

Autumn term 'soundbites'

Sport Unlimited continues to inspire young people to take up sport and physical activity. Many of the young people involved in programmes have never had the chance to try out different sports and activities due to a whole host of barriers that they are faced with (such as cost, transport and limited choice of opportunities). Sport Unlimited has given young people extra opportunities to try out something new, some of whom have discovered that they have a very special talent...

Alex Waterhouse was given the chance to take up climbing by Devon Sport and we highlight below just what Sport Unlimited has allowed him to achieve...



"I started climbing with the school in autumn 2008 through the Sport Unlimited scheme and after that was hooked. Since Christmas 2008 I have been climbing three or 4 times a week".

Alex has also been working on his NICAS course (national indoor climbing award scheme) and should complete level 3 very soon. Alex has competed in the British Regional Youth Climbing Series and narrowly missed out on a place in the national final, coming 4th in the South-West. Alex has also competed in many other competitions, such as the Welsh championships (where he came third), many local competitions and most recently the inter-schools climbing championship. Alex commented: *"My biggest achievement so far, was coming fourth in the British team trials, held in Liverpool on 28th November 2009"*. Alex's ambitions and enthusiasm do not end there! He is currently training for the British Regional Youth Climbing series, where he says that he has high hopes of making it to the British final,

held in Edinburgh in June. He also hopes to be competing in the British Lead Climbing Championships, the British Bouldering Championships, the Welsh Climbing Championship and many other local competitions. He also has set his sights on climbing an '8a sport route' and getting into the British team by the age of 14. Alex says that he has had a lot of support over the past notably from his family. *"My Dad has given me so much help and supported me through my climbing, even when things haven't been going very well!"*

Additionally, some of the deliverers involved in Sport Unlimited programmes across the country have made very positive comments about the programme and what it has allowed them to achieve. The following examples are highlighted from Greater Sport and Sussex.

New opportunities...

Greater Sport helped to provide young people from two schools in Manchester with a chance to play their first ever competitive game of softball, the first in their schools' history. Sale Grammar School and Sale High School had participated in a progressive eight-week Sport Unlimited programme in the lead up to the competition, which enabled them to learn the basic skills and rules of the game. James Churchill, School Sports Coordinator for Sale Grammar School commented *"It was a friendly and a brilliant match played in awful conditions, but this didn't put the lads off and they thoroughly enjoyed it. The game was played with great enthusiasm and determination by both teams but was also played with great sportsmanship from both sides. All of the boys were a credit to their school on the night."* Fiona Thomas, School Sport Coordinator for Sale High School echoed these comments and said, *"This was the first time that any of the participants had represented their school in any competitive sport"*.

"Funding made available to Sussex County FA through the Sport Unlimited project presents a great opportunity to bring new players into (girls) football. This is a county-wide project that will reignite interest in the sport and bring partners together in a coordinated effort to grow the game. We look forward to building on the success of previous projects!" Michelle Lawrence, Football Development Officer, Sussex County FA. **Sussex County Sports Partnership.**

*"For Inspire Leisure, Sport Unlimited means being able to give the chance to semi sporty children to engage in sometimes new activity and sometimes the activity that they love, but normally cannot afford. We have been working in some of the most deprived areas in the County, and being able to provide these sessions for free means so much. We have been able to lever in support from schools, NGB's and clubs to enable these children to carry on their sports once their Sport Unlimited experience has finished. It's grassroots development at its very best! We are really grateful to have the opportunity to be part of the programme and **Sussex County Sport Partnership** has made the process most effortless!"* Carrie Reynolds, Community Development Manager, Inspire Leisure.

"I am delighted that I have been provided funding to run Sport Unlimited sessions as sport in schools is often very focused on elite athletes. The introduction of 'QuadKids' in mainstream and special needs schools across Brighton and Hove will help to include young people of all abilities and disabilities to take part in athletics, promoting healthy living by giving young people a positive experience!" Becci Camis, Brighton and Hove and Southdowns School Competition Manager.
Sussex County Sport Partnership.

"We are delighted to have received support from the Sport Unlimited funding stream for the development of the Chichester District Street Dance Programme. The success of both the BBC's 'Strictly Come Dancing' show and the street dance group Diversity on 'Britain's Got Talent' illustrate how popular dance has become. With a corresponding increase in demand for dance provision, this funding will allow us to create opportunities for affordable and accessible dance sessions in rural isolated areas across the District. These dance sessions offer young people professional coaching, a chance to engage in structured physical activity and promote a healthy lifestyle. The creativity of choreographing and performing pieces will also help to develop confidence and team working skills."
Ben Polhill, Chichester District Council, **Sussex county Sports Partnership.**

Joined up delivery

The autumn term saw Sport Unlimited pass the halfway mark of the programme's 3 year funding period. The pace and enthusiasm from all involved has continued to grow. The range and breadth of partnership working, along with the activities on offer, continues to impress. Partnership working has really come into fruition; we identify some of the highlights from the autumn term...

