the first wave of case study visits, we asked each LA to rate the Programme on a scale of one to ten (where one is poor and ten is excellent). The vast majority of LAs were very positive about their experience of the programme to date, and the average score attributed by LAs was seven out of 10. Some stated that they would attribute a higher score to the programme if there was more certainty regarding the future of the Programme beyond the current two year funding period.

When undertaking the second wave of case study visits, we asked CSCs, LAs and operators the same question specifically with regards to the Programme (and excluding lessons). The ratings ranged from two to eight, but most continued to rate the programme at around seven out of 10.

Some of the positive comments about the programme are shown below:

“FSP is definitely increasing swimming. Pools are commenting that they are busier. Swimming now has a large profile”. (Interview with CSC)

“The FSP is getting the word swimming on everyone's lips again. It's getting people that no longer swim to return to the pool. It is an activity that nearly anyone can do so need to promote this and convert this into something people do more regularly as part of their everyday life.”(Interview with participating operator)

A few that had rated the programme well, had a few minor issues as follows:

- Overall, the impact of the Programme to date has been positive, although case study participants believed that it could be enhanced further in the future.
- The participating LAs were most concerned about funding, and the degree to which future funding (if any) would enable them to sustain the Programme in its current form. Some LAs called for the funding formula to be revised away from population and, instead, for grants to be based on the level of swimming uptake or performance against targets.
- Some LAs highlighted the need to address wider barriers to participation in the future, such as those caused by poor transport links and underinvestment in the infrastructure of pools (which LAs recognised could be addressed by the capital grants element of the programme). Support from partner organisations, such as PCTs and Housing Associations was also desired, and where this had been set up, added substantially to the success of the Programme.

"It has been good for those who can swim already but this is limiting in itself." (Interview with pool operator)

"I think the programme was great but the launch was too rushed." (Interview with participating LA)

Views specifically on free swimming lessons

CSCs, LAs and operators in the second round of case study visits were also asked to rate free swimming lessons on a scale of one to ten (where one is poor and ten is excellent). The ratings for the free swimming lessons were better than for the FSP in general. The ratings ranged from two to nine out of ten, with most people giving the programme a rating of around eight or nine.

The respondent who rated the programme as two out of ten explained this was his rating for the lessons so far, as the region initially tried to sell the concept to too many operators on a small scale, and these operators then under delivered. He felt the lessons would score an eight in the future when more focus should help.

Other comments on the lessons are shown in the box below:

"It provides new opportunities and allows operators to be creative and do new things with their existing programme. Lessons will mean that hundreds more people will be active, and thus will generate health and social benefits. This will have a quite good, positive impact and this should be sustainable." (Interview with pool operator)

"Free swimming lessons are the perfect complement to FSP – without learning how to swim, many would not be able to benefit from free swimming" (Interview with Sports Development Manager)

"Free swimming lessons will have a bigger impact over the longer term than free swimming. Swimming lessons have brought in new people. Some people are swimming for the first time – free swimming cannot do this. If the right strategies and incentives are used, the new swimmers will continue to swim and be active." (Interview with CSC)

Case study 13: London Region

Overview of region

There are 31 LAs participating in the Free Swimming Programme across the London region. The population aged 16 and under within these authorities is 1,465,700 and the population aged 60 and over is 1,100,400. There have been 905,848 free swims by those aged 16 and under and 761,375 free swims by those aged 60 and over.

Success story

Following the success of the earlier Everyday Swim initiative in Islington, the CSCs and pool operators in London have taken on board the learning from this initiative when planning their approach to the free swimming lessons. Within the Everyday Swim programme, which had been found to work well, the local authority has found that knowing about what is on offer and times which swimming and lessons are available were critically important to customers.

From this, the region has set up structured contracts with five key providers to ensure a co-ordinated approach. This way of working is now known as an “industrialised approach”, so that rather than working with all providers in a local authority or region, a few key providers are selected to offer lessons on a much larger, or industrialised scale. The providers include both public and private sector operators, and include Haringey Council, DC Leisure (in Wandsworth and Kingston), Parkwood (in Bexley), Leisure Connection in Harrow and GLL in 14 Boroughs. Each provider varies in terms of the number of pools which they have available – thus the contracts set up with each for the delivery of free swimming lessons varies in terms of both the target number of swimming lessons to be delivered and consequently the amount of funding which will be granted as a result.

Each of the five providers offers the first six swimming lessons free of charge. To encourage sustainability and ensure that swimmers do not drop out after completing these lessons, the next set of six are heavily discounted, rather than £100 which was the price usually levied for six lessons. The discounts available depend on the time of day when swimming lessons are taken: off-peak times attract higher levels of discount than those in peak periods. The peak rate is £48, the off peak rate is £36 and the super off peak rate is £24).

Last year the five operators provided lessons to approximately 3,000 people in the region but they have collectively committed to provide lessons to over 36,000 people in the period from April 2010 to March 2011. The contracts with these five operators have been set up so that LAs and operators are paid based on their results from lessons. This again encourages sustainability and ensures delivery of the required volumes.

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 14: Yorkshire and Humber Region

Overview of region

There are 15 LAs in the Yorkshire and Humber region participating in the FSP: eight are metropolitan districts, four are non-metropolitan districts and three are unitary authorities. Five of them do not provide free swimming to those aged 16 and under but the remaining ten authorities provide both elements of the Programme. The total population within the participating LAs is 1,563,800 of which 50% (765,900) are aged 16 and under. In the first year, 2,174,963 free swims were taken in the region of which 1,520,691 (70%) were by those aged 16 and under.

Success story

Kirklees Active Leisure is a charitable Trust which operates in the Yorkshire & Humber region and has achieved a high rate of participation in the first year of the Free Swimming Programme and also within the free swimming lessons offer. One of the reasons for this high level of achievement has been the leisure provider's re-programming of all eight pools in their area to increase participation and to increase uptake of lessons (for example, by opening some pools at 6:30am). They also invested in marketing to attract swimmers. For example, they developed their own marketing for free swimming and novelty characters went out on visits to schools and other events to promote the programme. Now that more people are undertaking swimming lessons, the Leisure Centre have put in place retention schemes to ensure that it retains the new customers it has attracted. One mechanism introduced is a sliding pay scale to further lessons, with the first additional set of lessons offered at a discount of 50% of the full price and the second additional set of lessons offered with a discount of 25%.

What has not worked well?

In Yorkshire & Humber the Senior CSC experienced delays in getting a full team of CSCs in place. As a result, it has been difficult to deliver the FSP in full, and much of the time available for supporting delivery in the first year was lost due to a partial team.

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 15: South East Region

Overview of region

There are 37 LAs in the South East region participating in the FSP: 27 are non-metropolitan districts and ten are unitary authorities. Eleven of them do not provide free swimming to those aged 16 and under but the remaining 26 authorities provide both elements of the Programme. The total population within the participating LAs is 2,091,800 of which 48% (996,100) are aged 16 and under. In the first year, 1,823,108 free swims were taken in the region of which 1,040,589 (57%) were by those aged 16 and under.

Success story

In the South East region, the Programming and Development manager in the Leisure Trust worked with one of the pools in the region, taking a holistic approach to improving the whole swimming experience. This included the provision of free swimming lessons.

The approach taken was to apply lessons from the wider leisure industry, in particular the gym market, to swimming. The Programming and Development manager wanted to create a culture change and encourage staff to treat swimmers and gym-goers in the same way. He contrasted the service that was previously provided when a member of the public would come to use the gym with what happened when they would come to use the pool. Those wanting to use the gym would be given a guided tour of the gym, a consultation with a fitness instructor on their particular needs and an induction. When a member of the public came to swim they would be pointed in the direction of the swimming pool/ changing rooms, with no other introduction to the facilities available. If the person decided to leave the gym, they would be telephoned to ask why they were not using the facilities whereas this did not happen with the swimmers.

