



**LONDON SPORT
CONSULTANCY**

**PORT OF
LONDON
AUTHORITY**

Active Thames Participation and Workforce Research

March - July 2021



The Challenge

The Thames Vision (2015-2035) highlights sport and recreation as one of the PLAs six priorities, specifically, increasing the number of recreational users on and alongside the river. To support this area of the vision, London Sport conducted initial research that brought together responses from 73 unique organisations along the river, including educational institutes, activity centres, clubs, charities and operators, to gain an understanding of current provision and levels of activity.

Working together, the Port of London Authority and London Sport has brought together key strategic stakeholders and, through consultation, facilitated workshops and surveys, developed Active Thames. Active Thames is a solution-focused programme aimed at increasing recreational usage on and alongside the tidal Thames and associated assets. The programme covers three main areas:

1. Growing and developing the water sports workforce across direct delivery and business support roles
2. Growing water sports
3. Developing facilities - clubhouse hubs and walking trails.

London Sport's Support

London Sport were commissioned to deliver a combination of stakeholder surveys and direct consultation to gather the evidence needed to support the direction of the Active Thames programme. Ultimately, this will facilitate decision-making and identify opportunities to increase physical activity and diversity in watersports.

London Sport's insight work aimed to give a better understanding of the factors affecting participation in watersports on the tidal Thames and inland waterways from organisational, administrative, delivery and participation perspectives.



Project Methodology

To enhance understanding of issues, feelings and barriers, London Sport has conducted two stages of research among three key groups:

- Administrative Workforce
- Coaching/Volunteering Workforce
- Participants in Waterways Activities

The research comprised of:

Stage 1: A quantitative self-completion online survey sent to a sample of people in all three groups which drew responses from 76 administrators, 115 coaches and 751 participants.

Stage 2: A qualitative online community to explore issues in-depth and to allow participants, in part, to highlight critical issues and help set the agenda.

The online community ran for three weeks and encouraged interaction between administrators, coaches and participants, with much probing and follow-up questions from London Sport and PLA personnel.

What do our partners say?

“With over 940 individuals taking part in the research, we have a wealth of insight into the challenges and aspirations of the watersports community. They want to see their sport draw in new audiences and become more reflective of the local community- and the research shows that developing the workforce will be key to achieving this.

As the largest watersports survey in the region to date, we have a solid evidence base for the development of the Active Thames programme. The mixture of quantitative and qualitative feedback is a good balance - I really recommend the online consultation platform as a space to probe further, and enrich discussion.”

- Jenny Cooper, Sports Manager, Port of London Authority



Interested in working with London Sport? Get in touch:

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