Focusing on... Multi sports

West Yorkshire Sport joined up with *Total Sports Coaching* to deliver a multi sports programme to primary school children, following some extensive consultation that was undertaken in the area. The programme, which was delivered across 10 weeks to key stage two pupils, focused on introducing a different sport each week to the young people. This enabled children of all abilities to attempt a variety of activities. The sessions were delivered outside on school playing areas, however there was also a back-up indoor venue available should it have been needed in the case of bad weather. Throughout the programme, *Total Sports Coaching* made sure that children were aware of the local and regional clubs that were open to them so that they could continue to participate if they wished to.

Focusing on... Young Carers

Suffolk Sport teamed up with *Suffolk Family Carers* to provide dance sessions for young carers in the region. The sessions were open to a variety of ages from 9 to 14 years and also attracted boys as well as girls. The project has enabled young carers to take a much needed break away from their caring role. The sessions have provided the chance to do an activity they enjoy doing with their friends, good exercise, the opportunity to learn new skills and to practice teamwork.

Focusing on ... 16-19 Delivery / FESCos

Sport Nottinghamshire worked closely with the *Further Education Sports Coordinator (FESCO)* from *South Nottingham College* to deliver a dodgeball tournament for 16-19 year olds. In total 10 teams entered the



tournament comprising 80 students from the local area. *"The event was very heated and it was clear that everyone who took part in the tournament wanted to win."* commented Lesley Taylor the FESCo coordinator involved in setting up the project. Lesley also said, *"It was fantastic to see 80 competitors aged between 16 and 19 years so enthusiastic about a new sport."*

WESPORT ensured that there was a strong emphasis on the 16-19 age group during the autumn term, which came about partly from knowledge gained through talking to coaches at the University of Bristol. They found that many 18 and 19 year olds were going to University and not taking part in sport and if they did they were not being retained in sport. Through working with the club coaches and captains, WESPORT put together a package to support captains and coaches in the promotion of their sessions and helped them to incentivise activity in order to maintain participants. The focus of recruitment of young people into sport shifted, so that it wasn't just about getting people through the door and just 'picking' the good ones. This helped to ensure that all of the semi sporty participants were given a minimum of 8 weeks coaching to enable them to make an informed decision about whether they continued to take part in a chosen sport or whether they went on to try out something else. WESPORT are now focusing their efforts on trying to help transition the new semi sporty participants from club training sessions into recreational sessions through intramural competitions to help maintain their interest if they are not lucky enough to be selected for teams.

Student Voice

Greater Sport and Pro-Active South London worked with SIRC to conduct research with participants in the format of an 'evaluation survey'. In total 161 responses were received (133 of these from Greater Sport). The headline findings show some differences between the tastes and preferences of males and females. The research highlighted that the majority of participants had attended 7 out of 10 sessions, with the mean average for attendances slightly higher for females (7.1) than males (6.8). However sustainability intentions data showed that a higher proportion of males (two thirds) were 'very likely' to continue their participation (compared with 47% of females) and a higher number had already joined clubs (55% of males compared with 30% of females). The data also highlighted significant differences in which sports male and female participants wanted to do more of - see graphs below, which all present combined results from Greater Sport and South London.

Figure 1.1 - What participants liked the most...