In Rye, staff now adopted the more comprehensive approach used by gyms throughout the country. Those that come to swim, or take part in swimming lessons, undergo a health check, complete a consultation and their progress and participation (on swimming lessons in particular) is tracked.

To achieve this change in approach required engagement from all staff. So, in Rye, 'dry side' staff became involved in the project. They would, for example, provide health checks in the gym before the swimming lessons began. This meant that new customers that were being brought into the Leisure Centre could get exposure to the whole Centre rather than just the pool. It also meant that all staff were aware of the FSP and what was on offer. Fitness instructors could build in swimming into their clients' fitness plans, and if the client told them that they could not swim they could signpost them to the free swimming lessons on offer. This new approach is being piloted in Rye and if successful will be rolled out across the region.

What has not worked well?

The CSC team in the South East meet once a month and discuss and share experiences of areas which have worked well. The CSCs, however, thought that there is potential for increasing sharing of practice between regions. Whilst at a recent conference, snapshots of work in other regions were provided. They would have liked more detail on these examples.

In addition, a representative from a pool operator in the region said that the Programme should provide more in terms of both "carrots or sticks" stating:

"In some places it is hard to get pools on board, particularly where they are council run. There is no real incentive for them to put on additional lessons. It is not mandatory to offer the lessons and it is not something they are being assessed against. In some cases if they don't have to, they won't bother."

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 16: North East Region

Overview of region

There are 12 LAs in the North East region participating in the FSP: five are metropolitan districts and seven are unitary authorities. Three of them do not provide free swimming to those aged 16 and under but the remaining nine authorities provide both elements of the Programme. The total population within the participating LAs is 1,092,700 of which 46% (497,900) are aged 16 and under. In the first year, 1,366,095 free swims were taken in the region of which 876,855 (64%) were by those aged 16 and under.

Success story

CSCs in the North East often worked with LAs and pools to identify where pool space exists to enable free swimming lessons to be provided. In one area within the North East, finding pool space was a particular problem as many of the pools in the area had been closed for refurbishment. To overcome this, the CSCs put the Leisure Centre operator in touch with the local schools that the CSCs had been working with on other projects. As a result, a series of free swimming lessons were provided in school pools. Given they were smaller and more private in nature, these pools were well suited to lessons for ladies only and those in BME groups. For example, several groups of Asian ladies completed six week courses using this approach. The CSCs in the area are now trying to get some of these ladies to enrol in a swimming coaching course so that in the future they will be able to teach other Asian ladies to swim.

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 17: South West Region

Overview of region

There are 24 LAs in the South West region participating in the FSP: 15 are non-metropolitan districts and nine are unitary authorities. Sixteen of them do not provide free swimming to those aged 16 and under but the remaining ten authorities provide both elements of the Programme. The total population within the participating LAs is 1,731,200, of which 756,700 are aged 16 and under. In the first year, 1,457,304 free swims were taken in the region of which 637,828 were by those aged 16 and under.

Success story

In Year 1 the CSCs developed a series of operator forums in each County Council area. These forums were set up because providers did not typically talk to one another and did not share practice. Some were particularly poor at providing free swimming lessons. The CSCs wanted to establish buy-in from the providers. Whilst providers still compete with each other, the forums have brought positive benefits for swimmers. For example, providers are now keen to 'beat each other' to implement good practice and this has led to healthy competition and improvements. In turn, some cross-county forums have been held, so that providers can meet others from outside their area to share good practice more widely.

What has not worked well?

In the South West region some pools aimed to fill their classes to the maximum capacity by having 12 participants in each lesson. However, the CSCs found larger class sizes did not work well with particular groups, such as older people and those who haven't been in the water for many years. It was felt by the CSCs and pool operators that smaller classes would have been more effective for these groups. In addition, it was felt by some CSCs that insufficient time had been available after the last lesson. One CSC explained:

"It would be better if there was more time to meet participants after this lesson to follow-up with them what they plan to do next. This is often left to the swimming tutor and can get 'lost'. There is a need for a more personal approach at this stage."

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 18: East Midlands Region

Overview of region

There are 38 LAs in the Yorkshire and Humber region participating in the FSP: 34 are non-metropolitan districts and four are unitary authorities. Two of them do not provide free swimming to those aged 16 and under but the remaining ten authorities provide both elements of the Programme. The total population within the participating LAs is 1,816,200 of which 48% (841,400) are aged 16 and under. In the first year, 2,580,301 free swims were taken in the region of which 1,774,598 (69%) were by those aged 16 and under.

Success story

The CSCs in the East Midlands region recognised that leisure centre receptionists often work on a part time basis and, therefore, there were difficulties in keeping this group of staff up to date on what was going on in the leisure centre and the area more widely. To counter this, the Senior CSC organised for a call centre number to be established for receptionists and members of the public to call to find out from an informed person where their nearest pool was that offered free swimming lessons, when the lessons were on and so on. This proved very successful based on feedback from centre users and receptionists alike, and is now being considered on a national level.

What has not worked well?

In the East Midlands region, it was found that the level of demand for free swimming lessons has been too high given the level of capacity in terms of pool space and also the number of instructors. At present, one centre has a waiting list of 150 people who want to attend free swimming lessons. One of the CSCs in this area explained that they have realised the importance of managing public expectations stating that: "If you offer something that is free to your community and then are unable to deliver it you will have issues."

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 19: North West Region

Overview of region

There are 37 LAs in the North West region participating in the FSP: 14 are metropolitan districts, 17 are non-metropolitan districts and six are unitary authorities. Only six of them do not provide free swimming to those aged 16 and under but the remaining ten authorities provide both elements of the Programme. The total population within the participating LAs is 2,820,400 of which 1,339,400 are aged 16 and under. In the first year, 2,876,281 free swims were taken in the region of which 1,835,155 were by those aged 16 and under.

Success story

Free swimming was introduced by Bolton Council in 2007 and became mainstreamed as part of the wider Free Swimming Programme in April 2009. At this point Bolton Council extended free swimming to include under 17's and over 60's. Bolton Council has also successfully bid for funding from the Free Swimming Programme's Capital Buildings pot and works have started at the Borough's two main pools in Farnworth and Horwich.

In the Bolton area, the population is 114,800 and 51% of the population (58,300) is 16 and under. There have been 63,848 free swims in Year 1 of the FSP with 58% of these (36,871 being provided to those aged 16 and under).

Given the success of the LA and providers in providing free swimming, the Bolton area wanted to pilot free swimming lessons at an early stage. The objectives set for the pilot were to:

- Have 3,200 adults enrolled and swimming by 31st March 2010: this launched on 9th January 2010;
- Develop a tracking system from registration throughout each course and on to future participation covering a period of three to 12 months;
- Monitor and evaluate progress and attitude to swimming in the area (to assess whether the approach would impact on APS data for the region); and
- Target specific hard to reach groups.

During this pilot period, Bolton LA ran a three week marketing campaign associated with their free swimming lessons at a cost of £4,000. This marketing campaign consisted of:

- A four page spread in the 'Bolton Scene' the local newspaper: this was estimated to reach 122,000 readers;
- Advertising on Bolton town centre billboards: this was estimated to reach 360,000 people over the three week campaign;
- Advertising in the Swimming Times: this was estimated to reach 15,000 readers;
- An advert in the Bolton Evening News: this was expected to reach 17,158 readers;
- Publication on the Active Bolton Website targeted at health professionals; and
- Leaflets which were made available in leisure centres.

In addition to attracting a mass audience through the marketing campaign, Bolton LA targeted hard to reach groups. This was done in partnership with organisations such as the local PCT and schools.

