



**LONDON SPORT
CONSULTANCY**

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 have 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 sport workforce across direct delivery and business support roles
2. Growing water sports
3. Developing facilities – clubhouse hubs and walking trails.

London Sport's Support

The concrete and, importantly, actionable outcomes the Port of London Authority and its partners expect to gain from this project are as follows:

- A better understanding of the factors affecting participation in watersports on the Tidal Thames from organisational, administrative, delivery and participation perspectives.
- A clear picture of participant and workforce profiles, including identified gaps in engagement and recommendations on how to diversify participation on the water.
- A better understanding of the barriers and needs affecting participation from administrative, delivery and participant perspectives, as well as the solutions and opportunities to overcome these.
- A roadmap to growing the watersports offer and building capacity across organisations delivering, and supporting the delivery of, watersports on the Tidal Thames.



Project Methodology

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

These groups were: Administrative Workforce, Coaching/Volunteering Workforce and Participants in Waterways Activities. The research comprised:

Stage 1:

A quantitative 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.

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



Interested in working with London Sport?

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