

Sport Unlimited Annual Report - Year 2

Summary of performance against year 2 targets:

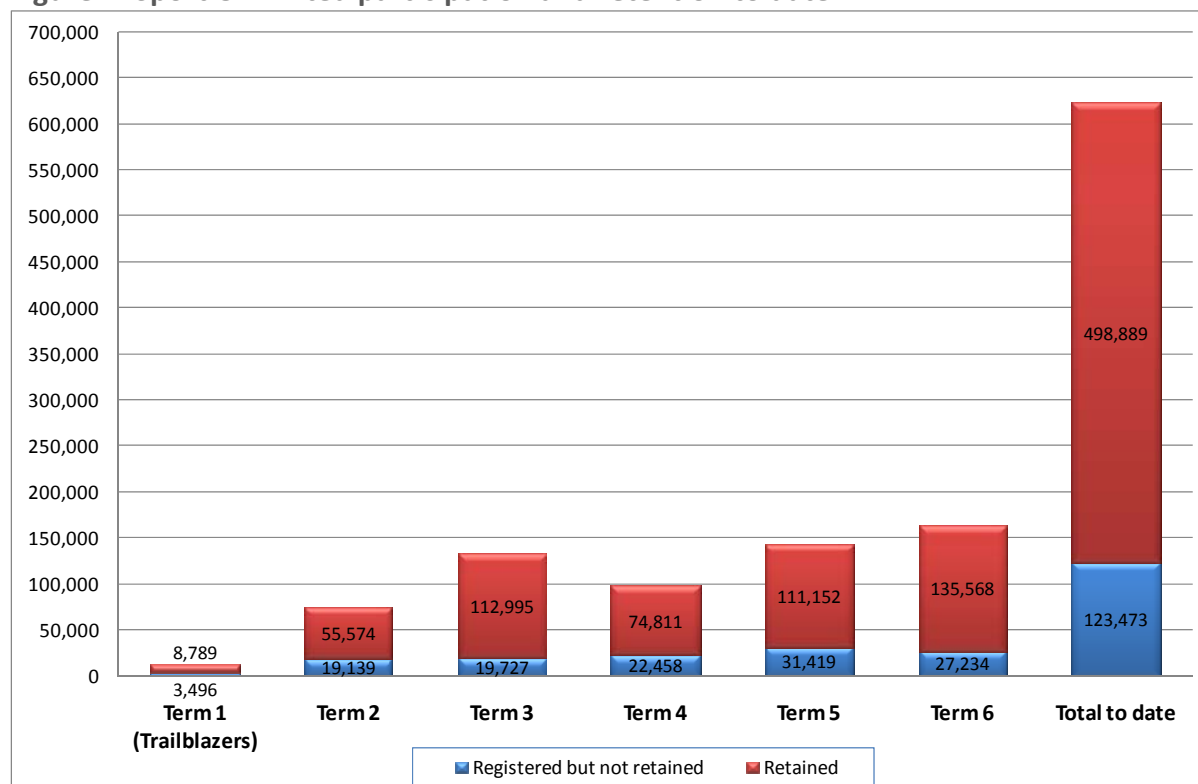
| CSP | Year 2 Retain Target | Year 2 Total Actual Achieved | % of Total Target Achieved |
|--|----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Active Devon | 5,928 | 6,047 | 102% |
| Active Dorset | 4,446 | 5,249 | 118% |
| Active Norfolk | 5,928 | 7,792 | 131% |
| Active Surrey Sports Partnership | 4,446 | 3,566 | 80% |
| Berkshire Sports Partnership | 5,928 | 2,204 | 37% |
| Birmingham Sport & Activity Partnership | 8,151 | 6,074 | 75% |
| Black Country Sports Partnership | 8,151 | 8,358 | 103% |
| Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Sports Partnership | 5,928 | 6,039 | 102% |
| Cheshire Sports Trust | 5,928 | 7,135 | 120% |
| Cornwall Sports Partnership | 2,964 | 3,219 | 109% |
| County Durham Sport | 4,446 | 6,105 | 137% |
| Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Sport | 5,928 | 3,226 | 54% |
| Cumbria Sports Partnership | 4,446 | 6,177 | 139% |
| Derbyshire Sport | 7,410 | 6,763 | 91% |
| Energize Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin | 4,446 | 2,466 | 55% |
| Gloucestershire Sport and Physical Activity Trust | 3,705 | 4,501 | 121% |
| Greater Sport | 15,561 | 16,713 | 107% |
| Hertfordshire Sport Partnership | 8,892 | 9,545 | 107% |
| Humber Sports Partnership | 5,187 | 4,660 | 90% |
| Kent Sports Development Unit | 11,115 | 6,487 | 58% |
| Lancashire Sports Partnership | 10,374 | 10,071 | 97% |
| Leicestershire & Rutland Sports Partnership | 7,410 | 8,754 | 118% |
| Lincolnshire Sports Partnership | 5,928 | 5,004 | 84% |
| Living Sport | 3,705 | 2,169 | 59% |
| Merseyside Sport | 11,115 | 9,778 | 88% |
| North Yorkshire Sports Partnership | 7,410 | 5,810 | 78% |
| Northamptonshire Sport | 3,705 | 3,633 | 98% |
| Northumberland Sport | 4,446 | 4,373 | 98% |
| Oxfordshire Sports Partnership | 3,705 | 2,962 | 80% |
| Pro-Active Central London | 5,928 | 5,481 | 92% |
| Pro-Active East London | 11,856 | 10,882 | 92% |
| Pro-Active North London | 8,151 | 6,794 | 83% |
| Pro-Active South London | 7,410 | 5,222 | 70% |
| Pro-Active West London | 8,151 | 7,620 | 93% |
| Somerset Activity and Sports Partnership | 2,223 | 3,437 | 155% |
| South Yorkshire Sport | 7,410 | 6,232 | 84% |
| Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke-On-Trent | 7,410 | 7,218 | 97% |
| Sport Hampshire and the Isle of Wight | 11,115 | 8,656 | 78% |
| Sport Nottinghamshire | 6,669 | 6,377 | 96% |
| Sportsex | 10,374 | 10,964 | 106% |
| Sports Partnership Herefordshire & Worcestershire | 5,928 | 6,827 | 115% |
| Suffolk Sport | 5,928 | 7,247 | 122% |
| Sussex County Sports Partnership | 6,669 | 8,732 | 131% |
| Team Beds & Luton | 5,928 | 5,541 | 93% |
| Tees Valley Sports Partnership | 5,187 | 5,336 | 103% |
| Tyne and Wear Sports Partnership | 7,410 | 6,301 | 85% |
| WESPORT | 5,928 | 5,935 | 100% |
| West Yorkshire Sport | 13,338 | 17,718 | 133% |
| Wiltshire and Swindon Sports and Physical Activity Partnership | 3,705 | 4,131 | 111% |
| | | | |
| Total for all 49 CSPs | 333,450 | 321,531 | 96% |

Year 2 Targets

Sport Unlimited aims to retain 900,000 young people in sustainable sporting activities by the end of March 2011. The period up until then will have incorporated eight school terms of delivering activities by all 49 CSPs, plus one term of delivery by 12 CSP trailblazers. The end of the spring term marks the end of the second year of the programme (the first full year of delivery by all 49 CSPs) and so far 55% of the national target has been achieved. This equates to almost half a million young people being successfully retained in activity, with a total of over 622,000 young people taking part in Sport Unlimited. The trend of consistently building momentum has continued, increasing the likelihood further still that year 3 will generate the biggest and best delivery period. The significant growth in delivery during the spring term places the overall Sport Unlimited target in reach. If the number of young people retained during the spring '10 term was matched (or improved upon) over the next three delivery terms then the Sport Unlimited overall target would be exceeded.

The spring term figures signify yet further growth and expansion of the Sport Unlimited project. The retain figure of 135,568 is the highest from any term so far and indicates the continuous growth in delivery (with the exception of a dip in the challenging summer term 2009). Progress to date is shown in figure 1 - this highlights the continued growing momentum of Sport Unlimited. Not only has the number of young people engaged in Sport Unlimited continued to grow, but the proportion of these young people retained in activity has also increased each term. The overall retain figure for Sport Unlimited during year 2 exceeded 80% - reaching a peak of over 83% during the spring term of delivery.

Figure 1: Sport Unlimited participation and retention to date



Year 2 Outcomes

Year 2 of Sport Unlimited delivery has exceeded the achievements in year one with reference to both the volume of delivery and success in retaining participants. In total 22 CSPs had a particularly successful year, all exceeding their year 2 retain target. Somerset Sport and Physical Activity Partnership exceeded their year 2 target after just two terms of year 2 delivery.

Delivery and retention by age

The graph below (figure 2) highlights how the proportion of participants from years 1-6 involved has decreased over the course of year 2, with the proportion of years 7-11s and the 16+ age group increasing steadily. Furthermore, the retention rates amongst every age group have steadily risen, particularly for young people aged 16-19 years during the spring term.