The impacts generated by the pilot can be described as follows:

- Within ten days of the marketing campaign 1,000 people had signed up to take swimming lessons;
- 3,200 people took part in the lessons over the pilot period;
- 81% of those people were new customers; and
- 30 – 32% have now signed up to a membership package.

What has not worked well?

In the North West, the CSCs realised that methods for communicating with LAs were not always achieving the desired outcomes. During the summer of 2009, the CSCs sent an e-mail to LAs regarding free swimming lessons. This was followed by an open day forum for those who wished to find out more. The e-mail explained that the CSCs could fund operators to run six courses of lessons over the holiday period. However, the CSCs found that the e-mail communication did not deliver the message which they

wished to give. In some instances, the message was misinterpreted or misunderstood by LAs and operators. Whilst the CSCs had assumed that it would be relatively straightforward for operators to commit to running a small number of lessons (e.g. six courses of six lessons) in a short period, some of the operators had thought that funding was only available for running six courses of lessons and they felt, therefore, that it was not worth their while. Since then, the CSCs found that a better approach was to meet with LAs individually so that the Programme and the offer of free lessons could be communicated more clearly. It also meant they could find out the particular barriers for each LA along with the support which was required in order to overcome the barriers.

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 20: East Region

Overview of region

There are 34 LAs in the East region participating in the FSP: 28 are non-metropolitan districts and six are unitary authorities. Ten of them do not provide free swimming to those aged 16 and under but the remaining ten authorities provide both elements of the Programme. The total population within the participating LAs is 1,872,300 of which 46% (863,800) are aged 16 and under. In the first year, 1,739,359 free swims were taken in the region of which 930,016 (53%) were by those aged 16 and under.

Success story

In the last year, one of the CSCs in the East region has worked with partners to attract new swimmers through the provision of free swimming lessons. Retaining these customers is now a key area of focus. Initially, this was achieved by providing those that had completed a course of six free swimming lessons with a £20 voucher, funded by the ASA, which could be used towards further lessons. While it was noted that this was very effective in encouraging new swimmers to continue, it could still be relatively expensive for a further set of lessons even with this discount.

As a consequence, the CSCs are now concentrating on a few key interventions that have been shown to work across the region. The objective is to encourage those that are completing free swimming lessons to take part in structured programmes so that they continue to swim. The most successful interventions in the region include:

- **Step into Masters:** this is an opportunity for swimmers to move smoothly into a 'club' session with a qualified coach delivering a planned swim session. The minimum ideal age is 18 years and there is no upper age limit. The session is designed to motivate and provide a learning environment to enable each swimmer to become more confident when swimming in lanes and with others.
- **Aquatic Youth Clubs:** the Aquatic Youth Group motivates young people to take part within a 'club' environment without being in a competitive swimming club. The club meets once a week for sessions lasting between 45 – 60 minutes, with delivery from a qualified teacher/coach and also a clear focus on participation and fun.
- **Over 60s Active Aquatics:** an Active Aquatics swim session is aimed at encouraging those aged 60 and over to take part in aquatic activities on a regular basis. The sessions motivate senior swimmers to take part within a group of like minded people, who may already know each other from other groups outside of the pool environment. The Active Aquatic swim sessions meet once per week with each session lasting around 30 minutes. They are delivered by a UKCC Level 2 teacher/coach with a clear focus on participation and fun. These sessions include a social opportunity after the swim encourages the establishment of Swim buddies to build confidence in attending the pool with others.

What has not worked well?

The CSCs working in the East found that the marketing materials provided by the ASA were difficult to work with and download. In addition, the application process and the deadlines set by the ASA were often too short. As a result, this led to rushed applications and sometimes inadequate planning time for lessons. The CSCs thought that moving to a more planned approach, whereby a number of "blocks" of lessons could be applied for at one time (rather than on a one-by-one basis) would be helpful in addressing this issue.

Source: PwC analysis

Case study 21: West Midlands Region

Overview of region

There are 28 LAs in the West Midlands region participating in the FSP: eight are metropolitan districts, 16 are non-metropolitan districts and four are unitary authorities. Five of them do not provide free swimming to those aged 16 and under but the remaining ten authorities provide both elements of the Programme. The total population within the participating LAs is 2,256,500 of which 48% (1,083,300) are aged 16 and under. In the first year, 2,389,509 free swims were taken in the region of which 1,565,265 (66%) were by those aged 16 and under.

Success story

In the West Midlands area the CSCs told us that Pot C funding (enhanced funding accessed via a competitive bidding process to support specific initiatives) was really important in increasing take up of the free swimming lessons offer. One of the ways that the Pot C funding has been used is to provide bus transport to leisure centres in the region in order to make pools more accessible and to encourage others to leave their cars at home. A 'Free Swim Bus' is provided in areas such as Feckenham, Astwood Bank and Crabbs Cross.

What has not worked well?

A CSC in the West Midlands area felt that the monitoring of the programme by some pools could be enhanced by providing them with improved information on the success of the programme at a micro level.

"Some pools collect information on the number of free swims provided or the number of lessons taken. However, some of these pools have not monitored factors such as whether these swimmers are new swimmers, new customers to the leisure centre, their swimming ability when they started and when they finished. This has meant it has been difficult for these pools to prove the success that they have achieved."

Source: PwC analysis

Annex 6: Online survey questionnaires

Introduction

This Annex contains the questionnaire which has been used as the basis for undertaking the two online surveys to inform this evaluation. The surveys were undertaken in November/December 2009 and April/May 2010, with the survey used in April/May 2010 broadly similar to that used in 2009, although some minor amendments and additions to the original survey questionnaire were made.

The online survey used in November/December 2009 can be found below, with changes made to this for the survey in April/May 2010 also detailed later in this section.

Online Survey – November/December 2009

A1.1 How old were you at your last birthday?

- Record age - If respondent age is 6 to 16, check that parental consent has been obtained for this child to participate

THANK AND CLOSE IF:

- Age is 17 to 59

A.1.2 Can you confirm that your parent or guardian has given consent to Research Now for you to fill in this questionnaire?

- Yes, consent has been given

THANK AND CLOSE IF:

- No, consent has not been given
- Not sure

Questions A.2 and A3 refer to an adult who may assist a RESPONDENT who is aged 6 to 16.

A.2 Children, especially those aged 6 to 12, will need help throughout from an adult to answer the questions in this survey, and those aged 13 to 16 may require assistance to answer some questions. Will an adult aged 18 or older help throughout or be available to assist a person aged 6 to 16 to respond to the questions?

- Yes, an adult will help throughout
- Yes, an adult is available to assist in answering some questions
- No, no adult involved

THANK AND CLOSE IF:

- Respondent is a child aged 6 to 12 and no adult will be involved (c in A2)

If the respondent has answered "Yes" to question A2, ask question A3 below:

A.3 What is this adult's relationship to the younger person who will be the respondent?

- Parent or step-parent
- Grandparent
- Brother or sister aged 18 or older
- Legal guardian
- Other relative, aged 18 or older
- Other adult

The data in response to the following questions should be recorded, based on Research Now's postcode data for survey panel members, along with the look-up tables provided by PwC. The following questions are not asked of respondents.

B.1 Is the respondent's postcode in England?

- Yes

THANK AND CLOSE IF:

- No – i.e. postcode is in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland

B.2 Record code for LA (alpha order within status, 001 to 354) to which respondents postcode belongs.

B.3 Free swimming status of respondent's LA:

- People aged 60 and older swim for free
- Both people aged 60 and older and people aged 16 and under swim for free
- No free swimming offered

B.4 Index of multiple deprivation for respondent's LA

- High
- Medium
- Low

B.5 Index of population density for respondent's LA

- High
- Medium
- Low

B.6 Eligibility of respondent's age group for free swims in respondent's LA

- Respondent is eligible to swim for free in LA where R lives
- Respondent is not eligible to swim for free in LA where R lives

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for opening this survey which is being undertaken on behalf of **Sport England**, the government agency that seeks to:

- Grow and sustain the number of people taking part in sport and recreational physical activity, and
- Develop talents that will help more people excel at sports.

