

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE

Research Project Briefing Sheet

Project Title:

An investigation into the impact of the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics on community sport and physical activity for young people aged between 8 and 24 years in the London borough of Southwark.

Hypothesis:

The London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics have had a positive impact and increased the number of 8 to 24 year olds engaging in sport and physical activity in the London Borough of Southwark.

Objectives:

- To determine the impact of the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics on levels of sport and physical activity across the London Borough of Southwark
- To focus on potential impacts specifically on young people aged between 8 and 24 years
- To explore changing attitudes towards sport, interest and participation in new sport forms and the effect of these on the wider family
- To challenge the notion of an Olympic 'legacy' and investigate the prevalence of this concept in sport and physical activity for young people from a grassroots level across the borough
- To take a retrospective view of the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics. Research will be qualitative for the most part as a pre and post comparative study is not possible due to timings.

Summary of findings

- Young people in Southwark embraced the London 2012 spirit and have become more aware of sport and physical activity opportunities available
- There has been a significant increase (72.06%) in the use of 'Get Active London' to search for sport and physical activity opportunities within Southwark post London 2012
- The most popular sports searched for in Southwark on 'Get Active London' has shifted from more traditional towards minority sports
- The majority of young people in Southwark were inspired to try new sports as a result of London 2012
- Young people in Southwark expressed a desire to improve and become more dedicated to sports they already take part in
- Young people in Southwark have been inspired by competitors at London 2012 and now have a number of role models to assist with lifestyle changes

- Data has led to a leading question; *does inspiration lead to participation?* Evidence suggests that despite young people being inspired by London 2012, it is a challenge to ensure this conversion takes place
- Young people in Southwark are more likely to convert inspiration into participation if the following three components are in play; lead adult/coach, established club or session and a local, accessible facility
- A number of young people in Southwark have encouraged friends and family to take part in sport and physical activity since London 2012
- Barriers exist within the borough preventing young people encouraging friends to join them in sporting activity
- Local sports clubs have experienced an increase in membership, but this was not associated specifically with London 2012
- Local sports clubs do not have concerns about capacity for new membership
- Southwark schools have reported minimal changes to their programmes post London 2012
- The majority of young people in Southwark believe there are enough opportunities for sport and physical activity in the borough but wanted to know where to find out more information
- Young people in Southwark expressed a negative view of the term legacy, but noted positive impacts on their involvement in sport since London 2012

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