Figure 2: Year 2 delivery and retention by age group

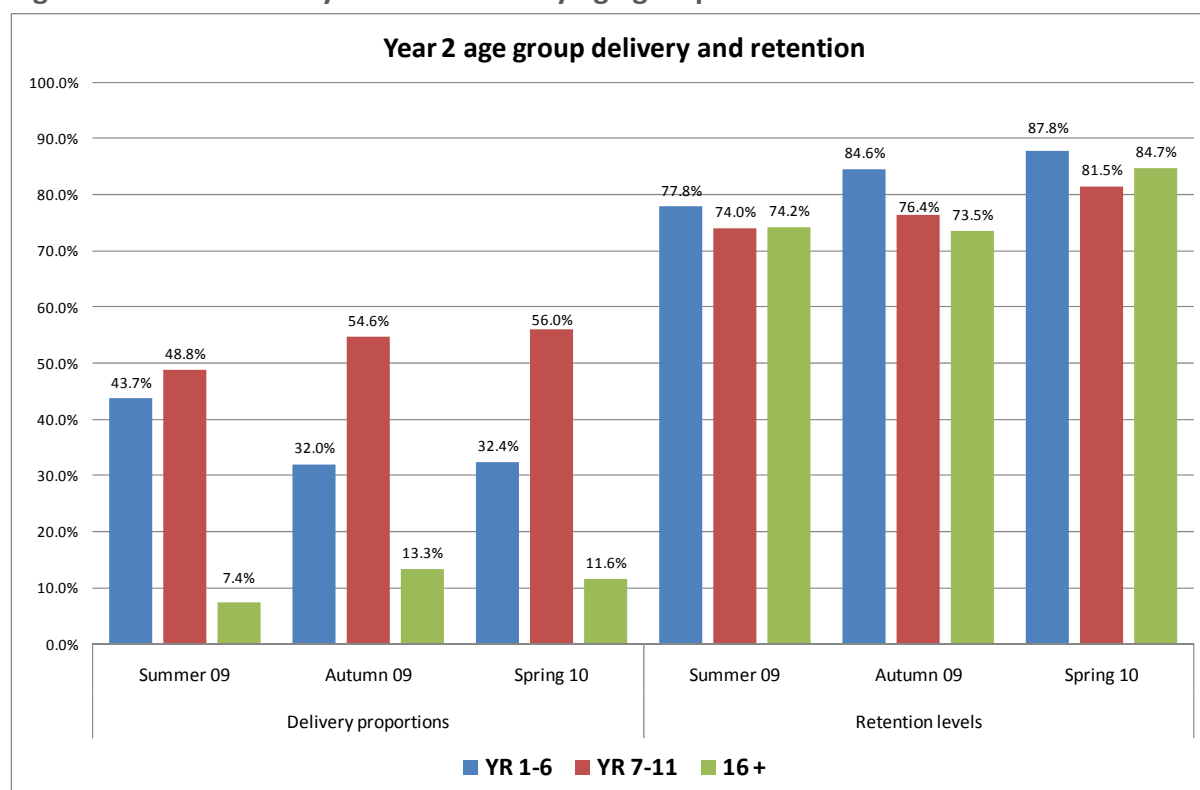


Figure 3 confirms the above findings and shows that, without exception, every year group achieved an increase in retention rates during the spring term. Further to this, the consistency of retention rates between each age group has also improved with the retention rate for all years hitting 80% or above.

Figure 3: Year 2 retention by age

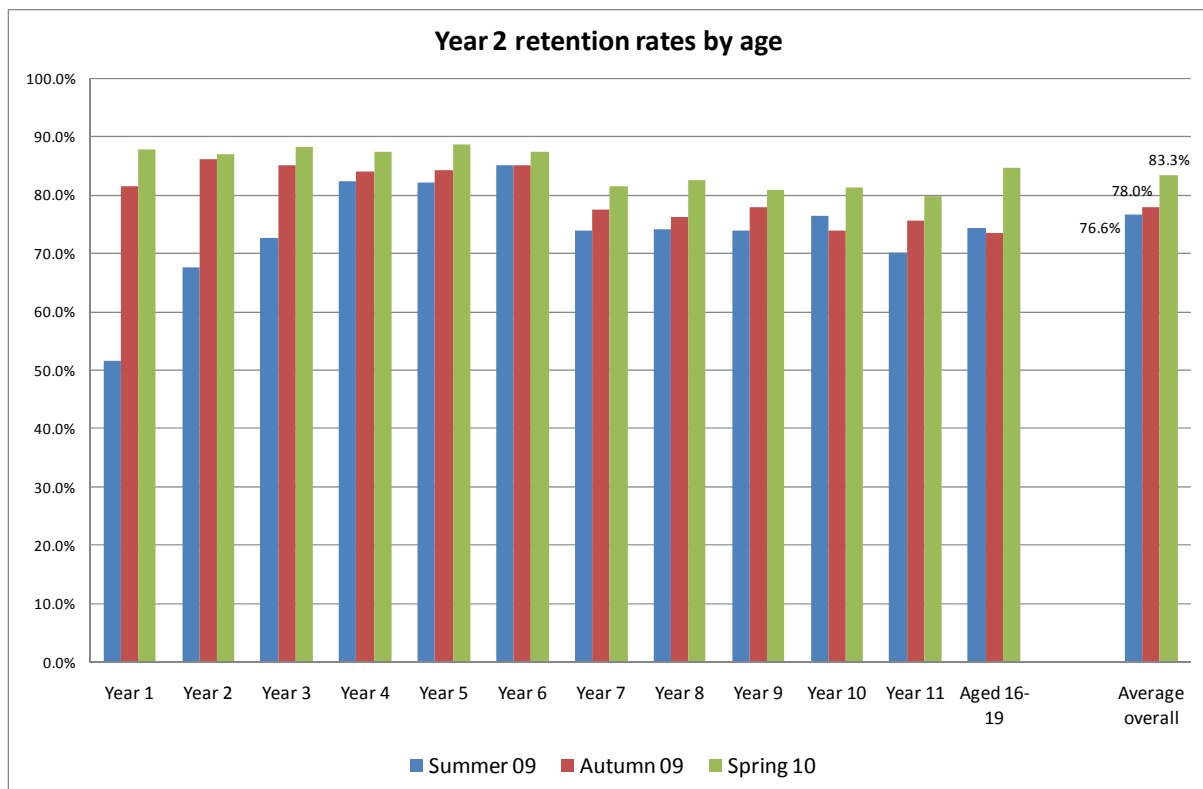
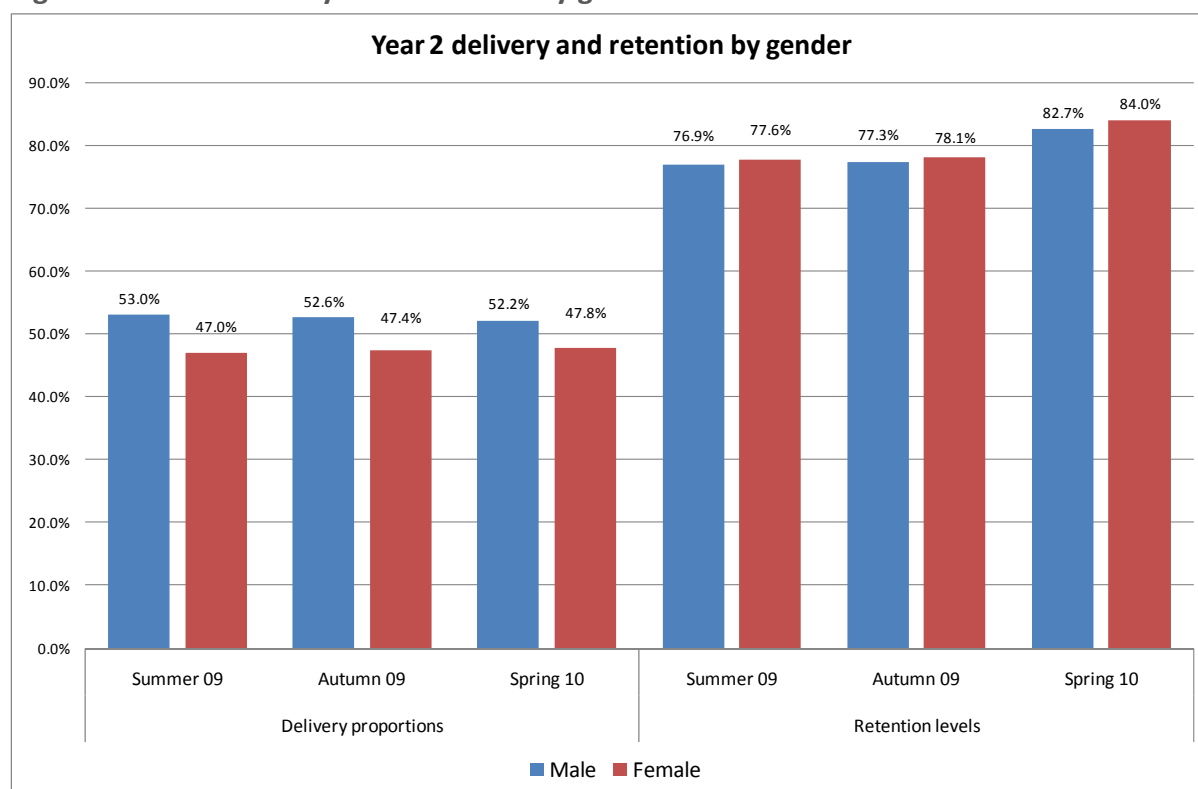


Figure 4 provides a comparison of the extent of delivery and the retention rates achieved by gender. It clearly shows that Sport Unlimited continued to successfully attract a fairly even split of males and females across year 2. In addition, the retention rates for males and females each term has continued to grow, with Sport Unlimited consistently retaining a slightly higher proportion of females than males.