The results of the survey will be used to assess the impact of some of Sport England's programmes.

Results from hundreds of interviews will be combined in our analysis, and you will remain anonymous. Neither Sport England nor anyone who sees reports of survey results will know who has participated. The questions will take about 10 minutes to answer.

The following text will appear if the respondent is aged six to sixteen.

The questions in this survey concern the sports and recreational physical activities that you do in your own time and of your own accord. Please **exclude** from your answers the time you spend:

- In physical education or gym classes during school time
- Participating in your school's sports teams

1 RECENT SPORT AND RECREATIONAL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

All respondents are asked the following questions:

1.1 Do you think you generally do more, less or about the same amount of sport and recreational physical activity as you did this time last year? **Single code**

- More
- Less
- About the same
- Not sure

1.2 In the last four weeks, that is since xx October 2009, what types of sport and recreational physical activity, if any, have you done? **Rotate order; record answer; tick all that apply**

- Athletics
- Badminton
- Basketball
- Cricket
- Cycling
- Dance
- Football
- Gardening or active conservation
- Golf
- Jogging or running
- Riding or equestrian sport
- Rugby Union or Rugby League
- Swimming
- Squash
- Tennis
- Walking or hiking for at least 30 minutes continuously
- Working out in a gym; keep fit or exercise classes
- Other, specify:
- No sport or recreational physical activity undertaken in past four weeks *(Note: this option always appears last and cannot be ticked if other options are also ticked)*

The following question is asked if any sport or recreational physical activity is specified in question 1.2 above.

1.3 In total, how many times have you taken part in [this sport or recreational physical activity/these sports or recreational physical activities] during the last four weeks? *(Note: Options ticked in Q1.2 are presented here)*

If number not recorded, present choice of summary replies:

Could you estimate about how many times you have taken part in sport and recreational physical activity during the last four weeks?

- Three times or less
- Four to eight times
- Nine to eleven times
- Twelve times or more

- 1.4 During the next 12 months, do you expect to spend at least as much time taking part in sports and recreational physical activities as you do now? **Single code**
- Yes, I expect to spend at least as much time as I do now
 - No, I expect to spend less time than I do now
 - I am not sure how much time I will spend in the next 12 months

2 SWIMMING

Questions 2.1 through to question 2.11 are asked if the respondent has noted swimming in their answer to question 1.2.

- 2.1 Comparing your swimming now and your swimming before April 2009, are you swimming more often now, less often now, or about as often as you did before April 2009? **Single code**
- More often
 - Less often
 - About as often as before
 - Not sure

Ask question 2.2 if swimming less often now ("less often" in question 2.1)

- 2.2 Why are you swimming less often now than you did before April 2009? Please be as specific as possible.

Ask questions 2.3 and 2.4 if swimming more often now ("more often" in question 2.1)

- 2.3 Why are you swimming more often now than you did before April 2009? Please be as specific as possible.
- 2.4 Has swimming more often meant that you are spending less time these days on other sports or recreational physical activities than you did before April 2009? **Single code**
- Yes
 - No
 - Not sure

- 2.5a When you swam most recently, did you go swimming on a weekday (Monday through Friday) or during a weekend (Saturday or Sunday)? **Single code**
- On a weekday
 - During a weekend
 - Not sure

- 2.5b What time of day was it, roughly, when you **began** your most recent swim? **Single code**
- Before 09:00
 - At or after 09:00 but before 12:00 noon
 - At or after 12:00 noon but before 14:00
 - At or after 14:00 but before 16:00
 - At or after 16:00 but before 18:00
 - At or after 18:00
 - Not sure

- 2.6 Since April 2009, have you had a swimming lesson or coaching to help you feel more confident in the water or to improve your skills as a swimmer? **Single Code**
- Yes – to feel more confident in the water
 - Yes – to improve your skills as a swimmer
 - No
 - Not sure

2.7 When you swam most recently, where did you go swimming? **Single code**

- A public swimming pool
- A pool at a state school that was open to the local community
- A private pool or a swimming pool at a gym or club that is run for members
- In the sea, a lake or a river
- Other, specify:
- Not sure

Questions 2.8, 2.9 and 2.10 will be asked if the respondent has indicated that they used a private pool or other pool for most recent swim (“a private pool or a swimming pool at a gym or club that is run for members” or “other” in question 2.7).

2.8 When you swam most recently in that (if “a private pool or a swimming pool at a gym or club that is run for members” in Q 2.7) swimming pool, did you use a voucher from a public pool to get in? **Single code**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

2.9 What admission charge, if any, do you think you would have to pay to swim in a local public pool? **Single code**

- £5.00 or more
- £3.00 to £4.99
- £1.00 to £2.99
- Less than £1.00
- No admission charge; I could swim for free
- Not sure

2.10 Would you swim in a local public pool if it was free? **Single code**

- Yes; I probably would
- No; I probably would not
- Not sure

Question 2.11 is asked if the respondent used a private pool or other pool for most recent swim (“a private pool or a swimming pool at a gym or club that is run for members” or “other” in question 2.7) and would not use, or was not sure about using, a local public pool if swims were free (“no I probably would not” or “not sure” in Q 2.10)

Why would you probably not swim at a local public pool, even if you could swim there for free?

3 EXPERIENCE OF USING A LOCAL PUBLIC POOL

Questions 3.1 through to 3.25 are asked if the respondent’s most recent swim was in a public pool or a state school pool (“a public swimming pool” or “a pool at a state school that was open to the local community” in question 2.7) or a private pool accessed by voucher (“Yes” in question 2.8).

3.1 Still thinking of the place where you swam most recently, did you decide which pool you swam at or did someone else make the decision? Please select the one answer that best describes how the decision was made. **Single code**

- I made the decision
- I made the decision with someone else or with other people
- Someone else made the decision
- Other, specify:
- Not sure

Ask question 3.2 if the respondent alone did not make the decision (all answers except “I made the

decision" or "not sure" in question 3.1):

- 3.2 Who else (helped to make – **if "I made the decision with someone else or with other people" is indicated in question 3.1**) (made – **if "someone else made the decision" in question 3.1**) that decision? Please select all the answers that apply to those involved in making the decision about where to swim. **Multi-code**

NOTE: not all options present in both versions of the survey: B=present in both; O = present in version for those aged 60 and over only)

- Your parent or parents (B)
- Your husband, wife or partner (O)
- Your child or children (O)
- Your brother or sister (B)
- A relative, such as a grandparent, cousin or an aunt or uncle (B)
- A friend or friends (B)
- Other, specify: (B)
- Not sure (B)

- 3.3 Why (did you decide – **if "I made the decision" in question 3.1**) (was it decided, do you think, – **if any other responses to question 3.1**) to use this pool for your most recent swim?

- 3.4 Thinking of the place where you swam most recently, had you ever used this pool before April 2009? **Single code**

- Yes
- No Skip to question 3.9
- Not sure Skip to question 3.9

Questions 3.5 and 3.6 to be asked if the respondent has used this pool before April 2009 ("Yes" in Q 3.4)

- 3.5 Thinking still of the place you swam most recently and how often you swim there now, has the frequency with which you swim at this (public pool – **if "a public swimming pool" in Q 2.7**) (state school pool – **if "a pool at a state school that was open to the local community" in Q 2.7**) (private pool with a voucher – **if "Yes" in Q 2.8**) changed since April 2009? **Single code**

- I swim at this pool more often now than I did before April 2009
- I swim at this pool less often now than I did before April 2009
- I swim at this pool about as often as I did before April 2009
- Not sure

- 3.6 Comparing your most recent swim at this pool and your experience of swimming there before April 2009, have you noticed any important changes at this pool? Please select the one answer that comes closest to your views. **Single code only**

- Changes for the better have taken place
- Changes for the worse have taken place
- Changes for the better and changes for the worse have taken place
- No changes that are important to me have taken place
- Not sure

Question 3.7 is asked if any changes for the better have taken place (i.e. if "changes for the better have taken place" or "changes for the better and changes for the worse have taken place" is indicated in response to question 3.6)

- 3.7 What changes for the better have taken place at this pool since April 2009?