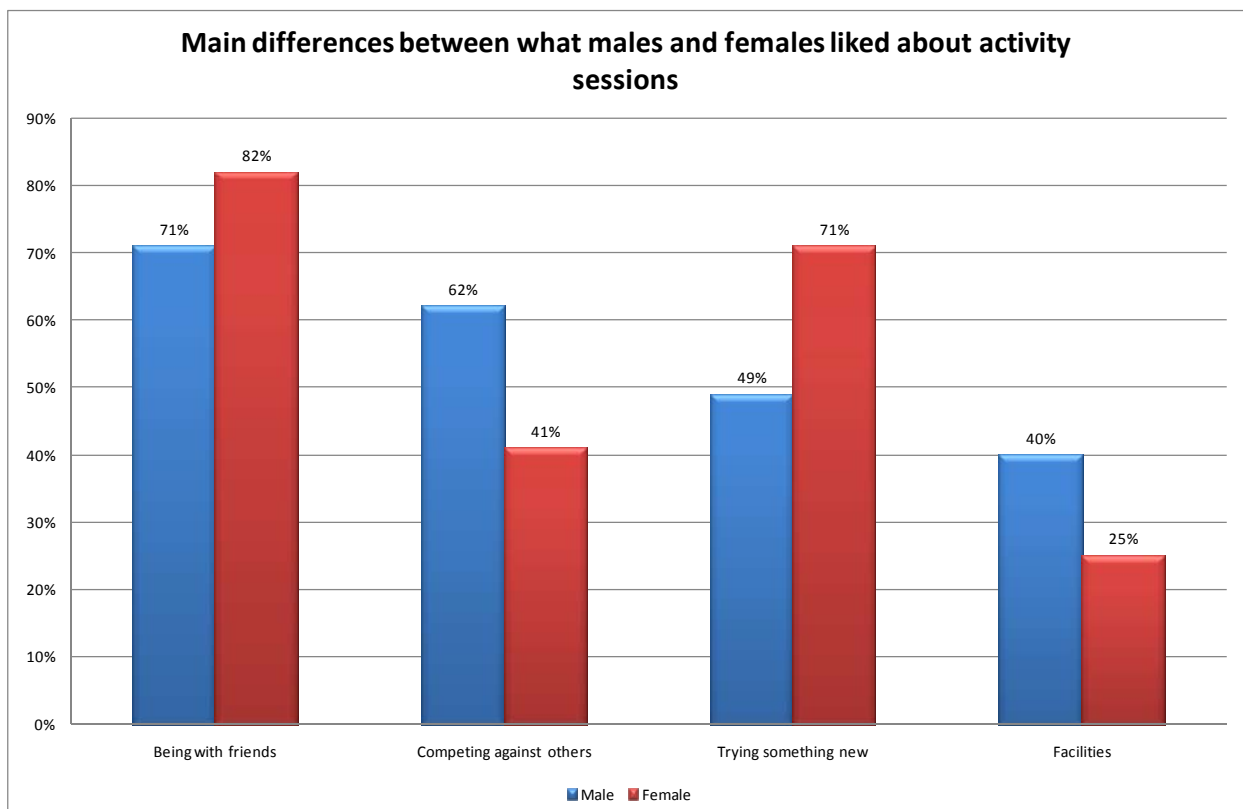


Figure 1.2: Intention to continue...

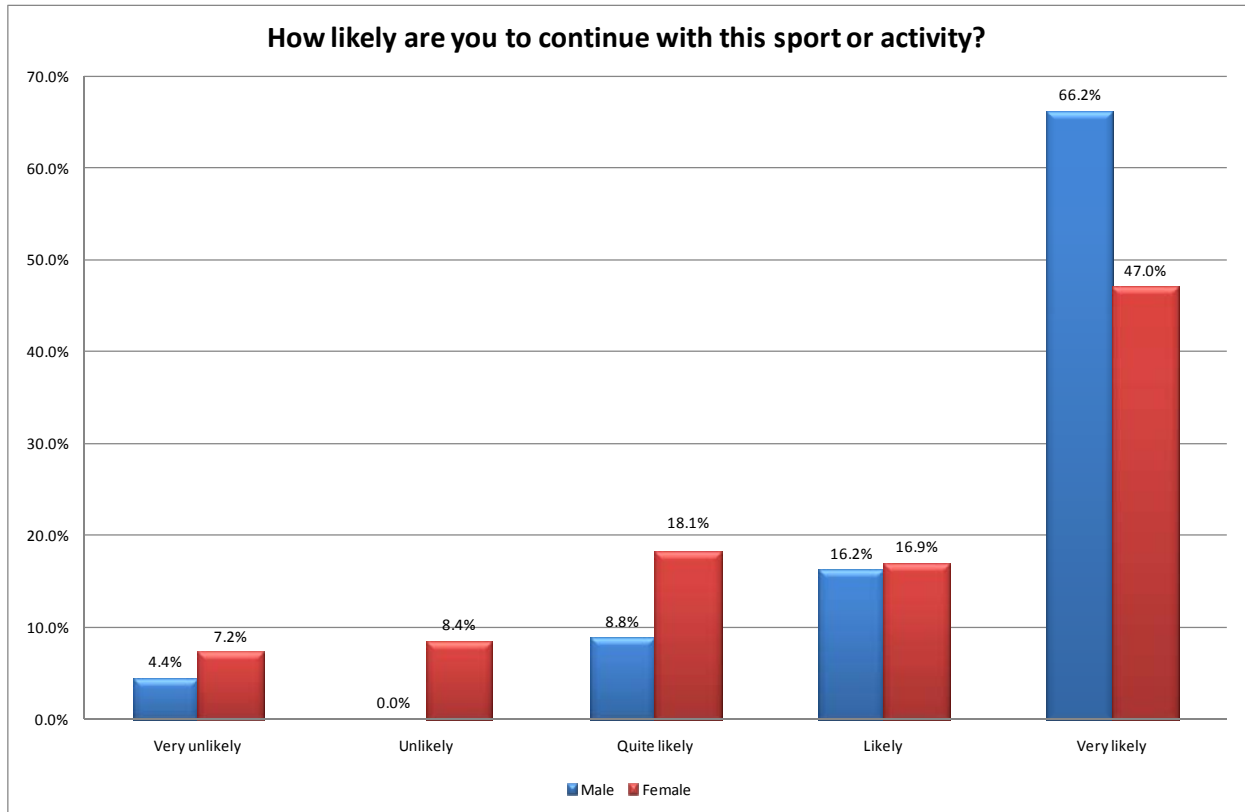


Figure 1.3: Joining a club...

