



24%
of English
population

👤 11.2m individuals

👤+ No latent demand



4% are interested in
swimming in next 4
weeks



12% of those
interested are likely to
swim in next 4 weeks



34 % are satisfied
with the overall
swimming experience

Their key characteristics

- Likely to be retired.
- Likely to be male.
- Tend to be of low affluence.
- Likely to have health conditions and/or impairments.

Their lifestyle

They have a clear weekly routine, prioritising hobbies and family time. They like to feel capable of what they're doing and their hobbies/activities tend to play to their current strengths and abilities; reading, gardening and cooking. They value learning new skills but don't like to bring any additional stress into their lives.

Their physical activity and ability

These individuals tend to exercise several times a month and this tends to be low intensity and impact, such as walking, gardening and dancing.

29% have started swimming in the last year; prior to swimming their main sport involvement was rugby, squash and netball. Their prior involvement in sport was several years earlier.

These individuals have a poor swimming ability, with the majority only being able to swim a length at most.

This group is very unlikely to recommend swimming to friends and family.



"I haven't been swimming in years as I am very frightened of being in deep water so I wouldn't feel safe. I know I learnt to swim but it's been years since I did my last swim"

How to inspire them to a consistent swimming habit

Frontier 1

These individuals do not swim and do not want to. This apathy is namely because of a variety of the following factors; low swim ability and confidence, high anxiety/fear, little desire to learn or improve as they are already satisfied with existing hobbies/activities.

What to do:

- Create a campaign around swimming as an enjoyable activity with the family in the summer months (e.g. grandchildren).
- Focus messaging around removing fear from the task of swimming and building confidence.
- Include secondary messaging around having fun in the water and being part of a community group/hub.
- Promote swimming on squash or netball courts at the facility for cross selling purposes.

Frontier 2

This segment are not used to going to a leisure facility and can feel uncomfortable when doing so. Improving their confidence of the environment, and knowledge of the swimming routine will boost their satisfaction with swimming.

What to do:

- Train a member of staff to focus on improving the customer journey would increase the satisfaction of the swim for these individuals. Structured swim inductions for new customers should include explanations of the swim timetable as well as a tour of the facility.
- Support these individuals with a warm welcome, support where necessary, and direction to swim sessions to improve the swim experience.
- Provide encouragement and support to improve their confidence, via a 'pool walker'.

Frontier 3

These individuals lack confidence in their swimming ability; either due to concerns over technique or never having learnt. Swimming is also perceived to be a boring activity.

What to do:

- Position sessions around removing fear and teaching the basics in an adult friendly way via adult swimming lessons or skill development "MOT" sessions.
- Ensure that sessions tailored to this segment have a social element; either with an instructor, pool walker or offer the opportunity for sessions attendees to relax and socialise together after the session.
- Implement fun and enjoyable sessions (e.g. in leisure water space) to create interest for this segment, so it doesn't 'feel' like they are swimming.

Current sessions:

Casual swimming

Other sessions of interest:

limited interest, but adult only and 50+ could encourage them into the water

Times of interest:

Mornings (6–9am) and early evenings (6pm–9pm), particularly so at weekends

How do you give adults aged 50+ the confidence to swim?

Reigate and Banstead Borough: Get Active 50+ project

Background

Banstead Leisure Centre, had been closed and replaced with the new Tadworth Leisure and Community Centre. Adult Learn to Swim lessons were extremely popular at the old centre and it was a priority to continue to offer adult lessons on the new pool programme.

The borough also wanted to engage with other non-swimmers and worked in partnership with Swim England and GLL to develop an offer that would suit their older audience.

Funding was received from Sport England Community Sport Activation Fund.

Challenges

- Reaching the inactive local population and encouraging adults aged 50+ to swim.
- Allaying participants concerns about an unfamiliar environment as many hadn't swam for a number of years.

Approach

- The "Get active 50+ project" used insight from the council and Swim England's Behaviour Change research to create an offer

that worked over the three frontiers.

Frontier 1 – increasing relevance and awareness

- 7,500 promotional flyers were distributed to local households. These were targeted by age and levels of activity and used appropriate creative and messaging for the audiences.
- The promotional message featured in the borough news.
- Reception staff promoted the course to site users.

Frontier 2 – environment

- Reception staff greeted all the participants when they entered the centre
- On their first session participants are given a tour of the facility
- After each session the reception staff provided tea, coffee and biscuits in a separate, quiet area, away from the bustling café, enabling the group to socialise together

Frontier 3 – tailored pool programme

- Their experienced instructor was able to adapt the sessions week on week to meet the demands of the participants



Results

- Water confidence has been restored in the participants and they have now created a habit by swimming regularly.

"Julie used to be a regular swimmer but lack of familiarity with the new site put Julie off swimming. This course has given her confidence again; she is now swimming full lengths of the pool"

Tadworth Staff Member 

Increase in swim attendance
due to social aspect

GLL agreed to extend **8** hours of funding for a further delivery

Successful **joint partnership** working

 **Find out more:**

If you are interested in getting more involved with a similar project, please contact learntoswim@swimming.org