Ask Q 3.8 if any changes for the worse have taken place (i.e. if "changes for the worse have taken place" or "changes for the better and changes for the worse have taken place" is indicated in response to question 3.6)

- 3.8 What changes for the worse have taken place at this pool since April 2009?

3.9 When you swam most recently, can you recall what admission charge, if any, you paid to swim?
Single Code

- £5.00 or more
- £3.00 to £4.99
- £1.00 to £2.99
- Less than £1.00
- No admission charge; I swam for free
- Not sure

Code an answer but do not ask question 3.10a if the respondent swam for free ("no admission charge; I swam for free" in question 3.9) and if the respondent's most recent swim was in a public pool or a state school pool ("a public swimming pool" or "a pool at a state school that was open to the local community" in question 2.7) or a private pool accessed by voucher (Yes in question 2.8).

3.10a Check Q B.6: Eligibility of R's age group for free swims in the LA where R lives. Record R's eligibility for free swims: Single code only

- Respondent is eligible to swim for free in LA where respondent lives

Ask question 3.10b

- Respondent is not eligible to swim for free in LA where respondent lives

Skip question 3.10b; go to question 3.11

If the respondent's age group is eligible for free swims in the respondent's LA ("eligible" in Q 3.10a), a drop down menu will appear showing the name and address of all pools in the respondent's LA that offer free swims to those in the respondent's age group.

3.10b When you swam most recently, was it at one of the pools listed below? You don't need to identify the specific pool. **Single code**

- Yes, I swam at one of these pools
- No, I swam at a different pool
- Not sure

Questions 3.11 and 3.12 are asked if the respondent swam for free ("no admission charge; I swam for free" in Q 3.9)

3.11 How likely is it that you would have gone swimming at this pool even if you had not been able to swim for free? **Single code**

- Very likely
- Fairly likely
- Fairly unlikely
- Very unlikely
- Not sure

3.12 Did you know you could swim for free before you went to this pool for your most recent swim?
Single code

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Questions 3.13 and 3.14 are asked if the respondent knew that they could swim for free before their most recent swim in a public pool ("Yes" in question 3.12)

3.13 How did you find out that you could swim for free at this pool? **Code all that apply**

- Word of mouth; I heard something about it

- Told by friends, family, or others who had got in free themselves
- Publicity for free swimming at the centre where the pool is located
- Publicity for free swimming at other locations away from the pool, such as at school, shopping centre, town hall or GP's surgery
- Information delivered at home in a leaflet, news letter, or free newspaper
- Other, specify:
- Not sure

3.14 Did (you – *if “I made the decision” in question 3.1*) (those deciding where to swim – *if other responses in question 3.1*) consider going to another pool before (you decided – *if “I made the decision” in question 3.1*) (it was decided – *if other responses in question 3.1*) to go to the pool where you swam most recently? **Single code**

- Yes, considered going to another one
- No, did not consider going to another one
- Other, specify:
- Not sure

Questions 3.15 and 3.16 are asked if the respondent swam for free (“No charge; I swam for free” in question 3.9).

3.15 In deciding where to go for your most recent swim, how important was it that you could swim there for free? **Single code**

- Free swimming was the main reason to choose this pool
- Free swimming was a reason, but not the main one
- Free swimming was not a reason to choose this pool
- Other, specify: Not sure

3.16 What other factors influenced the choice of the pool where you swam most recently? Please tick all the things that influenced the choice. **Rotate order; multi-code**

- Quality of facilities and amenities at the pool
- Ease of access – transport, parking, traffic
- Features that make the pool easier for people with disabilities to use
- Convenience of pool opening hours
- Availability of swimming lessons or coaching to help people become more confident in the water or improve their skills as swimmers
- Availability of water sports or other activities in the water, e.g. water polo
- Proximity to where you live, go to school, work, or go shopping
- Other factors, specify: Not sure

Questions 3.17 and 3.18 are asked if the respondent knew that they could swim for free before most recent free swim (“Yes” in question 3.12).

3.17 When you decided to go for your most recent swim, did you choose the time of your swim specifically in order to take advantage of the opportunity to swim for free? **Single code**

- Yes
- No

3.18 Has your ability to swim for free at this pool changed your use of private swimming pools that you may have used before April 2009? Tick the answer that applies best. **Single code**

- No – I had not used private pools before April 2009
- Yes – I use private pools less now than I did before April 2009
- Yes – I use private pools more now than I did before April 2009
- No – I still use private pools about as often as I did before April 2009
- Other, specify:
- Not sure

Question 3.19 is asked if the respondent did not know could swim for free before most recent free swim

("No" in question 3.12).

3.19 Thinking about the pool where you swam most recently, how likely are you to continue using this pool in order to take advantage of the opportunity to swim for free? **Single code**

- Very likely
- Fairly likely
- Fairly unlikely
- Very unlikely
- Not sure

Questions 3.20 and 3.21 are asked if the respondent's most recent swim was in a public pool or a state school pool ("a public swimming pool" or "a pool at a state school that was open to the local community" in question 2.7) or in a private pool accessed by vouchers ("Yes" in question 2.8) and since April 2009 the respondent has had a swimming lesson or coaching ("yes – to feel more confident in the water" or "yes – to improve your skills as a swimmer" in question 2.6).

3.20 You said earlier that since April 2009 you have had a swimming lesson or coaching to help you feel more confident in the water or improve your skills as a swimmer. Did you pay a fee for the lesson or coaching that was **not** included in admission to the pool? **Single code**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

3.21 How have the swimming lessons or coaching that you have received since April 2009 affected your intention to continue swimming in the future? **Single code**

- They mean I am more likely to continue swimming as a result
- They mean I am less likely to continue swimming as a result
- They have not affected my likelihood to continue swimming
- Not sure

Question 3.22 is asked if the respondent's most recent swim in a local pool was free ("No charge – I swam for free" in question 3.9).

3.22 When you swam most recently, did you go with anyone else, such as a group of friends or a member of your family? **Single code**

- Yes, went with one other person
- Yes, went with two or more other people
- No, went on my own
- Not sure

Questions 3.23, 3.24 and 3.25 are asked if the respondent went swimming with anyone else, ("yes, went with one other person" or "yes, went with two or more other people" in question 3.22).

3.23 How old were the other people you went swimming with? Did they include **anyone** who was: **Record answer – yes, no or not sure – for each age group**

- Aged 16 or younger
- Aged 17 to 59
- Aged 60 or older

3.24 Who else did you go swimming with? **Multi-code**

- Other members of my family
- My friends
- Both family and friends
- Other, specify:
- Not sure

- 3.25 Of the people you went swimming with most recently, how many, apart from yourself, paid an admission fee to swim? **Single code**
- All
 - Some
 - None
 - Not sure

4 NON-SWIMMERS

Questions 4.1 through to 4.7 should be asked if swimming was not mentioned by the respondent in question 1.2.

- 4.1 When was the last time you went swimming? **Single code**
- Since April 2009
 - During the year between April 2008 and April 2009
 - A long time ago, but it's hard to be certain exactly when *Skip to question 4.2*
 - Never *Skip to question 4.3*

Question 4.2 is asked if the respondent has previously been swimming ("since April 2009", "during the year between April 2008 and April 2009" or "a long time ago" in question 4.1).