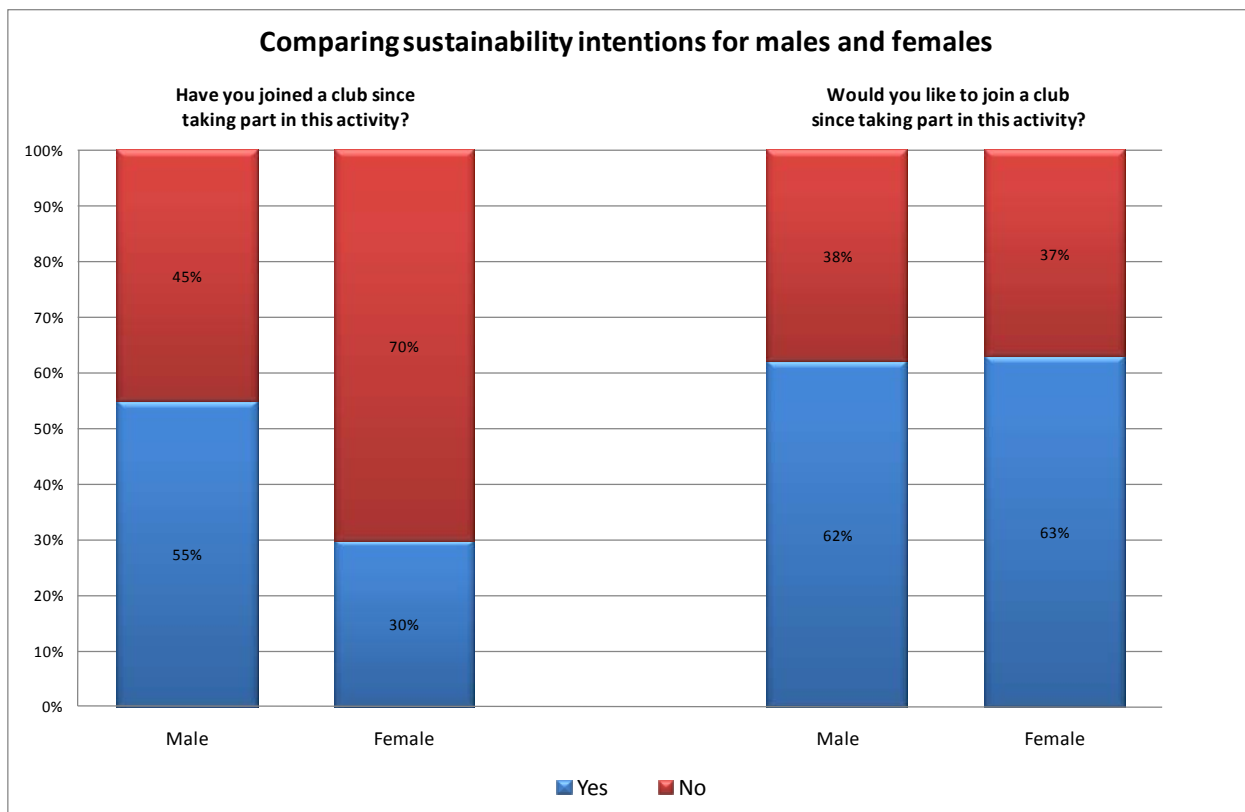
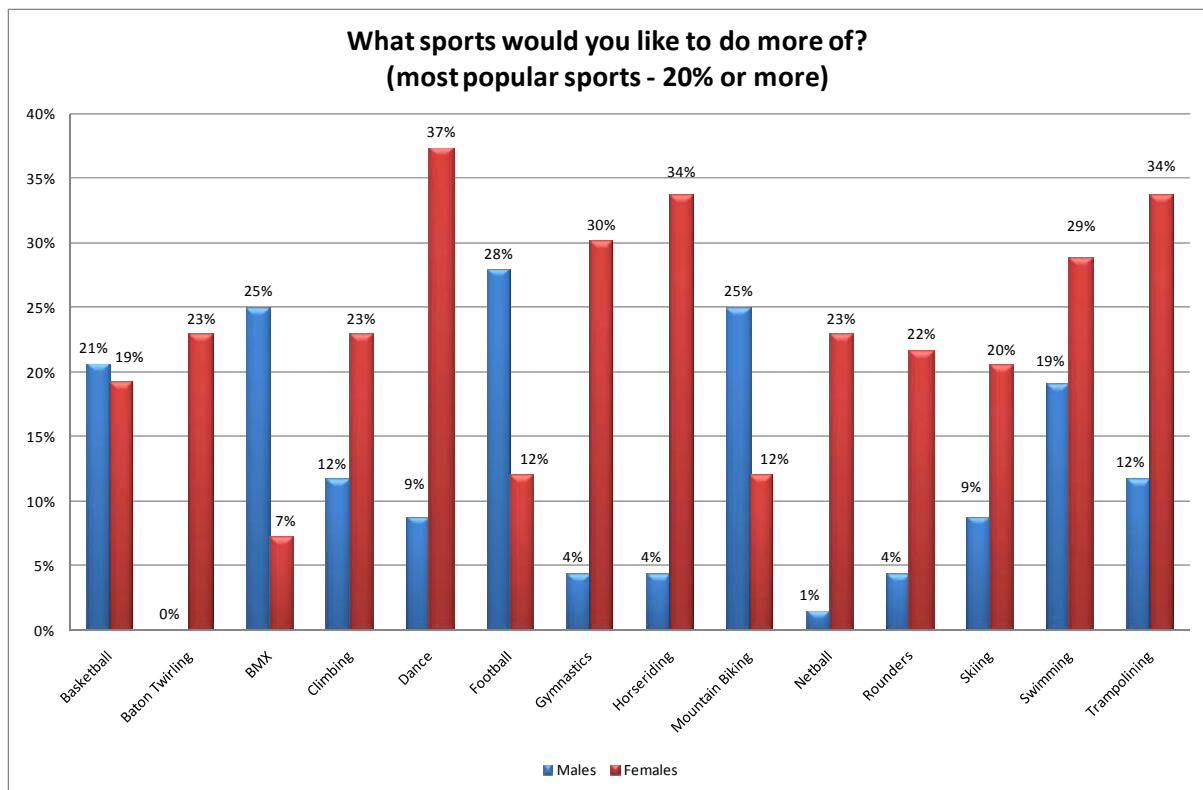


Figure 1.4: Activities with the highest levels of demand...



