



# EVERYDAY SWIM NEWS *Good Practice Centres*

NOVEMBER EDITION 2009 | ISSUE 28 | EDITOR NICOLA POLLEY

## Welcome to the November edition of Everyday Swim News

The last month has been a busy one for Everyday Swim, with the successful delivery of five national good practice seminars and the publication of the final report of the national pilot project as well as continued activities in the good practice centre areas!



The publication of the final report is a key milestone for Everyday Swim therefore this edition of Everyday Swim news focuses on bringing to you some key findings from the report, whilst also taking a look at the good practice seminars in brief.

If you have any questions or queries please email us at [everydayswim@swimming.org](mailto:everydayswim@swimming.org).

Enjoy your reading!

*Nicola Polley, Swimming Activity Officer, the ASA*

## Everyday Swim Final Report

In addition to the Active People Surveys to identify the impact of Everyday Swim, researchers from SIRC (Sport Industry Research Centre) at Sheffield Hallam University were commissioned to monitor and evaluate Everyday Swim at the onset of the project in 2006.

Analysis of the data collected has formed some key themes for the emerging blueprint for increasing participation in swimming. These are identified in the Everyday Swim Final Report and are being shared across the industry as good practice.

The Everyday Swim Final Report, Location Specific Reports (one for each of the Everyday Swim pilot areas) and other supporting documents are available at [www.everydayswim.org](http://www.everydayswim.org) but here are some highlights...



## What Active People says - 10,901 additional swimmers for Everyday Swim areas

The headline figures of Active People2 (AP2) were published in December 2008. Between AP1 and AP2 national figures showed that participation rates for those swimming at least once in the last four weeks had fallen from 13.8% to 13.4%. This is a statistically significant reduction in participation between the two surveys, and as reported by Sport England - meant a 63,600 reduction in swimmers.

In its simplest form, it can be reported that only one of the Everyday Swim pilot areas showed a significant increase in participation rates between the two surveys (a 3.84% increase in Islington), on closer analysis other interesting results have been identified;

- Only 9 local authorities reported a significant increase in participation rates between the AP surveys, one of which was an Everyday Swim pilot area.
- Seven of the Everyday Swim pilot areas reported 'no significant change', however collectively their average change was +0.44%, this compares favorably to the national average where it can be found that of the 327 local authorities reporting 'no significant change' their average change was -0.22%. Suggesting that ES areas performed counter to the national trend, adding value at a local level.
- Four of the Everyday Swim authorities (Islington, Lewisham, Kirklees, and Bolsover) are ranked in the top quartile for their performance (top 88 out



of 354), which is twice what would be expected under normal conditions.

- When figures were analysed to identify the change in the numbers of adult swimmers in Everyday Swim authorities it was identified that across the pilot areas there was an overall increase of 10,901 adult swimmers. When considered in the context of the reduction of 63,600 adult swimmers nationally, this is yet further evidence of the positive impact of Everyday Swim.

It is important to note that Everyday Swim was not pitched solely at adult swimmers, some interventions were aimed at increasing the uptake of swimming by children and young people, who would not be included in the Active People Surveys.

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## The blueprint - Three emerging themes

Three emerging components identified from Everyday Swim as key to driving forward the delivery of swimming and increasing participation are; *Culture Change, Structured Sessions and Creative Marketing*.

Each theme of good practice is explained in detail in the report, but here is an overview with some key supporting evidence as identified by Everyday Swim.

### Culture Change

Swimming participation rates have remained static for the last 20-25 years. The way in which pool providers work can bring about a culture change in the delivery of swimming, this needs to be embraced to develop the market for swimming.

#### Everyday Swim supporting evidence;

- Workforce fit for purpose to broaden the base of swimming participation by enabling new markets to be developed.

Some of the Everyday Swim pilots spent considerable resources on this essential element. Wirral was one of the first areas in the country to train dry-side instructors with the new Aquajogging qualification to deliver pool based sessions. Whilst in Woking an audit identified a shortfall in female lifeguards which was impacting on the delivery of women only sessions at the pool.

- Performance management tools.