- 4.2 The last time you went swimming, did you use a public swimming pool? **Single code**
- Yes, used a public pool
 - No, did not use a public pool
 - Not sure
- 4.3 Do you know how to swim well enough to feel comfortable in the water? **Single code**
- Yes
 - No

Question 4.4 is asked if the respondent does not know how to swim well enough to feel comfortable in the water ("No" in question 4.3).

- 4.4 Since April 2009, have you considered having swimming lessons or coaching at a public pool in your local area to help you feel more comfortable in the water? **Single code**
- Yes
 - No
 - Not sure
- 4.5 Do any of the following reasons for not using a public swimming pool in your area reflect your views? Tick all that you feel are reasons not to use a local public pool. **Rotate order; multi-code**
- Local public pools are difficult for me to get to; transport is poor
 - Car parking at or near local public pools is very limited or expensive
 - Local public pools are unpleasant to use – too cold, not clean, poor changing facilities
 - Local public pools are crowded, noisy and confusing
 - Local public pools do not meet the needs of people with disabilities
 - Admission fees at local public pools are too high for me
 - Local public pools are not available when I want to use them
 - Local public pools have safety and security problems
 - Local public pools lack facilities and services related to swimming that I would like to use
 - Local public pools do not seem welcoming, friendly, or helpful
 - No one I know uses local public pools
 - Other reasons, specify:
 - Not sure

- 4.6 Have you seen or heard anything recently about a Free Swimming Programme that provides opportunities for people in your age group to swim for free at a public pool in your local area? **Single code**
- Yes
 - No
 - Not sure

Question 4.7 is asked if the respondent has indicated “Yes” in question 4.6.

- 4.7 How did you find out that you could swim for free at local public pools? **Multi-code**
- Word of mouth; I heard something about it
 - Told by friends, family or others who had go in free themselves
 - Publicity for free swimming at the centre where a pool is located
 - Publicity for free swimming at other locations away from a pool, such as a school, shopping centre, town hall or GP’s surgery
 - Information delivered at home in a leaflet, news letter or free newspaper
 - Other, specify:
 - Not sure

5 CONCLUSION

The following questions are asked of all respondents.

Note: Children answer questions 5.1 and questions 5.9 in the children’s version of the questionnaire. Those aged 60 and over answer questions 5.1 through to 5.8 in the adult version of the questionnaire.

- 5.1 In future, how much would you be prepared to pay per session to swim in your local public swimming pool? Would you be prepared to pay:

Present options a through g in order, until unacceptable level is reached. Record Yes or No for each option presented, then automatically record No for all remaining options that are more expensive.

- Up to £1.00
- £1.00 to £1.99
- £2.00 to £2.99
- £3.00 to £3.99
- £4.00 to £4.99
- £5.00 or more

Note: The adult who is overseeing a child is asked to answer question 5.2 through to question 5.8 on behalf of the child in children’s version of the questionnaire, and language is changed to reflect this, i.e. questions are being asked about the child. These changes are shown in italics in brackets, with the text they replace underlined.

To finish the survey, here are a few questions about you and your household (about the household in which the child lives who answered most of the questions in this survey).

- 5.2 How many people, including both adults and children, live with you in your household? (*with the child in the child’s household?*)

Note: An answer is selected from a drop-down menu. In the adult version only the options include “0 – none, I live on my own” **Single code**

- 5.3 Which of the following descriptions applies best to the accommodation where you live? (*the child lives?*) **Single code**

- Owned outright by someone who lives in your (the child’s) household
- Owned with a mortgage
- Rented from the Council
- Rented from a housing association

- Rented privately
 - Other, specify:
 - Not sure
- 5.4 Is there a car or van normally available for use by you or members of your (*members of the child's*) household, including any provided by employers that are normally available for private use by those in your household? **Single code**
- Yes
 - No
- 5.5 Do you (*Does the child who answered most of this survey*) have a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? By longstanding I mean anything that has troubled you (*the child*) over a long period of time or that is likely to affect you (*the child*) over a period of time. **Single code**
- Yes
 - No

Question 5.6 is asked if the respondent (*the child*) has a long-standing illness ("Yes" in question 5.5).

- 5.6 Does this illness or disability limit your (*the child's*) activities in any way? **Single code**
- Yes
 - No
- 5.7 Which of these ethnic group do you consider that you belong to? (*the child belongs to?*) **Single code**
- White
 - Asian or Asian British
 - Black or Black British
 - Mixed ethnic background
 - Chinese or other ethnic group
 - Prefer not to say
- 5.8 Could you please indicate the range into which your total yearly household income falls, (*the total yearly income of the child's household falls,*) that is, income from all sources before tax and other deductions? **Single code**
- £6,000 or less
 - £6,001 to £15,600
 - £15,601 to £26,000
 - £26,001 to £41,600
 - £41,601 to £56,600
 - £56,601 or more
 - Prefer not to say

Question 5.9 is asked if the respondent is aged six to 16 in question A.1.1 Note: this question occurs only in the children's version and is answered by the child.

- 5.9 Has an adult aged 18 or older helped you throughout the time you've spent completing this questionnaire or been able to assist you in answering some of the questions? **Single code**
- Yes, an adult has helped me throughout
 - Yes, an adult has assisted me in answering some questions
 - No, an adult has not been involved as I have completed the questionnaire

The answer to the following question should be recorded based on Research Now's data, but not asked of respondents.

- 5.10 Socio-economic grade of R's household will be provided by Research Now from classification data it holds on panel members

5.11 Gender

- Male
- Female

Thank you very much for taking part in this survey.

The following data is recorded but not asked of respondents:

- Date survey completed
- Elapsed time to complete survey

Online survey – April/May 2010

The questionnaire used in November/December 2009 and in April/May 2010 were largely the same to ensure comparability of the responses. In April/May 2010, a small number of changes were made to the questionnaire used in November/December 2009, either to clarify responses received in the first round, or to gather additional data that were considered key to the evaluation. These changes, along with their placement in relation to the original survey questions and their rationale, are detailed in the following table.

Question number	Details	Rationale for change
2.1 to 2.3	These questions have been repeated, asking the respondent to compare their swimming now with six months ago (i.e. September 2009)?	To assess changes in swimming participation at the outset of the Free Swimming Programme, and at six months into the Free Swimming Programme.
Added after 2.4	Has swimming more often meant that you have completely stopped any other sports or recreational physical activities that you did before April 2009?	To assist in the assessment of leakage, particularly to assess the number of swimming participants who have experienced 100% leakage.
3.11	How likely is it that you would have gone swimming at this pool even if you had not been able to swim for free? • Very likely (100%) • Fairly likely (75%) • Neither likely or unlikely (50%) • Fairly unlikely (25%) • Very unlikely (0%)	The response scale for this question was amended from the previous questionnaire to include a percentage probability against each response. A scale of this nature allows respondents to select the most appropriate response on a more explicit scale, rather than the evaluators imposing such a scale retrospectively. This helps to improve consistency of response.
3.19	Thinking about the pool where you swam most recently, how likely are you to continue using this pool in order to take advantage of the opportunity to swim for free? • Very likely (100%) • Fairly likely (75%) • Neither likely or unlikely (50%) • Fairly unlikely (25%) • Very unlikely (0%)	The response scale for this question was amended from the previous questionnaire to include a percentage probability against each response. A scale of this nature allows respondents to select the most appropriate response on a more explicit scale, rather than the evaluators imposing such a scale retrospectively. This helps to improve consistency of response.
5.1	In future, how much would you be prepared to pay per session to swim in your local public swimming pool? Would you be prepared to pay: <i>Note: modify this question so that even those who have swum for free are asked and ensure that this refers to the amount which R would be willing to pay "once the Programme has ended".</i> <i>Ask further question – would you still swim as often if you could not swim for free – and explore impact of payment on frequency of swimming.</i>	To assess willingness to pay amongst respondents who have recently swam for free, to help in assessing sustainability and whether frequency of participation is likely to decline once the Free Swimming Programme has ended,
Added after 5.1	In future, how much would you be prepared to pay for a swimming lesson in your local public swimming pool? Would you be prepared to pay: <i>Note: this question should be asked of those who are identified as weak swimmers per the responses to the following questions:</i> • Those who have answered yes to question 2.6 and 'free' to question 3.20 • Those who have answered no to question 4.3 • Those who have answered yes to question 4.4	To assess sustainability of free swimming lessons, along with respondents willingness to pay for such lessons.