Activities Framework

As the days grew shorter and the winter months set in, this did not deter the continued commitment from CSPs and deliverers in offering a huge array of activities during the autumn term. Outdoor and adventurous activities are perhaps not quite so accessible or appealing during the winter months (we often hear of young people commenting that "it is too cold" for this type of activity). However CSPs and deliverers were committed to offering alternative activities or indoor environments to draw young people in to taking part. Structured sessions have been very successful for Bucks Sport using traditional coaching methods, Gloucestershire delivered three archery projects with 100% retention rate indoors and dancing continues to be very popular (the example below highlights a ballroom dance competition hosted in Suffolk).

Bucks Sport has been successful in providing basketball sessions for young people aged 9 to 11 years with the help of a very enthusiastic and dedicated coach. With the help of Sport Unlimited funding Peter Jenner ("Coach Jenner") has been providing young people with the opportunity to try out an exciting sport, make new friends and have lots of fun! Coach Jenner has been helping children to learn the basic skills of basketball over a period of ten weeks, giving them the confidence to go on to find local clubs and play. Coach Jenner commented, *"Some of the kids are much better than the others but they're all with their friends and having a good time. I ensure there is a set structure and the kids like the sessions to be run in a controlled way"*. Coach Jenner's class are so enthusiastic about basketball that they have their own team name (the 'Marlow Meerkats') and mascot! He says that Sport Unlimited has enabled them to reach kids who would otherwise never play.



Active Gloucestershire teamed up with the *Grand National Archery Society (GNAS)* to enable archery, taught to GB standards, to be delivered as after school clubs in four schools during the autumn term. The programme also worked closely with the *Deer Park Archery Club*, (the local archery club in the area) who have committed to donating disposable faces, nocks and arrows as well as some additional funding to enable the project to take place. As a result of the success of the sessions, *Deer Park Archers* have already helped schools to set up their own after school clubs, to allow young people to continue to take part in archery and further develop their skills in the sport. *Deer Park Archers* are providing coaching support to these clubs until teaching staff are fully trained and qualified to deliver the sessions themselves. In the four sessions that were held over the autumn term the retention rate for the sessions was 90%, with three out of the four projects having a 100% retention figure. Additionally, *Deer Park Archers* have seen 10% of young people who participated during the autumn term directly join *Deer Park Archers*.

Suffolk Sport have capitalised on the success of the highly popular BBC One show *Strictly Come Dancing* in an attempt to attract young people to try out ballroom dance. *Suffolk Sport* in partnership with *High Suffolk School Sport Partnership* provided ballroom dance sessions to nine middle and secondary schools across the region. The sessions attracted over 80 youngsters to participate in something they had never accessed before. The programme culminated in a Ballroom Dancing Competition at *Thomas Mills High School*. The standard of dancing, given that the youngsters had only had 7-8 hours of coaching prior to the event, was outstanding, highlighting the commitment and talents of the young people involved.

Kent Sport in partnership with *Medway Sports Department* and *British Judo* have worked together with *High Halstow Primary School* to provide an opportunity for young people in a rural area to try out judo. In 2009, *Medway Sports Department* and *British Judo* recognised that judo needed some development in the area and *Sport Unlimited* has given many young people an opportunity to try out the sport. The funding has enabled them to use top facilities and equipment as well as enabling fully qualified coaches from *British Judo* to attend and deliver the sessions. There were 82% of young people who initially registered on the sessions who were retained in activity. One of the teachers from *High Halstow Primary* commented, "*The children expressed a lot of interest in judo and in participating again in the future. They all enjoyed doing something different and they are more respectful and disciplined within the class room*". At the end of the programme, the local club provided the young people with two free lessons and six weeks of free equipment usage in an attempt to encourage them to continue with the sport.

Braving the cold...!

Kent Sport in partnership with the *Seapoint Centre* in Hythe ran 10 sessions with the aim of getting more young people involved in paddle sports. One young person who attended the sessions commented, "*It is fun and I enjoy doing something new! The instructors were very good and professional*". The young paddlers were close to completing their Community Sports Leaders Award and Expedition Award and were being encouraged to undertake the BCU Star 1 Award having completed many of the skills needed for this throughout the sessions. The achievements of the young people were recorded throughout the programme in their very own logbook! The main success of the project was felt to be that more young people have had a chance to benefit from doing something that is active, different and adventurous. It has enabled the young people to feel they are part of a team and they get to work towards something that will benefit them later in life. By achieving awards and becoming qualified in certain areas of canoeing and kayaking, the young people can give a little back to the club, by assisting coaches and helping out at the weekends. "*It's great, I am able to pass on my experience of kayaking and canoeing to other young people and still be able to take part in my new hobby which I thoroughly enjoy.*"

Signposting

CSPs and deliverers have showcased that they are as committed as ever in ensuring that exit routes are in place to allow young people to continue with activity after their initial taster sessions. Strong links are being formed with established clubs and academies to ensure that young people really do have exceptional opportunities to continue to participate in activity.