- Of the 402,642 participants engaged in Sport Unlimited activity during year 2 – 52% (figure) were male and 48% (figure) were female.
- Sport Unlimited succeeded in retaining a slightly higher proportion of females (80%) than males (79%) overall – which is a particularly noteworthy achievement.

Figure 4: Year 2 delivery and retention by gender



Year 2 delivery highlights - critical success factors

Joined up delivery

Partnership working with a mix of both sport and non-sport partners has been truly embedded into the Sport Unlimited programme. The programme has engaged with more organisations, such as charities and trusts, whose roles link to sport and physical activity with shared agendas.

- A 'Street Sport' programme in North Lincolnshire, supported by **Humber Sport**, has allowed a mobile team of sports leaders to work in deprived and disadvantaged areas using a van full of equipment to enhance the sporting opportunities on offer in the area.
- **Pro-Active North London** has worked in partnership with Enfield Youth and Partnership department of the Met Police, along with Tottenham Hotspur FC, to deliver boxing sessions through the Edmonton Eagles boxing club. The programme was aimed at 12-18 year olds and its objectives focused on promoting positive attitudes, self esteem, self control and improving overall wellbeing.

There has been an array of partners working with CSPs across the country who have been fundamental to the success of Sport Unlimited programmes throughout year 2. Key partners have included the Golf Foundation, StreetGames and the Saracens Sports Foundation. The voluntary youth sector has also continued to play a strong role in delivering Sport Unlimited projects during year 2 and youth services have worked closely with CSPs to deliver programmes of activity in the community. CSPs have developed strong links with clubs and external organisations to help ensure that exit routes are in place and that young people are signposted into further activity once their Sport

Unlimited sessions come to an end. In some cases new satellite clubs and youth sections of clubs have been formed to cater for extra demand. This includes a regular multi-sports club set up in Lincolnshire following a successful 10-week programme of activity at Lincoln University during the summer term. In Merseyside, a girl's under 15's team has been established at Liverpool St Helens Rugby Club following a successful Sport Unlimited programme and a desire to develop the youth section of the club.

Case study example: partnership working to form a new community club:

Sport Essex worked with Colchester Blackwater School Sport Partnership to deliver a mountain biking project with young people from 10 secondary schools in the region. An instructor from the local county outdoor education centre delivered the sessions which started on school premises, working on mountain biking skills before progressing to off-road biking in local public parks. A significant increase in the number of students riding to school has been seen as a result of the programme. The sessions have also secured funding and support from the local PCT and therefore have been able to continue as a club throughout the academic year 2009/2010. This has provided the young people involved with a chance to continue to develop their skills and fitness with advice from a qualified coach.

Student voice

Consulting with young people

CSPs have continued to put the 'wants and needs' of young people at the forefront of their Sport Unlimited planning and programming and have therefore ensured that a continuous flow of consultation with young people has taken place. This has enabled CSPs and deliverers to plan attractive sport and physical activity sessions for their students. Many programmes have been shaped by Youth Sport Development Teams and SSPs with vast knowledge of young people through wide scale consultation. Many projects have become more young people led with participants developing a stronger voice in terms of what they want and the format for delivery, plus leading warm up sessions and contributing to delivery.

WESPORT organised a funky roller disco programme during year 2 for young people in collaboration with Positive Futures and Young Leaders. The Young Leaders organised the lighting and music equipment for each session, whilst others took registration details and dealt with skate hire. A total of 32 semi sporty young people took part in the sessions, many of whom would not ordinarily get involved in traditional sporting activities. Since the sessions there has been interest from young people about a roller hockey team which is now being considered.



Many CSPs have seen the value of their investment in and commitment to consultation during year two. The spring term figures represent significant further growth in the overall number of young people being retained of 5 percentage points (an increase from 78% to 83%). Several CSPs who committed resources in year one to finding out what young people wanted have seen steady increases in their retain figures. Some examples are highlighted below:

- **South Yorkshire Sport** has seen its average retain figures across year one of 68.5% increase to an average of 75% for year 2. In year one South Yorkshire Sport committed significant resources to a wide scale consultation of young people to finding out what activities young people would like to see on offer, including innovative qualitative data collection.
- **Active Devon** have attributed their excellent performance throughout year 2 to maintaining consultation with young people (through online surveys) to finding out what activities were in demand and paying close attention to detail in delivering these as young people wanted them. Once survey information (collected by SSPs) was made available then funding requests were made accordingly. The attention to detail offered by providing experienced, high quality coaches provided a good consistent model which engaged and benefited the students.

CSPS have also continued to ensure that they listen to, and consult with young people throughout year 2, and evaluate delivery on an ongoing basis to guarantee that their programmes are tailored to the evolving tastes and preferences of young people.

- **Tyne and Wear Sport** has worked with the City of Sunderland College to develop Sport Unlimited programmes for young people aged 16-19 years. The Further Education Sports Coordinator (FESCO) at the college was committed to ensuring that their sport and physical activity offer was specifically designed with the students in mind. The college used a number of methods to consult with their students to find out what activities they wanted to participate in, this included; direct consultation between the tutors and students, forums on the Blackboard intranet site and a texting service. A promotional video was produced and displayed on Blackboard and played to students in seminars. Students were then invited to identify potential sports which should be made available through the college. All promotional tools (posters, leaflets etc) included a phone number so that students could text their own ideas for future activities. As a result of the consultation a range of sessions were provided including outdoor activities such as urban surfing, kayaking, surfing and skiing. Many of those who participated in the outdoor activities were reported by the college to be students who traditionally did not take part or really enjoy sport.
- **County Durham Sport** working in partnership with Durham University, has commenced a wide scale student voice project via a survey delivered to students in school time. So far the survey has been trialled with year 7 pupils in eight different schools. It takes around 20 minutes to complete and includes questions about how young people define themselves, how many hours of sport / physical activity they do, where participation takes place, volunteering work, barriers to participation and what they would like to do. Early results from the trial phase have confirmed previous research that 'lacking confidence', 'having someone to go with' and 'knowing where to go' are major participation barriers. The data collected will also contribute to the wider delivery of the 5 hour offer and help to personalise this offer for young people.

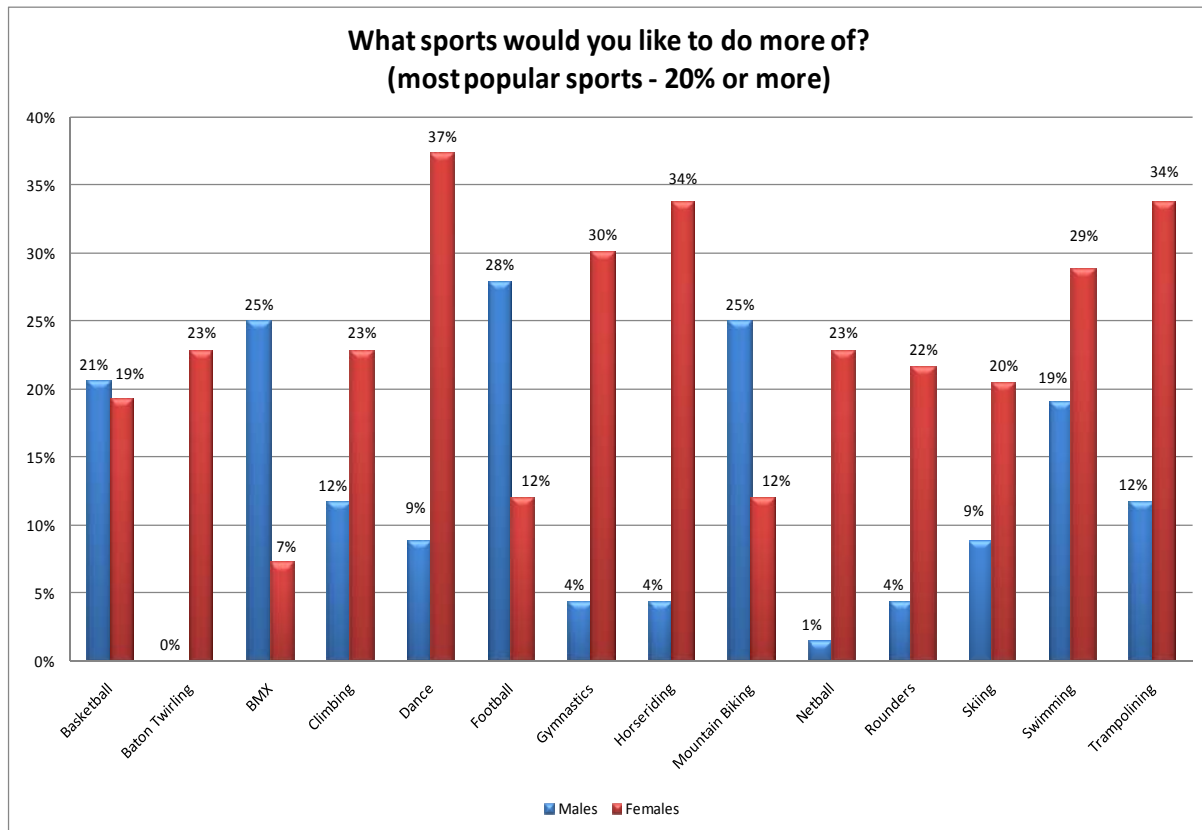
Case study example - Greater Sport and Pro-Active South London evaluation surveys

Greater Sport and **Pro-Active South London** worked with SIRC during the autumn term getting participants to complete an 'evaluation survey'. This data was analysed to identify any differences between the tastes and preferences of males and females.