Annex 7: Topic guide for case study visits

Introduction

This Annex contains the topic guides which were used to inform the discussions with those involved in the Free Swimming Programme during the two waves of case studies. The two waves undertaken were as follows:

- **Wave 1:** Twelve visits were undertaken in November/December 2009 to a range of LAs and pools therein. These visits explored general views on the FSP (including economic implications), the financial implications of the FSP along with promotion, marketing and awareness-raising activities which LAs and pools have done; and
- **Wave 2:** Nine visits were undertaken in April/May 2010, co-ordinated via the Senior CSCs in each of the regions throughout England. These visits explored general views on the FSP to date, along with the impact of the CSCs and the impact of free swimming lessons on increasing participation in swimming.

First wave of visits – November/December 2009

Questions for the Head of Leisure Services

- Why did you decide to take part in the Free Swimming Programme?
- Who else was involved in making that decision?
- What were the factors involved in making your decision. For example, did your neighbouring LAs also avail of the Programme? Ask if there are any papers which we could see – for example where the decision was discussed at meetings, or if there is a business case or appraisal document.
- What outcomes did you expect as a result of taking part in the Programme?
- Have there been any unanticipated effects of taking part?
- Has the experience across the leisure centres in your local authority been the same/different – if so, how?
- Of those that avail of the FSP, what proportion were previously members of your leisure centre or held some form of membership at your pool? (probe for an estimate if this is not known factually)
- If the leisure centre has decided to target just one of these groups then why is that?
- If the leisure centre has decided to target free swimming to people outside of these two groups then why is that?
- Why do you think that uptake is now higher/lower than previously? What has this meant in the number of swimmers and the number of swims – i.e. is it the same people swimming more often for free, or are there actually new people swimming?
- Have you seen any change (increase/decrease) in the uptake of sports other than swimming in your local authority since the FSP has been in place?
- Have any partner organisations been involved (e.g. PCT) and what has their role and influence been?

Questions for finance department personnel within the LA or pool itself

- Describe the operating model for the pool/pools within the local authority area – are these funded and staffed directly by the council, or are they sub-contracted or outsourced in some way to the private sector?
- How, if at all, does your operating model impact on your ability to access the benefits of the Programme (i.e. have some operators been better able to take advantage of the financial and other benefits than others?) Has the operating model caused any constraints in the delivery of the FSP? If a private sector provider is responsible for providing leisure services – who has taken on any financial risk associated with the Programme – the provider or the council?
- In terms of the increase/decrease in uptake of free swimming between Q1 and Q2, what factors would you say have influenced this?
- Now that free swimming is at xx level, what has been the impact on the pool (or Leisure Provider)/LA in terms of finance, staffing and revenue costs (such as cleaning, catering, staffing levels)?
- Thinking specifically of the revenue grant which you got from DCMS for delivering the FSP, has this grant been sufficient to cover the foregone revenue from those aged 16 and under or 60 and over to deliver this programme?
- Have you added to the funding granted by Sport England – such as with funding from the PCT or LA itself?
- Did you receive capital funding support for the delivery of the FSP? Explore how capital funding has been used – firstly the small amount shared out initially by DCMS between all LAs which were providing swimming for both groups, and then the later tranche of capital funding which is being distributed through a competitive process by Sport England. If so, how has this been used, what impact did you expect it to have and what impact has it had?
- How much has your local authority (or other partners?) invested in rejuvenating the swimming pool or has it been financed exclusively through the FSP?
- Considering all of the above, what will be the key success factors in making the FSP work? Why do you say this? What are the risks associated with this, and how could they be mitigated?

Questions for leisure centre or pool managers

- How are you monitoring the number of people accessing the FSP – do you have an electronic/card based system or is it done manually? Are there any issues with monitoring numbers accessing the Programme?
- Are your neighbouring swimming pools also availing of FSP funding – how has this impacted on the FSP in your area?
- Which groups are offered free swimming at your leisure centre – is it 60 and over and 16 and under or one of these groups? (check that this is the same as recorded on the monitoring data)
- If the leisure centre has decided to target just one of these groups then why is that?
- If the leisure centre has decided to target free swimming to people outside of these two groups then why is that?
- Were you involved in the decision that your pool should be part of the FSP?
- How has the take up changed throughout the first six months i.e. has the take up been sustained?
- What changes have you noticed at your leisure centre since you began to participate in the Programme?
- Has participation increased in the targeted groups?
- Has participation increased outside those targeted groups?
- Have the targeted groups used other leisure facilities within your centre e.g. gym facilities?
- Have the targeted groups switched from using other facilities to swimming more often?
- Are other areas of the leisure centre e.g. restaurants more/less busy?
- How has this impacted on staffing and other resources?

Questions for the marketing department within the LA/pool

- How has your LA/pool sought to promote the FSP? Why were the channels used chosen? How much has been spent on advertising?
- Has your approach changed over the first six months – if so, how and why?
- What has worked well or not so well in terms of promoting and marketing the FSP? How, if at all, does this vary across target groups?
- How have you tried to promote the FSP to different groups – such as those aged 60 and over, 16 and under, ethnic minority groups and other non-traditional pool users?
- In designing your approach to promotion and marketing, have you decided to target any particular groups (e.g. areas of deprivation or BME communities)? What has worked well or not so well?
- What do you plan to do over the next six months in relation to promotion of the FSP?
- Overall, how do you think that your efforts with promotion and marketing have influenced take-up?

Questions for staff working at pools including reception, cafes and any other shops

- Have you seen a change in the amount of money generated by the pool since the FSP started? In what areas has this been most evident? Also, worth understanding the relative importance of the different revenue streams.
- Has the profile of your typical client changed as a result of the FSP?
- How long do users of the FSP spend swimming each time they visit the pool, e.g. 1 – 2hrs; 2-3hrs etc?
- (If visiting a leisure centre rather than a stand-alone pool) Have you noticed leisure centre members switching to swimming over other activities available within your centre e.g. pilates?
- Are the FSP participants repeat users of the leisure centre, i.e. has the uptake of the Programme been sustained? Do you think that “regular” swimmers are now coming more frequently?
- What help have you received from the CSC? How valuable has it been?

Observations

- Evidence of marketing and promotion
- Evidence of other initiatives taking place
- General atmosphere – busy/quiet, crowded, clean/dirty
- Swimming activities – are Free Swimmers actually swimming or doing other things e.g. aqua aerobics, water polo, inflatable sessions, no structured activities/generally “mucking about”.

Second wave of visits – April/May 2010

Questions for Senior CSCs and CSCs

- What was your background before you became a CSC/Senior CSC? What attracted you to this position? How was the recruitment process undertaken?
- Over the last year, what training have you received in your role as a CSC/Senior CSC? Has this been sufficient? Would you have liked any further training?
- What is your role in the region? What targets are you required to meet? What do you see as the key components within these? Do you have any operating plans?
- How would you describe the level of support for swimming, free swimming and lessons within and between the LAs in your region? How many are participating in one or both elements of the FSP? What level of funding did this region (or sub-regions therein) receive from ASA/Sport England/DCMS to support the Programme? Was this funding support supplemented by funding from other partners, such as the LA, PCT or others in the area?
- What support have you received from the ASA centrally/regionally? How helpful has this been? Are there any areas where it could have been improved? In what way?