Suffolk Sport has been running a very successful golf programme in partnership with *Newton Green Golf Club*. Two sessions were held each week during the autumn term, which were full to capacity. In total 32 juniors attended the sessions, 15 of which were completely new to the game of golf. So far 10 of these juniors have gone on to join the junior section of the golf club as a result of the phased introduction to the club. This has included inviting the young people along to attend two of their junior evenings and having a chance to play 9 holes of golf with a current junior member.

Similarly, **Greater Sport** in partnership with *Stockport Sports Trust* and *Moor End Golf Club* in Bramhall delivered two blocks of golf sessions, which were oversubscribed. The programme was aimed at beginner golfers and looked at the basics of the grip, stance and swing. The initial sessions were held at *Bramhall High School*, with the final five sessions being held at the driving range at *Moor End*. The sessions were so successful that *Bramhall High School* held their first ever golf competition at *Moor End*, with 12 entries in total. Pupils who attended at least 6 out of 10 sessions had the opportunity to join *Moor End Golf Club* at a discounted rate, with four signing up so far for the 2009/10 season.



Birmingham Sport and Physical Activity Partnership joined up with *Strikes Soccer Academy* to offer girls, vulnerable children and young people the opportunity to gain access to a quality coaching scheme, free of charge. On completion of the programme the young people involved were invited to join *Strikes Soccer Academy*, held at *Colmers Community Leisure Centre* and given a £15 voucher off the course fee. The children on the programme flourished and many received achievement awards at the end of it. The programme also helped nine young volunteers engaged in Community Sport Leadership Awards by providing them with the opportunity to be mentored and gain practical experience as a football coach.

Active Devon in partnership with *Plymouth City Council* Sports Development Unit have been dedicated to ensuring that the most effective marketing methods are in place in order to attract young people into *Sport Unlimited* programmes. *Plymouth City Council* Sport Development Unit committed a generous budget of £14,000 to advertise the spring term activities. The concept behind this scheme was that a range of 28 different activities would be offered over a ten-week period providing a total of 474 opportunities, with the aim of achieving an advanced booking take-up of 80% of capacity. The 28 activities would be scheduled to run alongside the usual community club coaching time to ensure that the transition for young people to continue to participate in activity would be seamless. These opportunities were advertised on the local radio (*Heart FM*), local newspaper (*Herald*), school leaflets, internal advertising on the *Plymouth Council's* intranet page as well as advertising programmes on the Sport Development Unit's website and the Youth Services website. A open booking system was set up so that it would be possible to identify from which advertising sources the bookings originated. At the beginning of the spring term the target had been exceeded, an 85% advanced booking rate had been achieved. We now await with anticipation, the final KPI figures that were achieved for all of the activities that took place following this innovative marketing approach. Results for which will be available from June onwards.

Sustainability Update

During the autumn term, 10 CSPs took part in the 'sustainability tracking' research. The research aims to 'track' young people so that a follow up to determine whether their participation in activity has continued can take place the following term. Unfortunately as a result of issues regarding consent and the usage of registration forms, plus the short timescales involved in the autumn pilot phase, this data collection did not yield as many contact details as SIRC has hoped. Therefore the follow up research that can be conducted from the autumn term will be limited, however initial results will be shared in April. Efforts are now being focused across the country in order to obtain as many contact details as

possible to allow the follow up research to be conducted in the spring term and for year 3. As part of this process all 49 CSPs took part in a 'sustainability audit' with SIRC and a number of CSPs have now committed to feed in data to support this evidence base through utilising more flexible methodology. The new 'tracking' methods include: a short (60 second) online survey (personalised for each CSP willing to use it), working with big hitting projects, utilising existing tracking systems on wider scale basis and contacting deliverers to gain an insight into sustainability achievements.

In addition to the tracking research highlighted above, sustainability 'intentions' were also measured during the autumn term. This research assesses whether *Sport Unlimited* is inspiring participants and if they intend to continue with activity. This measurement took place using exit poll postcards and 'before and after' surveys to evaluate any changes in behaviour and perceptions of almost 900 participants. The headline results are identified below:

Headline figures from autumn term 'sustainability intentions' surveying:

The data below is taken from 591 'exit polls' and 192 'before and after' surveys completed by participants during the autumn term. In addition to this, over 160 exit surveys were completed, a further 100+ exit polls (which formed part of SIRC's sustainability tracking work), plus over 20 sustainability diaries.

Figure 1.5: Key findings from the 'exit polls' - participants' intentions to continue...

In total 9 out of 10 respondents (90%) reported that the sessions had inspired them to continue taking part in sport. Three quarters of respondents (75%) expressed the intention to carry on participating, with a further 3% still 'unsure'.