- The majority of participants had attended 7 out of 10 sessions with the mean averages for attendances slightly higher for females (7.1) than males (6.8)
- Sustainability intentions data showed that a higher proportion of males (two thirds) were 'very likely' to continue their participation (compared with 47% of females)
- A higher number of males had already joined clubs (55%) compared with 30% of females

The data also highlighted significant differences in which sports male and females wanted to do more of as highlighted in the graph below.

Figure 5: Sports which young people want to do more of....



Activities Framework / offering a wide menu of options

The range and extent of sports and physical activities on offer during year 2 was vast. This included a range of outdoor and adventurous activities such as kayaking, canoeing, BMX and mountain biking. Less formal type activities have also proved to be popular and have become an important part of the Sport Unlimited programme, such as fitness based activities. Traditional activities also play a strong role in Sport Unlimited and have been popular across the country including basketball, netball and football - often with innovative twists on how these sports are delivered.

Many sporting opportunities are now supported by visits from elite sport men and women to further inspire young people through the 'Sporting Champions' project. Visits from role models via Sporting Champions appear to have been a hit up and down the country, providing young people with the motivation to continue with sport and physical activity, and something that they can aspire to. SIRC are working with Creating Excellence and the Dame Kelly Holmes Legacy Trust to undertake a more detailed evaluation of Sporting Champions during the autumn 2010 term. SIRC hope to work with the majority of CSPs who have been given Sporting Champion's visits and will conduct focused evaluation work

with participants at sessions in North Yorkshire and Northumberland.

Dance, cheerleading and fitness programmes have remained hugely popular particularly amongst the girls throughout year 2. Various programmes have been put into place which range from street dance, dance mats, cheerleading and hula hooping. In some instances external organisations such as the Saracens cheerleading group and the Harrogate Hornets cheerleading squad have been influential in inspiring young people to participate in activity. The retention rates from such projects have been consistently high (e.g. 100% for Cheerleading in Merseyside, Hoop Fusion in North Yorkshire and cheerleading in North Yorkshire, plus a ballroom dancing project in Suffolk achieved a retention rate of 96%).

Throughout year 2 CSPs have worked hard to programme activity that is tailored to the semi sporty cohort.

Case study example - Sound Basketball

Sport Unlimited has also demonstrated how 'traditional' activities can be packaged in a way that appeals to semi sporty young people. This project utilises popular music at the sessions played by a DJ at the side of the court (or the young people themselves DJ) to attract young people to the sessions, by giving them an opportunity to take part in the sport in a non threatening environment. Each of the sessions was run by a fully qualified basketball coach and assistant coach and was open to all pupils at secondary school level. There has been a high level of demand for expanding delivery of this type (informal and structured by the participants themselves) with not all young people wishing to progress into a traditional club structure. A series of 'all stars' events also formed an integral part of delivery to ensure that a competitive element was included and club-links were encouraged.

Signposting

The importance of ensuring that Sport Unlimited programmes have clear exit routes and paths for continued participation has been a significant factor in terms of the success of Sport Unlimited programmes throughout year 2. The delivery of sessions by external coaches ensures that joining a club, or continuing to participate informally, feels like a natural progression not a big step. Also taking sport to young people where they feel comfortable (such as youth clubs, car parks and outdoor spaces) has developed further - this has been assisted by national and local projects such as StreetGames, Doorstep Sport and Sport on the Road.

CSPs are continuing to build upon the way in which opportunities are communicated to young people. Many CSPs have launched their own Sport Unlimited websites (including Active Devon, Northumberland and Active Gloucestershire) as part of their targeted marketing plans. This approach highlights that the way in which young people are communicated with has evolved. As new and innovative methods are introduced, this does not always mean abandoning the more traditional tools of communication (such as posters, flyers and notes in registers) but merely recognises that the use of new technologies can enhance communication to ensure that it appeals to and reaches young people.

- **Active Devon** worked in partnership with Plymouth City Council Sports Development Unit to put in place effective marketing methods in order to attract young people to Sport Unlimited programmes. Sport and physical activity opportunities were advertised through a variety of sources. The following data reveals the main sources from which bookings originated; local radio 12%, local newspaper 10%, school leaflets 60%, Sport Development Unit's website 5% and other sources 5%.

Case study example - Suffolk Sport Multi Sports Programme

Suffolk Sport in partnership with Suffolk New College offered a multi-sports programme for young people with learning and physical disabilities throughout the summer term. The activities that were on offer included football, cricket, athletics, goalball and sailing, all of which were delivered by experienced external club coaches on the college site (with the exception of sailing!) As part of the programme a 'Pas-Sport' scheme was established, this allowed the students to take ownership of what they were doing and achieving. Each young person was provided with a booklet which was signed off each week once they had completed the activities. In addition to this they had to rate how good they thought the sessions were, so that



parents or carers could see what they were enjoying the most. Clear exit routes and contact details were also provided inside the booklets so that the information was clearly available. This was used to encourage participants to pursue one of the activities further.

Sustainability

It is very difficult to assess how many young people are being signposted into clubs or continued informal participation through just one method of evaluation. Therefore a combined methodology was developed and piloted during the autumn term, and then rolled out nationally from the spring term onwards. The following methods have been utilised:

- Exit postcards to measure 'intentions' to continue participating
- Before & After surveys to measure changes in 'perceptions'
- Follow up sustainability 'tracking' research one term later (using online exit surveys and follow up research with coaches and deliverers)

During year 2 a total of 16 CSPs took part in the measuring 'intentions' sustainability research. This research enables an assessment to be made on whether Sport Unlimited is inspiring participants and whether they intend to continue with activity. This measurement took place using exit postcards and surveys to examine changes in behaviour and perceptions of participants.

Headline figures from year 2 sustainability 'intentions' and 'tracking' data

- **Many young people are being inspired to continue with activity either informally or through a club environment as a result of Sport Unlimited.**
- **Three quarters of all participants completing exit postcards intend to continue participating**
- **'Before and after' surveys highlight that Sport Unlimited is increasing the**

likelihood of young people joining clubs and is also improving their perceptions regarding the importance of taking part in sport / exercise.

- The initial online polls to 'track' sustainability show that over 60% of those surveyed are taking part in more activity and over 40% joined a club in the 3 months after completing Sport Unlimited taster sessions.