- Who have been your key partners? How easy have you found it to establish partnerships? What has helped? What has hindered? How effective/successful have they been?
- What have been the key issues and challenges which you have faced? How have these challenges arisen and how have/will they be dealt with?
- What specific projects or initiatives have you supported in relation to free swimming/free swimming lessons in your region in your role as a CSC?
 - Spreading the philosophy of the free swimming initiative throughout the county;
 - Working in effective partnership with LAs and pool operators engaged in the FSP, supporting these organisations to deliver the FSP;
 - Implementing ASA policy and practice in the area;
 - Bringing about the desired culture change; and
 - Acting as a representative for the ASA, in helping to achieve national and regional goals and targets particularly to get more people swimming.
- Can you provide examples, or any particular success stories, for example:
 - Enabling swimming pools to offer free swimming lessons;
 - Marketing of free swimming lessons or free swimming at local pools;
 - Training staff at local swimming pools;
 - Undertaking work to ensure FSP reaches deprived/vulnerable groups or those not traditionally involved in swimming;
 - Helping local swimming pools to improve their pool programming; and
 - Other initiatives?
- Is there anything which has not worked so well?
- What lessons would you say that you have learnt?
- What has been the actual impact of your activities? Are there more people swimming within your region? Are there more people now physically active or more active? Are those that are taking free swimming lessons also now going to the pool, outside of their swimming lessons and paying for swims? Have some LAs/areas in your region experienced a greater impact than in others? Why do you think that is?
- Have there been any unanticipated effects?
- Has the experience across the leisure centres in your local authority been the same/different – if so, how?
- Do you think that any of this work would have happened in the absence of the CSC team, or in the absence of specific funding support? If so, what would have happened? What would not have happened?
- Over the next year in your post, what will be your key areas of focus in this region? Why have you specifically stated these areas? Do you expect to achieve this? What are the key risks and uncertainties?
- What do you expect to be the key success factors determining whether there will be increased swimming participation in the short term (12 months) and medium to longer term (2-5 years)?
- How best do you think that the increased level of participation in swimming could be sustained once the FSP/free swimming lessons end?

Questions for leisure centre staff and swimming teachers

- What is the nature of the FSP offer in the area? Discuss how it has worked for both under 16s and over 60s based on the monitoring data.
- How successful would you say the FSP has been in this area to date (based on what you had initially expected to happen) in increasing participation in swimming, and in attracting new swimmers?
- Prior to the introduction of free swimming lessons, what lessons or schemes were provided within your centre/area? Are these lessons/schemes still available now that free swimming lessons are available? How has free swimming lessons impacted upon existing provision?
- Why did your pool/area decide to provide free swimming lessons? Describe the process for applying

for funding for these lessons – were there any issues or challenges in this process?

- What groups are being targeted for participation in lessons? Why were these groups selected?
- How have you sought to promote free swimming lessons? Why were the channels used chosen? How much has been spent on advertising? How effective has each been? What has worked well/less well? In the NW region, pick up on the experience of Bolton in particular (showcased at recent CSC training event)
- Describe the “offer” for free swimming lessons:
 - How many lessons are offered?
 - Over what time period are lessons offered? (pick up on any issues with pool access)
 - How long does each lesson last? At what time is it offered?
 - How many swimming coaches (and of what qualification level) assist with these? Do you feel that this is sufficient, or are there challenges in this area?
- Has your approach changed over the first six months – if so, how and why?
- What impacts have you observed in terms of free swimming lessons?
 - Attendance and completion rates for lessons.
 - Confidence/swimming ability amongst participants.
 - Satisfaction, experience and general feedback from participants.
 - Participation in public swimming sessions by those who have taken lessons.
 - Participation in other leisure activities amongst those who have taken lessons.
- What has worked well or not so well in terms of offering free swimming lessons? Does this vary across different target groups?
- What help have you received from the local authority, ASA, the CSC or any other partners? How valuable has this help been? What would you have done without it?
- What advice would you offer to other centres who were thinking of providing free swimming lessons, for example:
 - Encouraging take-up of lessons;
 - Retention of swimmers/new swimmers; and
 - Outcomes in terms of swimming ability/water confidence.
- To what extent do you think that those who have participated in lessons will continue swimming in the future? What factors will influence this, and how are you addressing these?
- What do you plan to do over the next six months to a year in relation to free swimming lessons? What do you plan to do beyond FSP?
- Considering all of the above, what will be the key success factors in making free swimming lessons successful? Why do you say this? What are the risks associated with this, and how could they be mitigated?

The following final questions will then be used to round off interviews with the range of participants:

- How would you rate the FSP so far on a scale of one to ten (where one is poor and ten is excellent)?
- What impact do you think that the FSP will have on swimming rates in the short to medium term (i.e. in the next 6/12/24 months) and in the longer term (over the next five years)?
- How would you rate free swimming lessons so far on a scale of one to ten (where one is poor and ten is excellent)?
- What impact do you think that free swimming lessons will have on swimming rates in the short to medium term (i.e. in the next 6/12/24 months) and in the longer term (over the next five years)?

Annex 8: Topic guide for interviews with non-participating local authorities

Introduction

This Annex contains the topic guide which we used to inform the discussions with a number of non-participating LAs. These interviews were undertaken by telephone in November 2009.

Interview questions

- Are you aware of the FSP? If so, how did you become aware of it? What do you understand the FSP involves – free swims, capital grants and free swimming lessons?
 - Explore awareness of Programme for those aged 60 and over and those aged 16 and under.
- How did your local authority approach the decision as to whether or not to participate in the FSP?
 - What factors influenced your decision not to participate in the FSP? Probe for factors such as level of information provided, financial implications – what were the key costs/benefits (e.g. staff costs (more lifeguards), foregone revenue, ancillary income), other programmes already in place (please include names and details of offer where this is the case), importance attached to physical activity by the LA/existing levels of activity within the LA. Understand the critical factors
 - Who was involved in this decision?
 - Was there any difference in the approach for those aged 60 and over and those aged 16 and under?
 - Aim to get as much 'hard' information as possible (e.g. are there Council Committee papers etc which sum up the considerations)?
- How has the decision not to participate in the FSP been received?
 - Probe to explore public reaction (complaints, queries), elected members and other public sector organisations (e.g. PCTs and health bodies).
 - With the benefit of hindsight, would you make the same decision again today? If no, what has changed? Probe for better understanding if scheme, experience in other LAs, boundary hopping, etc?
- How would you describe the level of swimming uptake/participation in your local authority:
 - Before April 2009?
 - From April 2009 until now?
 - By those aged 16 and under and those aged 60 and over?
 - By men and women generally?
 - By those from BME communities?
- In what way (if at all) do you think that the level of swimming participation by each of these groups

would have been different had your local authority chosen to participate in the FSP?

- What are your perceptions of the FSP based on what you have seen or heard about it elsewhere?
- Has your local authority undertaken any work over the last six months (particularly those aged 60 and over or those aged 16 and under) to:
 - Remove the cost barriers to swimming (i.e. by providing free or discounted swims)?
 - Remove the barrier of not being able to swim (i.e. through the provision of lessons, either free or discounted)?
 - Encourage existing or new swimmers to swim more often?
 - Improve the quality of the swimming experience?
 - If yes to any of the above, what has the impact of these initiatives been in terms of uptake and impact (financial, staffing)?
 - Who (if anyone) have they been undertaken with (e.g. PCT, etc)
- Finally, have you any suggestions as to how the FSP itself could be improved to encourage uptake across all LAs?
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