Consultation with customers and non-customers will help pool operators to manage expectations and identify areas of service delivery that might require action. In Woking a review led to the introduction of additional cleaning hours, which has since increased customer satisfaction.

- Audit the pool programme.

Research informs us that there is a strong positive relationship between participation rates (demand) and the availability of pool space (supply). Everyday Swim examples come from Easington where vital pool hours were unlocked at a school pool which was opened to provide community access.

### Structured Sessions

Providing structured sessions rather than 'free splash' is essential in converting new participants into regular swimmers. Having structured sessions linked into pathways gives the new swimmer an idea of where their participation 'journey' might take them.

#### Everyday Swim supporting evidence;

- Adult learn to swim opportunities.

Providing a structured environment in which adults can learn to swim is one way to tap into the latent demand identified in Active People, as for many adult this is the barrier to participation. 1 in 5 adults are unable to swim in England.

In Islington, 704 adults have accessed quality free or subsidised adult lessons as a result of Everyday Swim. Through empowering people with the relevant water skills and confidence, swimming lessons provide a platform for positive behaviour change.

- The Aqua-Max summer programme for young people in Telford and Wrekin delivered a variety of water based activities including snorkeling, mini polo, and Aqua fun sessions.

Having this structure kept participants engaged.

### Creative Marketing

The Active People2 survey revealed that 13% of the adult participation on England would like to start swimming or swim more often. To persuade potential new swimmers to use your pool it's essential to market beyond the four walls of the pool in a way that is audience and context specific. It is not a one size fits all approach.

#### Everyday Swim supporting evidence;

- Creative techniques such as the Suffolk open days are a key opportunity to engage with non-swimmers and showcase the range of aquatic opportunities, improved standards of cleanliness, improved facilities, and that 'times have changed'. 64% of those who visited the initial Suffolk open days stated they had used the swimming pool since the open day on a follow up survey.
- 56% of participants on the Islington free adult learn to swim lesson programme in 2008 found out about them via Islington's Motivation magazine, a glossy magazine full of interesting feature based articles on swimming which was delivered to residential households. Of these new swimmers, a follow up survey revealed that 19% had never used the leisure centre before and 30% had not used one in the last year.

More supporting detail on the three themes can be found in Chapter 5 within the final report.

## Critical success factors

The final report also highlights the key strategic conditions required to enable interventions such as Everyday Swim to succeed. These are vital where the overall outcome is to create the potential to increase participation levels in swimming.

- Being well informed
- Effective Consultation
- Dynamic leaders and support network
- Continuity and perseverance
- Long term vision
- Marketing and promotions
- M&E

Find out more in Chapter 6 of the report.

## Next steps

Everyday Swim has confirmed that there is no 'magic bullet' for increasing participation in swimming, and that it is actually a question of doing 100 things 1% better rather than one thing 100% better.

But swimming has the edge, it is the sport with the highest levels of latent demand amongst adults (AP2) and it IS possible to drive swimming forward with the insight of the Everyday Swim project.

The ASA are committed to taking forward the good practice from Everyday Swim to support the delivery of the governments Free Swimming initiative through our 49 ASA County Swimming Coordinators. This is a unique time for swimming and we look forward to embracing it as we are provided with an opportunity to be proactive and bring about improvements in the way swimming is delivered.

## Everyday Swim Good Practice Seminars



*Five Everyday Swim Good Practice seminars were delivered in October across the country. These national seminars gave delegates a unique opportunity to learn the lessons from Everyday Swim and hear firsthand the key findings and good practice identified across the project as identified in the final report.*

More than 350 delegates from organisations including local authorities, leisure providers, and county sports partnerships, took up the opportunity and enjoyed an informative day with the Everyday Swim team. Olympic gold medalist, Duncan Goodhew, also attended each event as national ambassador for the project, giving a motivational key note speech at each.

Following the seminars, the Everyday Swim team is committed to sharing the good practice identified across the industry and beyond. As part of this they will offer ongoing learning opportunities including email and phone support, the Everyday Swim newsletter, bespoke visitor days to the good practice centres and more!

For information on any of these please visit the good practice area of [www.everydayswim.org](http://www.everydayswim.org)