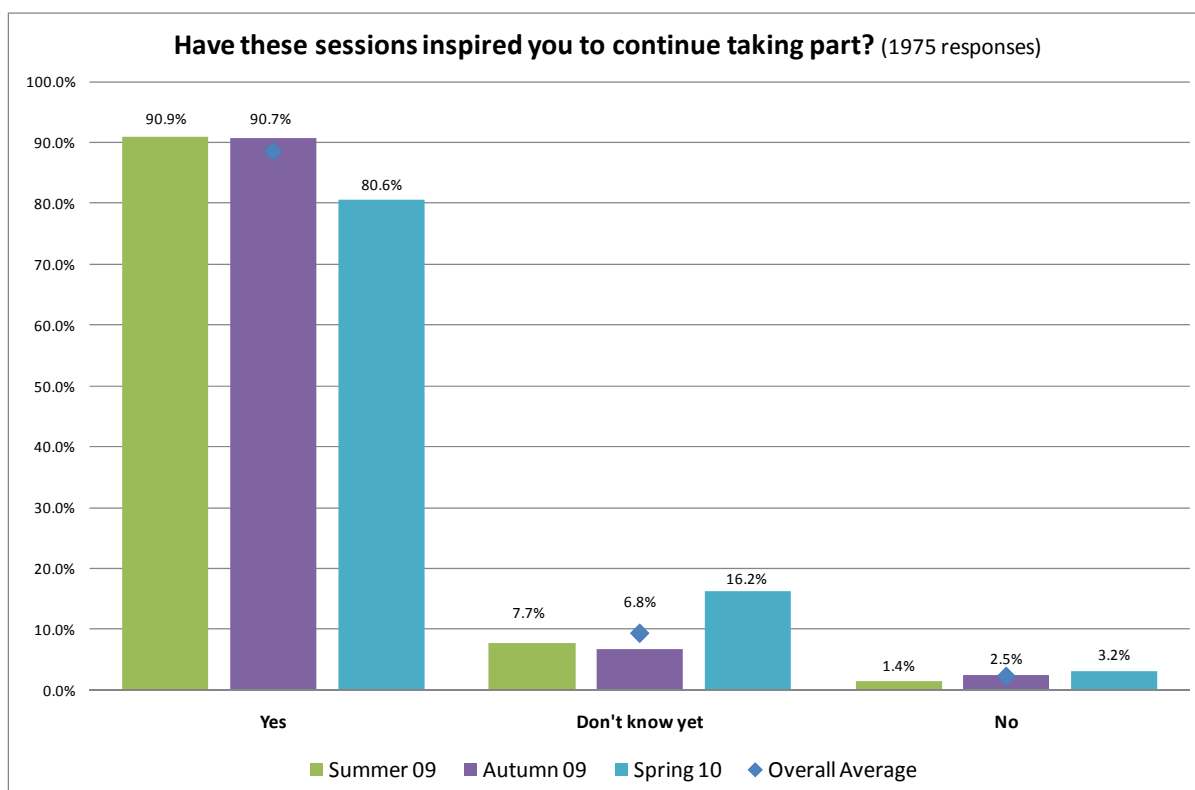
Due to the small sample size currently available for sustainability tracking data at present it is not possible to be able to confirm whether the 41% of young people who have reported joining a club in the 3 months after completing Sport Unlimited taster sessions is a representative sample of Sport Unlimited participants as a whole. As the data continues to build over year 3 of the programme the findings will be more robust based on this growing bank of evidence. The sample size that SIRC are aiming for is 1,000 per year (333 per term) which will provide a reasonable sampling error and is industry standard for research of this type.

Key findings from the 'exit postcards'

The data below is taken from almost 2,000 'exit postcards' completed by participants during year 2. **However the spring term sample size is lower as some data is still outstanding and will therefore be rolled forward to year 3.*

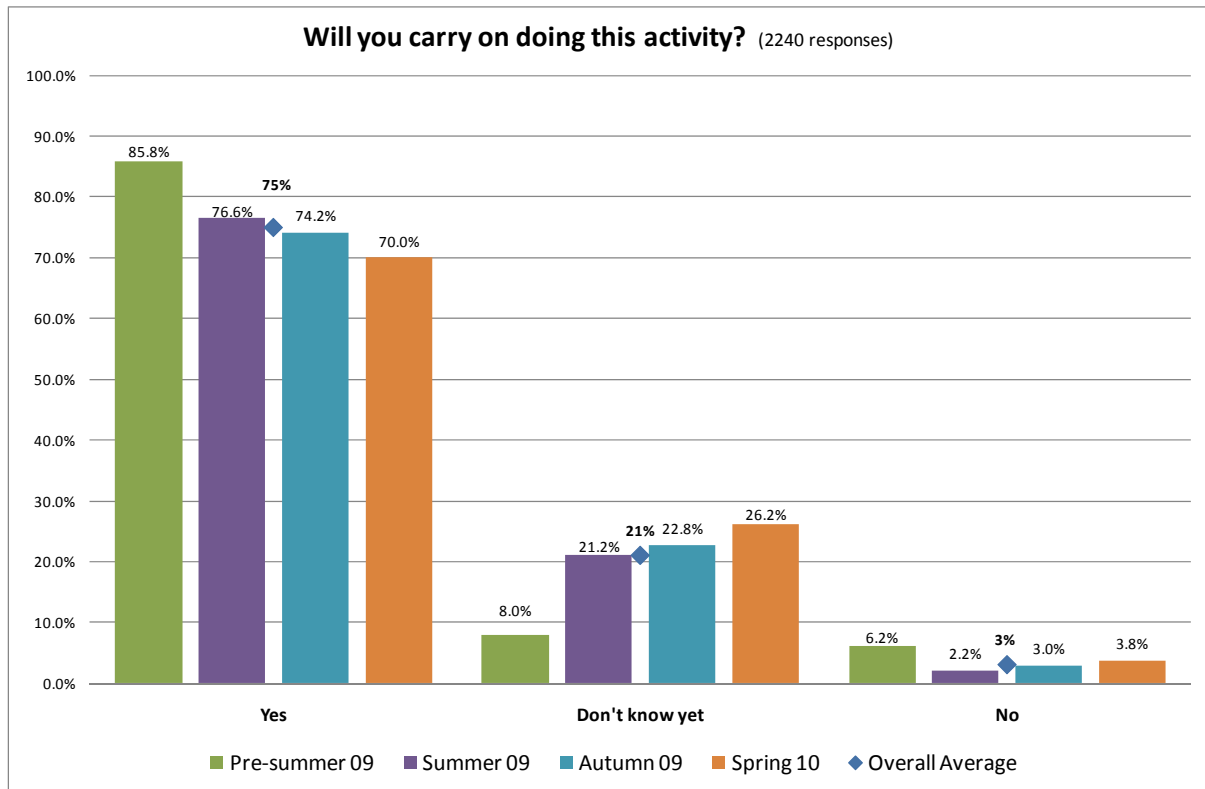
The data in figures 6 shows that a high proportion of participants are being inspired by Sport Unlimited (88.5%) overall. This ranges from a high of 90.9% during the summer term to a low of 80.6% during the spring term.

Figure 6: The impact of Sport Unlimited on inspiring young people



Participants were also asked whether they WILL carry on participating. These findings are also highly positive and show that 75% of participants nationally intend to continue with their activity.

Figure 7: Key findings from the 'exit postcards' - will you carry on participating?



A high level of desire for young people to join clubs was noted, with 72% of young people reporting that they wished to join a club (if they hadn't done so already). The number of young people who had already gone on to join a club was also very encouraging as identified in figure 9.

Figure 8: Key findings from the 'exit postcards' - aspirations of club membership?

