

# Complementing Fitness



9%  
of English  
population

4.1m individuals

0.8m latent demand



34% are interested  
in swimming in next  
4 weeks



33% of those  
interested are likely to  
swim in next 4 weeks



77% are satisfied  
with the overall  
swimming experience

## Their key characteristics

- Whilst there are individuals from all ages in this segment, there is a high concentration of those in their teens and 20s.
- This segment is less likely to have a disability.

## Their lifestyle

Family, friends and keeping active are important to this segment. Keeping active allows them to live well, age well and set a good example.

## Their physical activity and ability

Staying healthy and being active are important. They participate in exercise 2 to 3 times a week.

23% have started swimming in the last year; prior to swimming they enjoyed walking or running.

These individuals have a good swimming ability.

This group is less likely to recommend swimming to friends and family.



"After a swim I feel so much better as the stresses of the day drift away and I feel a sense of pride and achievement."

# Complementing Fitness

## How to get them swimming more

### Frontier 1 – Visibility + Relevance

This segment understands that swimming makes an overall contribution to their fitness; it's great for weight loss and is an enjoyable low impact exercise. However swimming does act as a complement to their preferred exercise and is enjoyed most on holiday.

#### What to do:

- Educate them on the benefits of swimming in order to develop their fitness specifically.
- Promote through the gym, through a personal trainer, and at the leisure centre preferably in hall spaces to catch those doing complimentary sports.
- Market the campaigns based on getting fit but having fun at the same time.

### Frontier 2 – Welcoming Environment

Swimming is a complement to their current routine because the desired fitness benefits aren't perceived to be available in the pool, either through a lack of understanding of the fitness benefits of swimming or lack of pool equipment to offer a different training stimulus.

#### What to do:

- Provide fitness mats and weights on poolside for an added challenge.
- Improve staff knowledge with training on specific fitness goals and the benefits of swimming.
- Reframe the pool as a fitness arena.

### Frontier 3 – Tailoring the swimming offer

Swimming is seen as unchallenging and a more sedate or gentle form of exercise. Tracking progress in swimming is perceived to be hard. Individuals in this segment are likely to swim at a gentle pace and chat with friends. The social element to swimming is important to them.

#### What to do:

- Create challenging swim events helps this segment see the pool as their fitness arena.
- Make swimming social, as they tend to go with friends.
- Market intense fitness sessions and the ability to track the fitness benefits of swimming by using technology. This will help change the current 'complementary' perception of swimming that this segment has.

 **Current sessions:** Casual

 **Other sessions of interest:**  
Relaxation, adult only and family fun sessions

 **Times of interest:** Weekday mid mornings (9am–12pm)

# How do you get more women swimming?

## Oxley Sports Centre: Ladies only 'Loose Women'

### Background

Oxley's 'Loose Women' started back in September 2010 from the government initiative Free Swimming to get more women in the pool. The demand for the sessions, resulted in a weekly (weekday) social group for women aged over 40.

Prior to the sessions there were limited opportunities for exclusive pool time for ladies as part of Oxley's pool programme.

### Challenges

The main challenges for this centre, was to cater for the level of interest that was received from mixed ability swimmers. This included; non-swimmers and competent length swimmers.

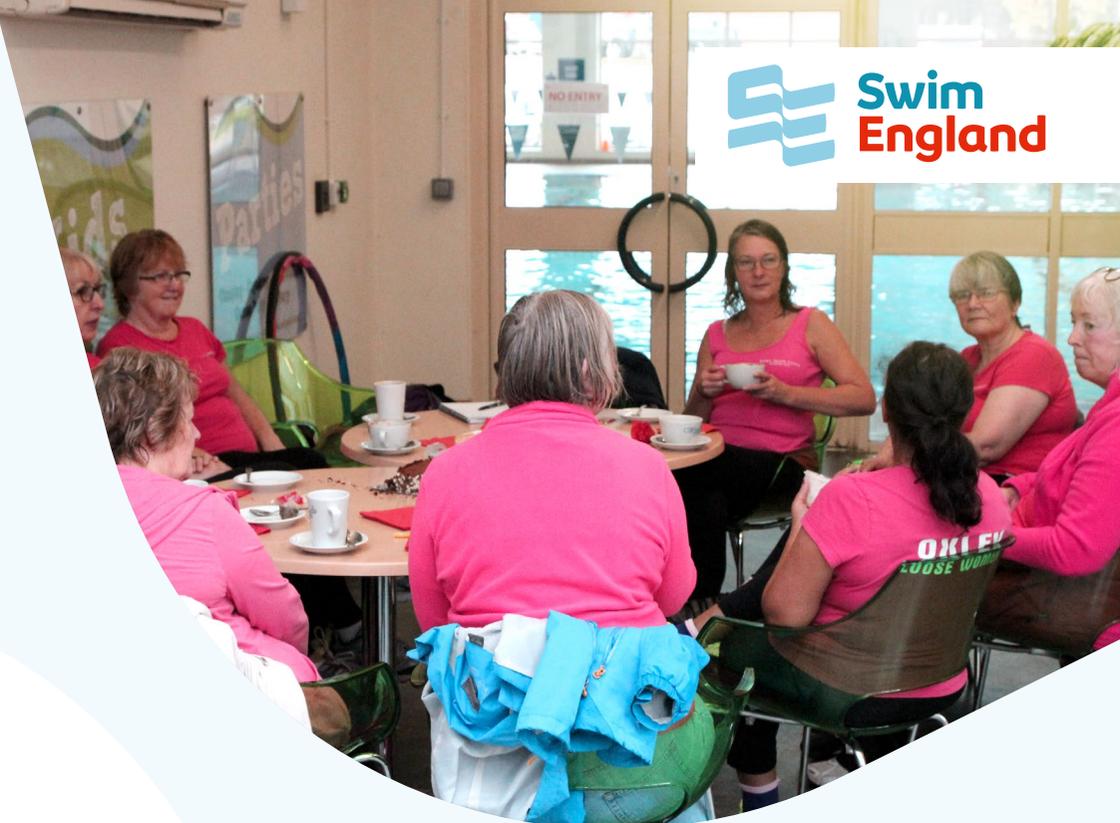
### Approach

- The sessions centre around exciting and engaging content. Anyone who wants to get involved in the sessions are first invited to have a chat with the swim co-ordinator and are given a tour around the facility.

- It is a mixed offer comprising a dry side session (e.g. power hoop, indoor climbing, and badminton) and a swim session with an instructor on poolside offering teaching/ advice on a casual basis.
- The swim co-ordinator encourages the group to try new activities, such as aquatic discipline activities mixed with swimming to create a fun, innovative session that everyone can partake in.
- The 'Loose Women' have developed their own branded t-shirts and swimming costumes.
- Each week a different member of the group brings in a cake and they sit in the centre's café afterwards with hot drinks subsidised to encourage the social aspect of the group.

### The Results

- Many ladies now take part in multiple activities at and away from the centre.
- Increased confidence and ability of the ladies attending the swim sessions.
- The 'Loose Women', as well as many of their partners, have since taken out memberships at the facility.



Increase in attendance, many now swim times per week **2-3**

Average attendance of ladies each week with a group of 25 at times **12**

**1.5** hours of pool time is provided to the ladies per week

**"I travel 17 miles to get here, there is nothing else like it, the mix of activity really floats my boat."**

**Participant** 

**Find out more:**  
If you are interested in getting more involved with a similar project, please contact [equality@swimming.org](mailto:equality@swimming.org)