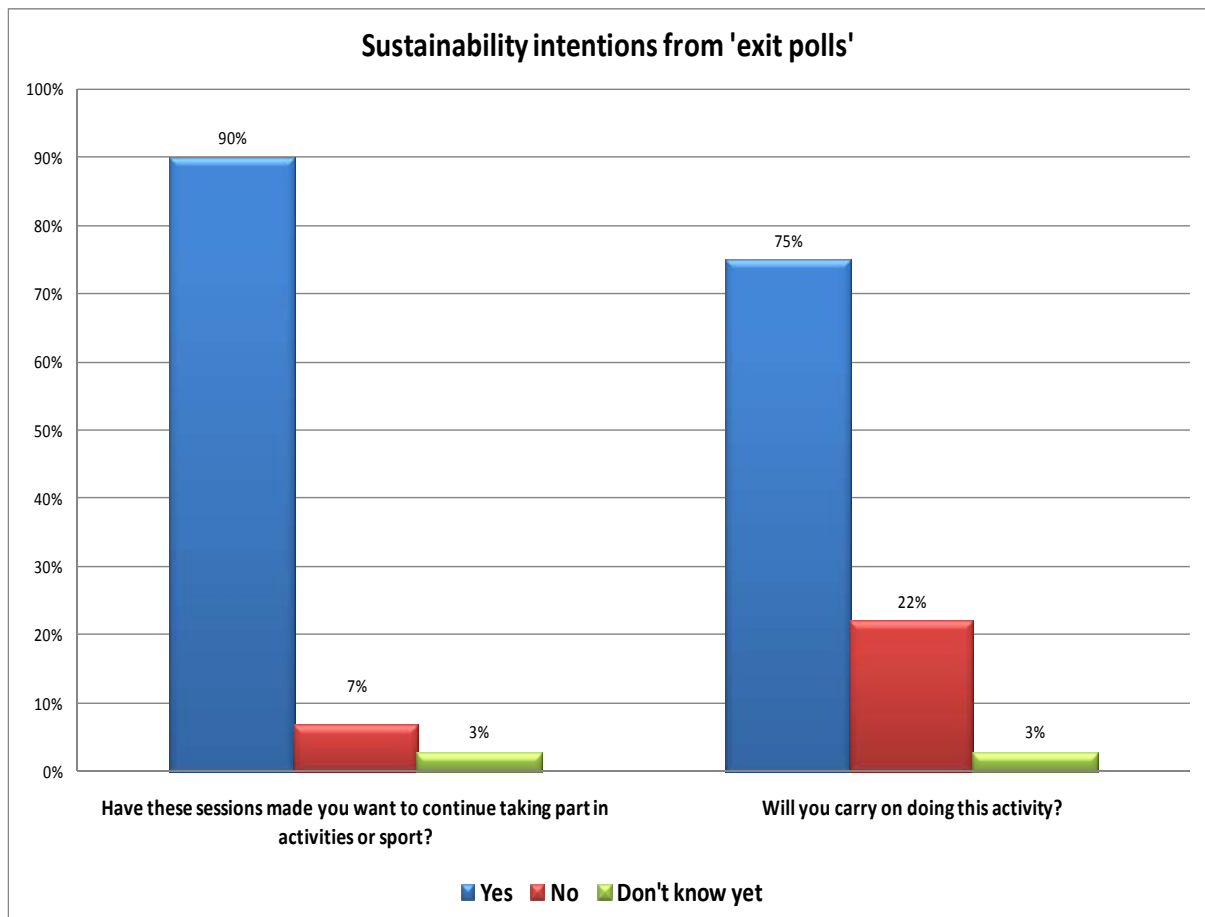
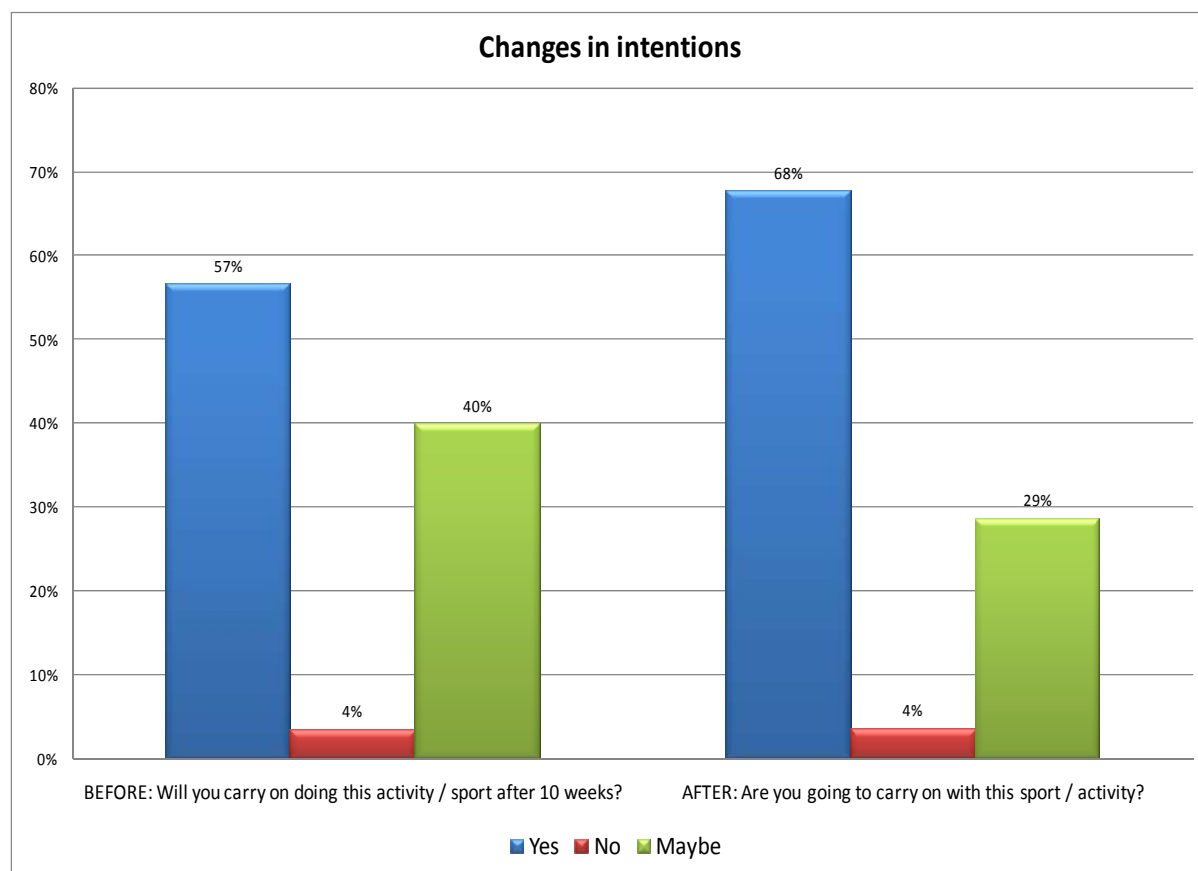