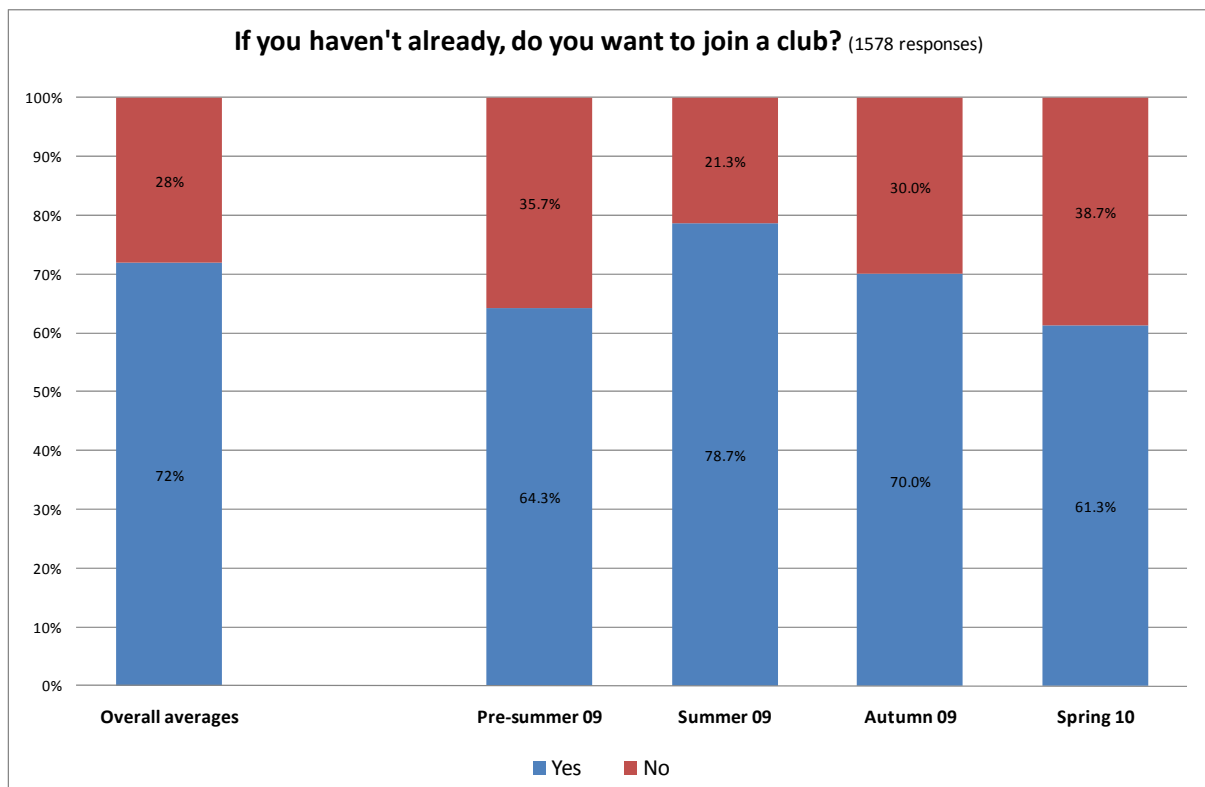


Figure 9: Participants who have already joined a club

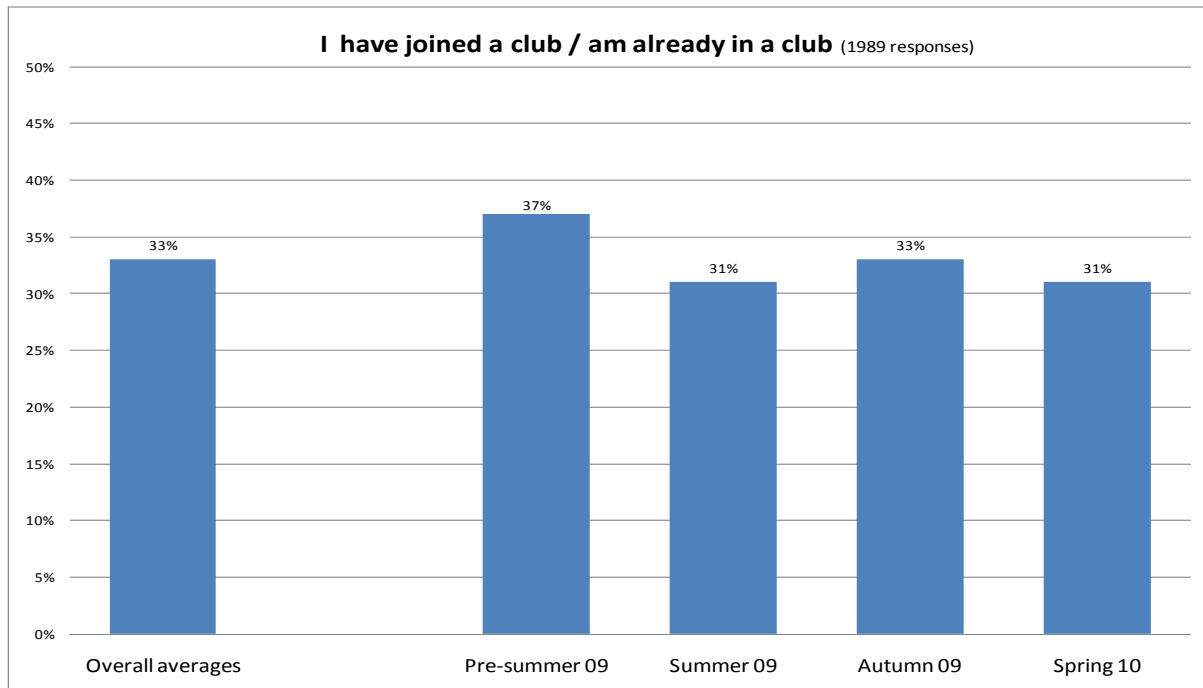
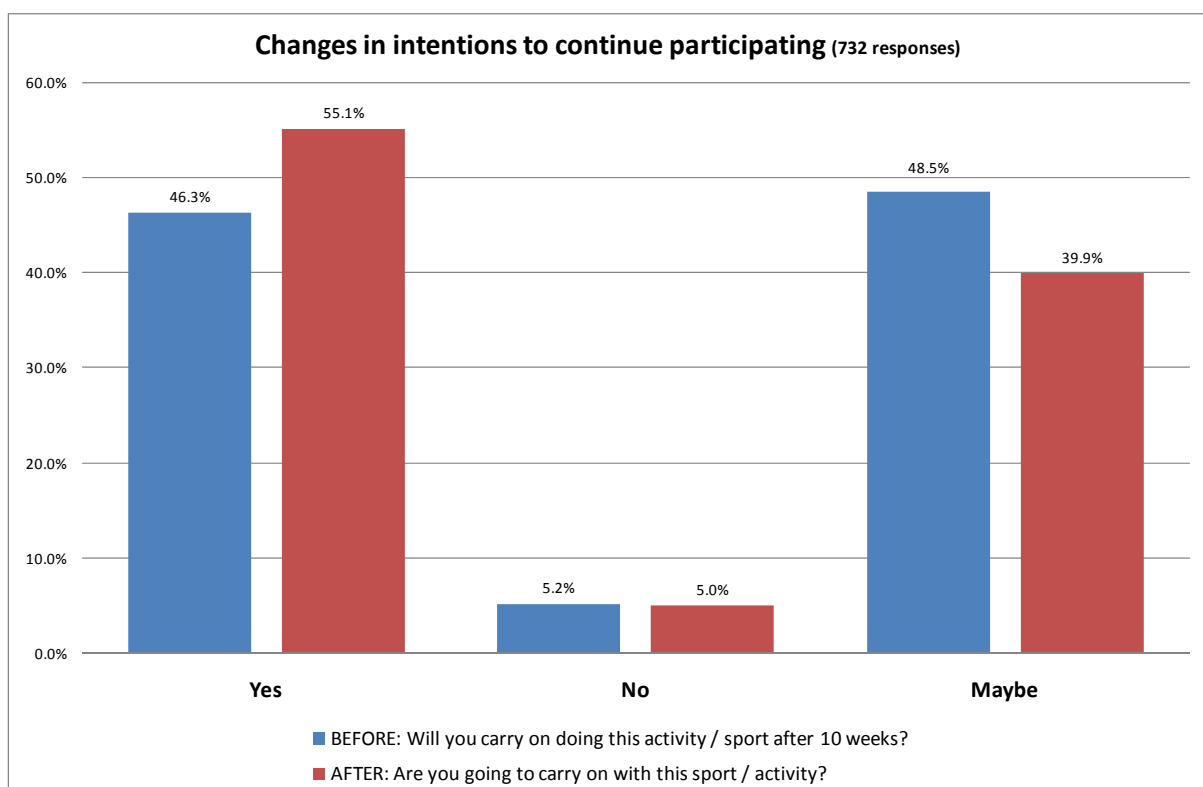


Figure 9 highlights an average of one third (33%) of participants have reported joining a club or already being a club member. As this measurement is taken from SIRC's 'intentions' research (via exit postcards and before and after surveys) it is not possible to confirm when these young people joined clubs or whether this was a result of involvement in the Sport Unlimited programme. However our 'tracking' research which is currently underway (with early findings presented in figures 12 and 13) will provide a greater insight into the joining of clubs by Sport Unlimited participants.

In addition to the exit postcards, 'before & after' surveys were used to measure changes in young people's perceptions of sport and physical activity. The data below is taken from 664 'before & after' surveys completed by participants throughout year 2.

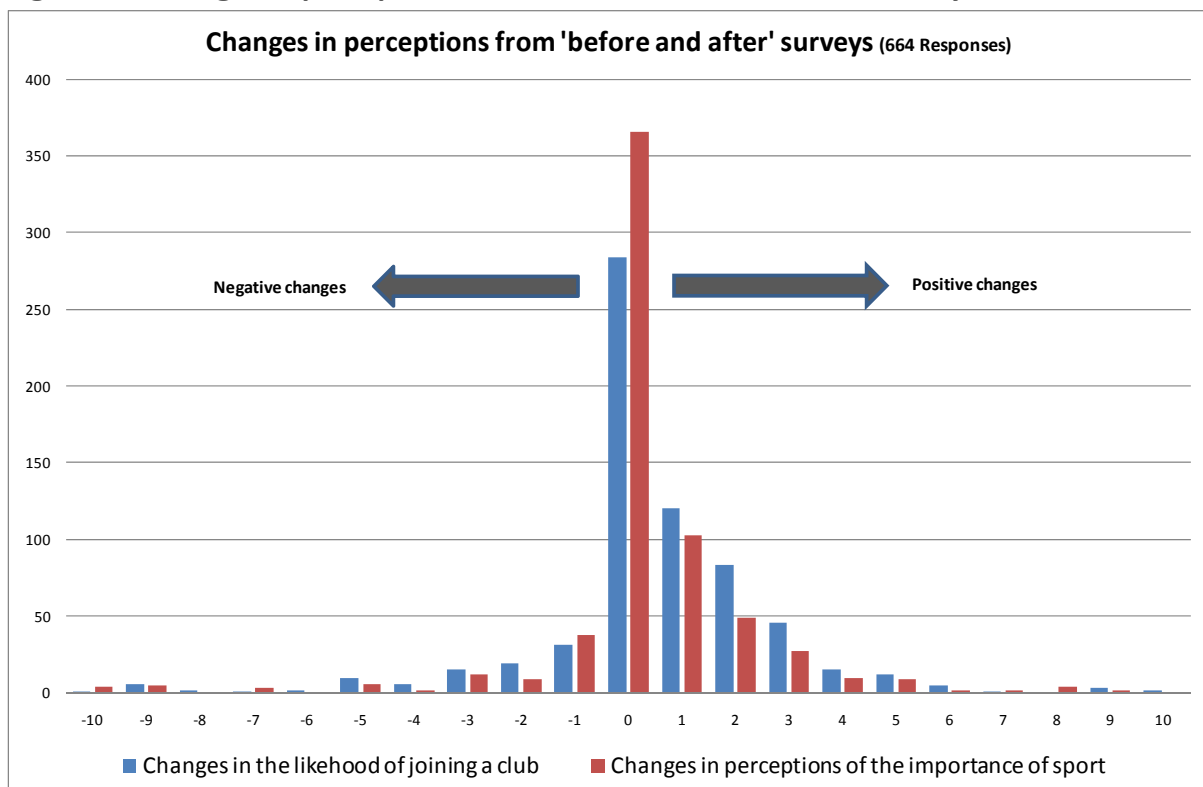
Figure 10: 'Before & After' surveys - measuring changes in intentions to continue



At the onset of Sport Unlimited sessions, 46.3% of participants expressed the intention to carry on participating, whilst 48.5% were unsure. In the final weeks of the sessions, the proportion of participants intending to carry on had increased by almost 9 percentage points to 55.1%, whilst those who were 'unsure' decreased to 39.9%.

