

# Restorative Swimmers



8%  
of English  
population

3.9m individuals

1.6m latent demand



51% are interested  
in swimming in next  
4 weeks



34% of those  
interested are likely to  
swim in next 4 weeks



90% are satisfied  
with the overall  
swimming experience

## Their key characteristics

- Both pre-family and post-family life stages.
- More likely to be female.
- Tend to be affluent individuals.

## Their lifestyle

These individuals spend much of their time juggling lots of activities and commitments, including home, work and family time.

## Their physical activity and ability

They want to build and maintain their overall health and wellbeing through moderate, low impact exercise to alleviate their current health issues or prevent any future issues. Typical forms of exercise for this segment includes gardening and walking. They try to do these activities at least 2 or 3 times a month.

21% have started swimming in the last year; prior to this they enjoyed walking/running, fitness classes or cycling.

These individuals have good swimming ability.

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



"I like going for the occasional swim as it gives a full body workout and can be a gentle, full body exercise. I feel invigorated afterwards and calm."

# Restorative Swimmers

## How to get them swimming more

### Frontier 1 – Visibility + Relevance

Being able to relax and de-stress whilst swimming is very important to these individuals, as is improving their physical and mental wellbeing.

#### What to do:

- Focus messaging around the benefits of swimming towards maintaining holistic health (e.g. “You are only one swim away from a good mood”).
- Promote swimming activities within the leisure centre or on the local council website as these individuals are most likely to view swimming via this media.
- Promote swimming at exercise classes in the facility for cross selling purposes.
- Promote the benefits of a swim membership to encourage a regular habit as Restorative swimmers are likely to be PAYG customers.

### Frontier 2 – Welcoming Environment

Restorative swimmers want to feel relaxed and refreshed by their swim experience, which includes being in a relaxing pool environment. Creating a “spa” feel on and around poolside will encourage these individuals to swim more frequently.

#### What to do:

- Create a “spa” feel in your pool; dimmed/mood lighting, warmer pool temperature and relaxing music.
- Ensure the cleanliness of the swimming pool, promoting the cleaning schedule to improve customers’ comfort.
- Install vanity areas and features such as free hairdryers and seating will help them to feel refreshed after their swim and may encourage more frequent swimming.

### Frontier 3 – Tailoring the swimming offer

This segment like to enjoy a stress free experience whilst swimming; avoiding pools at busy times and any sessions in the pool that aren’t inclusive of any disabilities/health conditions they may have.

#### What to do:

- Create a tailored pool programme to allow Restorative Swimmers to enjoy their ‘me time’ without being disrupted by a crowded busy pool.
- Create after work sessions to help these individuals de-stress and refresh after their busy day.
- Optimise the inclusivity of sessions for those with disability/health conditions.

#### 👍 Current sessions:

Casual and lane swimming

#### 💬 Other sessions of interest:

Health/GP Referral and relaxation sessions

#### 📅 Times of interest:

Early evenings (6pm-9pm) on weekdays and the mornings on the weekend (6am-2pm)

# How do you encourage a regular swimming habit?

## Kirklees Active Leisure (KAL): Aqua Relax

### Background

Kirklees Active Leisure (KAL) were a pilot operator for the Swim England's 'Let's Go Swimming' project, aimed at encouraging individuals with additional needs to make aquatic activity part of their weekly habit. Prior to starting Aqua Relax sessions, KAL's aqua classes were focused on improving fitness, rather than relaxation and swimming.

### Challenges

The Aqua Relax session was trialled at Huddersfield Leisure Centre. When expanding the session to a further five pools in Kirklees, KAL had to ensure all Aqua Relax sessions ran as close to the session description as possible, whilst being aware that each pool's physical environment differs.

### Approach

Aqua Relax sessions are targeted at people who want to swim for holistic benefits.

- The sessions are relaxation focussed and fully inclusive, with warmer water, dimmed lighting and relaxing music.

- Lane ropes have been removed to take away the competitive element and provide a sense of equality in the water.
- The sessions take place regularly, even during school holidays, allowing participants to build a swimming habit.

### The Results

Since the pilot, Aqua Relax has evolved to be a fully inclusive activity for individuals in Kirklees. Feedback from participants has been very positive and indicated:

- Those with additional needs felt equality in the water that they didn't tend to find in other sports.
- Increased health and wellbeing, having made at least one of the Aqua Relax sessions part of their routine each week.
- The success of the sessions has led to a successful Sportivate bid for Adult Access Swimming Lessons for adults with additional needs.

"I come with my friend and we both love it. We're really active in the garden and walk together, but we like to come here because it's lovely and warm and we can relax."

Aqua Relax Participant 



Expanded Aqua relax sessions across the area/ at their sites to **19.5** hours a week

Participation has grown **50%** in 3 months

**£10,000** funding allocation from local council to promote inclusivity

 Find out more:

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