Figure 1.6: Key findings from the 'before and after' surveys - measuring any changes in intentions over the 10 weeks...



At the onset of the Sport Unlimited autumn term sessions, 57% of participants expressed the intention to carry on participating, whilst 40% were 'unsure'. In the final weeks of the sessions, the proportion of participants intending to carry on had increased by 11 percentage points to 68%, whilst those who were unsure had decreased to 29% (11 percentage points).

In addition to the sustainability tracking research there are a whole host of examples of good practice which showcase some of the excellent work of *Sport Unlimited*. There are many success stories that are evident in terms of young people carrying on with the activity once their *Sport Unlimited* sessions come to an end. It is apparent that a growing core of the projects are achieving 'sustainability', much of this is down to the dedication, commitment and enthusiasm from the CSPs, deliverers and coaches to make the programme work for young people.

Merseyside Sports Partnership has worked closely with *Liverpool St Helens Rugby Union club* to develop a girl's under 15s team. As there was a lack of activities available for girls this age, the *Rugby Football Union (RFU)* applied for *Sport Unlimited* funding to deliver a 10-week block of coaching in six different schools across the region for girls in years 7/8. At the end of the 10 week programme a girl's rugby festival was held at *Liverpool St Helens Rugby Club* to encourage participants to join the club. A rugby leader's course was also organised to help train young leaders to assist in future coaching. From the initial interest of girls who trained throughout the autumn term, there is now a girl's under 15s team established at the club with around 15 girls who initially attended the *Sport Unlimited* sessions, regularly taking part at the club.

Merseyside Sports Partnership also worked closely with *Sefton Active* during the autumn term to provide a 10 week programme of cheerleading activity as part of their efforts involved in increasing physical activity levels of girls and young women within the *North Sefton Partnership*. In total, there were 30 participants who signed up to the cheerleading programme all of whom were retained in activity. As a result of this programme a community cheerleading club has now been established

within the local *Dunes Leisure Centre*. Additionally a number of coaching staff are now completing a level 2 coaching course to ensure that there is greater access for children and young people to this activity throughout the Borough.

Suffolk Sport joined up with the *Our Space Project*, which serves a housing estate in South Ipswich. The project ran two climbing activities with funding from *Sport Unlimited*. During November and December the *Our Space Project* successfully delivered a rock climbing project with young people attending the Copleston climbing wall to receive instruction. Six young people from the estate achieved an AQA (Assessment & Qualifications Alliance) unit award, with one young person managing to achieve a lead climb at the end of the eight weeks. As well as seeing an increase in the self-esteem of these young people, additional personal achievements were made. One participant has taken up rugby as a sport, attending training sessions on a regular basis. This was a direct result of the rock climbing, which gave them the confidence to attend organised sport. Finally, some of the participants have now been invited to take part in an expedition to the Alps, which is planned to include cycling, rock climbing and canyoning.

and finally...

Many CSPs will have been lucky enough to benefit from '*Sporting Champions*' visits which aims to inspire young people to take part, hopes to increase the likelihood of retaining young people in *Sport Unlimited* activities and successfully transitioning these young people into sustainable exit routes. The summer term (year 2010-11) will see a new round of *Sporting Champions* and selected CSPs, and *SIRC* will be conducting a piece of small scale research with 2 (yet to be confirmed) CSPs which will help to provide evidence of the impact of the scheme in retaining young people in activity. Results of this research will be published in the autumn.