All respondents stated how likely they were to join a club to continue participation and how important they perceived sport to be on a scale of 1 to 10 - both BEFORE and AFTER completing their 10 weeks of sessions. The highest proportion of respondents had a positive change in their likelihood of joining a club (43% scored a positive increase by placing their 'likelihood' higher up the scale), whilst 32% also viewed sport as more important. Figure 11 below indicated how perceptions had changed from 'before' the Sport Unlimited sessions to 'afterwards'.

Figure 11: Changes in perceptions measured via 'before & after' surveys

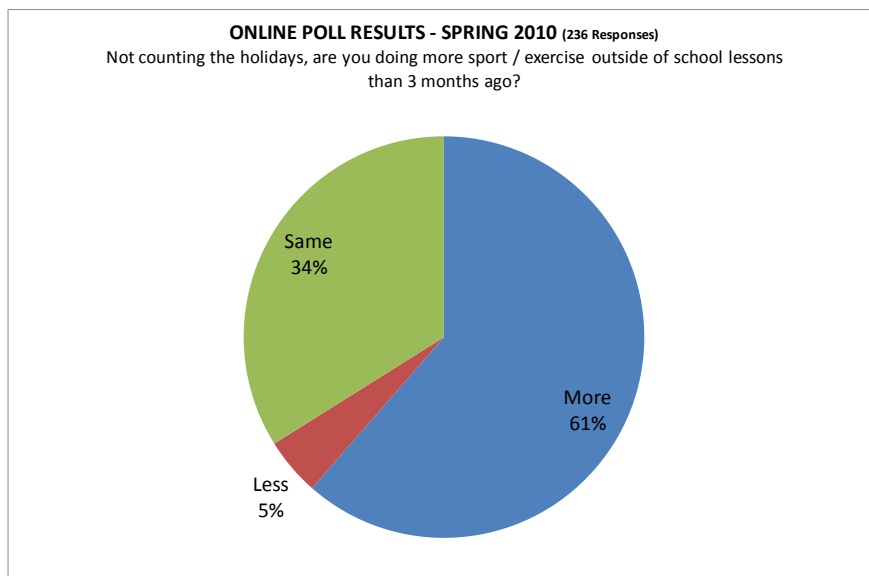


The intentions research has further evolved to investigate the proportion of young people that have actually gone on to join clubs or participate informally since completing Sport Unlimited sessions.

Headline figures from year 2 'sustainability tracking' data

'Tracking' research to assess the sustainability of Sport Unlimited in terms of driving continued participation after the end of the 8-10 week blocks commenced in the autumn term. This research tracked participants to see whether they were taking part in more sport / exercise the following school term (three months after completing Sport Unlimited) and also whether they had joined a club in the past three months. The initial results from this research were very positive and are presented below.

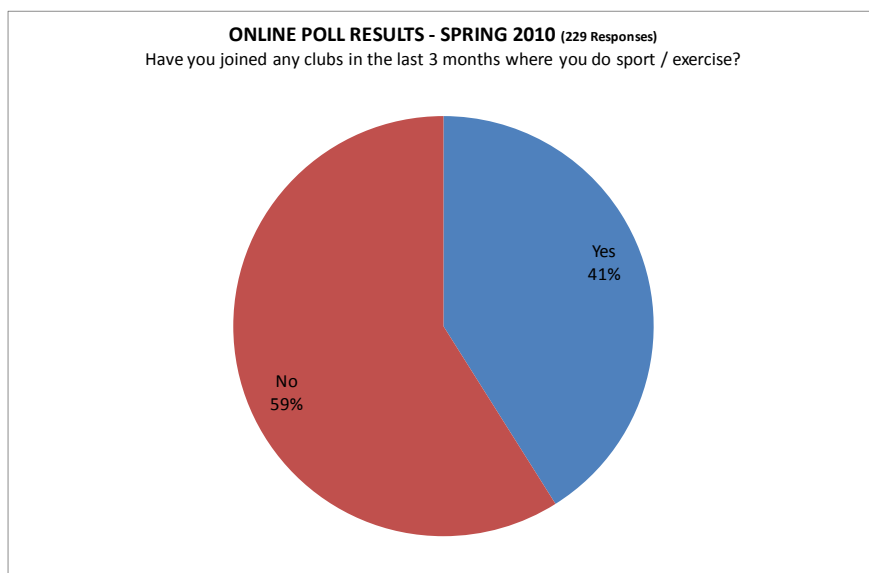
Figure 12: Online polls results - increased participation



In total over 230 participants took part in the initial tracking research.

Over 60% of these respondents reported taking part in exercise in the 3 months since attending a Sport Unlimited session.

Figure 13: Online polls results - joining a club



Furthermore, over 40% of respondents reported joining a club in the past 3 months. Many of these respondents provided additional details including the name of the club and type of activity participated in. Archery, dance, football and rugby were the top 4 sports / activities.

SIRC also maintain a 'sustainability log' which keeps an ongoing record of sustainability good practice examples and progression into clubs - see examples below.

Bucks Sport - "12 new netball teams have formed - 7 of these 12 are now linked to senior clubs"

North Yorkshire Sport - "9 participants (out of the 16 registered) were selected to join the Harrogate Hornets Cheerleading squad as a direct result of their success in the Sport Unlimited programme"

Lincolnshire Sport - "22 out of 24 new squash players (92%) will continue out of Sport Unlimited funded sessions", "There are 72 new Under 11 members for our girl's football programme - 50 directly from Sport Unlimited".

The ongoing focus of the Sport Unlimited evaluation is to assess the sustainability of programme. Data will be reported as and when available to inform and enhance delivery

through the process of shared learning. The following are key components of successful sustainability that have been identified within year 2 delivery.

Sport Unlimited promoting sustainability

- Delivery by clubs / facilities / external organisations
- Supporting transition from school to community sites
- Incentives to join clubs / continue participation
- Promotion of wider family / friend participation opportunities
- Leisure / swipe cards to continue participation

Year 2 Delivery Highlights – Emerging Themes

What has worked in year 2 to 'engage' and 'retain' young people?

Sport Unlimited has continued to build on year 1 successes, with the continuing use of incentives, strong appeal of fitness based activities and the development of projects around central events. The top 10 success factors highlighted below are key components which will contribute to the aims of engaging and retaining maximum numbers of young people in Sport Unlimited activities.

'Engaging' and 'Retaining' young people in sport

1. Consultation / 'student voice'

Consulting with young people to find out their needs, tastes and preferences, the most effective ways to communicate, and any current barriers to participation, can have a big impact on engaging young. Many CSPs have highlighted the benefits of consulting with young people to maximise and increase the effectiveness of their programme delivery. The surveys and consultations have been well received by both stakeholders "the SSP's loved it" (Pro-Active South London) and CSPs (as highlighted in the quotes below). There is also evidence of the research findings being used for training with Local Authorities to ensure that they are delivering what young people want.

"Allowing the local knowledge to advise and map out the activities has proved to be a sound investment"
(Sport Essex)

"The survey has been fundamental to our planning and can help us to bridge the gap between schools and community sport" (Pro-Active South London)

2. Strong partnerships / joined up planning

Sport Unlimited has provided the impetus for different organisations to work together to produce cohesive plans for young people's sport, encourage connectivity across the PESSYP strands and to engage a wider range of partners with complementary agendas into this process. Of particular note has been the number of projects being delivered with the youth sector in environments where sporting opportunities were previously non-existent or extremely limited (such as the Rurban project in Hertfordshire). Other key partners have included Extended Schools who have provided 'leadership and support' and School Sport Partnerships who have played a vital role in both signposting and in coordination. Many partnerships have been key to attracting match funding and additional funding to support the long term sustainability of projects, including Extended Services and Positive Futures by Suffolk Sport and Herefordshire and Worcestershire Sport

Joined up working has enabled CSPs to bring sport into settings which young people are already comfortable and familiar with and link up with new and existing festivals, tournaments and events to give young people an extra target to work towards and aspire to. The utilisation of private deliverers and professional clubs has been well received by young people. It has allowed Sport Unlimited to be promoted as something very different to school sport and PE provision and has given the programmes additional street cred and kudos.

Partnership working with NGBs has also increased significantly as Sport Unlimited has progressed with several NGBs offering hybrid / adapted versions of sports to meet the needs of the semi sporty, for example 'fit rugby', 'tri-squash', 'samba soccer', 'tri-golf' and 'cardio tennis'.

3. Innovative signposting

Face-to-face signposting has proved a successful way to promote awareness and interest. Often demonstrations, talks and the chance for young people to 'have a go' can be built into school assemblies or PE lessons, this has proven successful with various fitness-based sessions, BMX and judo. Many deliverers have utilised new technologies to engage and retain young people including text messaging, DVDs, dedicated websites and social networking.

4. Strong appeal to young people

SIRC's research has shown that 'friends not taking part' and 'nobody to go with' can be major barriers to participating in sport and physical activity, especially for young people attending secondary schools (girls in particular). Several CSPs have combined sport with social activities such as 'Friday Night Projects' – which integrate a range of physical activities, with other activities such as arts, crafts and health relaxation activities, plus the chance to have a drink or something to eat afterwards.

Other Sport Unlimited opportunities have built upon current trends to attract young people. The current popularity of 'Britain's Got Talent', 'Strictly Come Dancing', 'Dancing on Ice' and 'High School Musical' have led to increased popularity and demand for all types of dance (including street dance with sessions catering solely for girls and boys, or mixed classes), ice skating and cheerleading. It is clear that young people want to have a go at what they have seen celebrities



doing on TV and are attracted by things such as the latest music (as demonstrated by Pro-Active Central London's 'sound basketball' project). Another way of achieving 'street cred' is through delivery by professional clubs. Young people have been attracted to sessions because of the status and branding of these clubs.

5. Offering an extensive menu of opportunities

A key to Sport Unlimited's success has been the wide range of activities on offer and this 'menu of opportunities' has continued to grow and develop each term. The vision for Sport Unlimited has been ambitious and bold; there has been acceptance that offering just 'more of the same' via traditional sports to young people who already engage with these type of

activities will not impact on static participation rates. Sport Unlimited delivery has included a big focus on health and fitness with gym sessions and other fitness-based classes (such as urban rebounding and hula hooping). Additionally lifestyle activities (such as skateboarding and free running), watersports (including kayaking and sailing) and alternative activities (such as mountain biking, BMX, street surfing, blo-karting and climbing) have proved very successful. The emphasis has been on offering something different and exciting.

6. Incentives

CSPs across the country have adopted incentive schemes and are now demonstrating their success through reporting positive and increasing retention figures. From our analysis of case studies and data provided by CSPs, SIRC have concluded that the 'top 5' most commonly used incentives are as follows: events, free or discounted kit / equipment, certificates / water bottles / t-shirts, free or discounted club sessions or membership, free / discounted tickets to sports matches and events.

It is not necessary for all incentives to be something tangible or things that need to be heavily resourced / subsidised. Many deliverers have shared good practice examples where young people are 'rewarded' for their continued attendance by participating in an event, demonstration or competition. Simple acknowledgement of how well a young person is doing or how much they have progressed may be a sufficient incentive to keep coming to sessions. An online league to show weekly performance in dance sessions in Leicestershire has incentivised young people to compete against their own scores from previous weeks, their classmates, other classes within their school and other schools. Young people can also be incentivised by allocating them a role in delivery the following week or allowing them to lead the session or devise a dance routine, game or skill that everyone can try.

7. Participant evaluation / feedback

Consulting with young people has already been highlighted as an effective tool in engaging young people to try out sport. However, also of vital importance is maintaining this dialogue with young people once they begin to participate and obtaining feedback and evaluation of the activities undertaken. Data collected from participants can be used to enhance learning, continuously improve and shape future provision. One simple example of the value of participant feedback is taken from a dance project where evaluation using photo caption sheets and participant diaries found that a high number of young people were unhappy with the music used in their sessions – describing it as 'old'. This is something that could be rectified very easily creating a positive impact on levels of retention and enjoyment. Utilising innovative evaluation methods to collect data from participants (and parents and deliverers where possible) is useful to generate future promotion and to ensure that sessions meet the needs of participants and to continuously improve delivery.

8. High quality coaches / supporting transition

The Sport Unlimited project has highlighted the importance of utilising external and high quality deliverers to attract, enthuse and retain young people. It is highly likely that semi sporty young people would prefer to take part in something away from the conventional school setting and PE. Sport Unlimited aims to package itself as something distinctive and separate to school sport – even when sessions are delivered on school sites. An external deliverer often provides a clear exit route after the initial 10 weeks (into other community based classes or clubs offered by them) this enhances the sustainability of Sport Unlimited. The process of transitioning young people from school to community sites is also facilitated

by the development of a relationship with an external deliverer – the jump from school-site participation into community venues is less daunting if the participant already knows the coach that will continue to deliver their sessions. The transition can also be supported by arranging / subsidising the cost of transport for young people or by starting the sessions in a school environment but then supporting the move to a community site during the 10 week period. This is particularly important with outdoor activities such as biking, skateboarding and climbing - so young people can get a 'real' feel for the sport in natural surroundings e.g. BMX track, woods / countryside or skate park.

8. Setting personal goals / challenges / events

The setting of personal goals or challenges for participants and the hosting of events has proven successful in retaining participants. Goals and challenges have included health or fitness based targets to work towards, charity work and fundraising, and individual or group tasks such as rowing or swimming the distance needed to cross the English Channel or cycling the distance from Lands End to John O'Groats, or running a marathon or 10k. A personal or group challenge provides additional motivation - people want to celebrate their achievements, do not want to let other people down and enjoy the social side / team spirit of working towards something together. Even in individual challenge situations, there is still a sense of ownership and responsibility in terms of not wanting to let oneself or the instructor / coach down.

In West Yorkshire one FESCo reported scheduling a successful running club with 16-19 year olds where the goal was competing to take part in a 10k run. Northumberland Sport's rowing project found that the 'Concept 2' league provided a strong motivation for young people to be retained in activity and to keep improving (achieving a retention rate of over 80%). The machines use a built-in performance monitor to form national leagues and competitions and there is also a 'Distance Award Scheme'. Several participants who were new to the sport were entered into local, regional and national heats and competitions, with one year 10 pupil winning the regional championship event.

Events can be used to attract, engage and sustain young people and can feature at varying points within the 10 weeks of delivery. They can help to increase motivation (retaining interest and providing something to work towards), showcasing skills, links to existing clubs / facilities (which may otherwise be perceived as daunting / inaccessible), engaging parental support, competing against peers and recognising commitment and achievements.

9. Utilising technology / text messaging

Several CSPs (including South Yorkshire Sport and Pro-Active South London) have used text messaging as a tool for encouraging retention levels once young people have registered onto Sport Unlimited sessions. A weekly text which was automatically generated and distributed was perceived by many young people as a personal text message sent directly from their coach and as such worked as an effective reminder to attend sessions. This method was also used towards the end of the initial taster sessions as a way to inform young people about the opportunities to continue taking part. There is limited reliable data (e.g. where a control group has been established to evaluate the impact of text message reminders on a comparable basis) however retention rates across projects using this method have been reasonably high and positive comments on the service have been received from deliverers and coaches, plus participants themselves. Consultation by South Yorkshire Sport identified that the language used in text messages was not that important –

but that simple information highlighting the session venue, day and time was sufficient to act as a reminder.

Summary of key factors to 'engage' young people:

A strong focus on as many of the factors below as possible is likely to increase the number of young people engaged in Sport Unlimited activity.

- Using local knowledge
- Wide partnership working
- Innovation (wide menu of opportunities, trying things which are new, different and exciting)
- Responding to consultation findings (listening to what, where and how young people would like to see sport delivered)
- Using external deliverers with 'street cred'
- Mixed methods approach to signposting (innovative and traditional)

Summary of key factors to 'retain' young people

The need for continued consultation is a key part of the process, along with offering incentives to participants, such as events, to sustain levels of interest and motivation.

- A creative approach to offering incentives
- Supporting transition from school to community sites
- Providing a focus to work towards, such as an event or personal challenge
- Utilising new technologies to encourage retention (such as texts and online leagues)
- Continued consultation and ongoing evaluation

Year 2 conclusions

Year 2 of the Sport Unlimited programme has been highly successful in terms of meeting targets (96% of the yearly target achieved) and increasing levels of retention (from 78% in year 1 to 83% in year 2). Furthermore the programme has continued to offer the wide range of activities that meet the needs of young people via innovative delivery and enhanced joined up working.

SIRC are developing a growing evidence base to measure the sustainability of Sport Unlimited and initial findings indicate that the programme is inspiring young people into continued participation. With the help of CSPs and deliverers, this evidence will grow further over the next year. Strong spring term results have put the challenging target of retaining 900,000 young people in Sport Unlimited in reach. CSPs should be commended for continuing to show commitment and determination to achieving aspirational targets through high quality, young people centered delivery.

This report was compiled by the Sport Industry Research Centre, Sheffield Hallam University, On behalf of Sport England, June 2010.