

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny	Date: 6 th May 2008	Classification: Unrestricted	Report No.	Agenda Item No.
Report of: Michael Keating, Acting Assistant Chief Executive		Title: Report of the Scrutiny Review Working Group on Young People's participation in sports leading up to the Olympics		
Originating Officer(s): Jebin Syeda, Scrutiny Policy Officer				

1. Summary

1.1 This report is a submission of the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Working Group on Young People's participation in sports leading up to the Olympics for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- 2.1 Endorse the draft report.
- 2.2 Authorise the Acting Assistant Chief Executive to agree the final report before its submission to Cabinet.

Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) Section 100D LOST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Background paper:

Young People's participation in sports leading up to the Olympics documents held with the Scrutiny Policy Team

Name, telephone and address where open to inspection:

Jebin Syeda
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3. Background

- 3.1 The Working Group was established in December 2007 to investigate the Council's approach to increasing young people's participation in sports leading up to the Olympics.
- 3.2 The objectives of the review were to ensure young people; particularly young disabled people participate in sports leading up to the Olympics and are part of the momentum generated by it. The review looked in particular at the following areas:
- Current initiatives in place around sports engagement for young people including young disabled people;
 - Strategy development regarding young people's participation in sports;
 - Availability of leisure facilities for local young people including disabled young people;
 - Young people and their interest in trying Olympic sports and the type of Olympic sport they would be interested in and their experiences and barriers to sports participation;
 - The role of the PCT to address health issues using the Olympics as a catalyst to promote healthy lifestyles.
- 3.3 The Working Group met three times in addition to a number of visits to organisations to consult young people and to consider the evidence for this review, including visiting local leisure facilities.
- 3.4 The report with recommendations is attached at Appendix A.
- 3.5 Once agreed, the Working Group's report and action plan will be submitted to Cabinet.

4. Concurrent Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services)

- 4.1 Any legal implications that may arise following the report will need to be considered at that time.

5. Comments of the Chief Financial Officer

- 5.1 The report contains a range of recommendations specifically in relation to Supporting and Improving Access which have financial implications, these will need to be costed and proposals taken to Cabinet for consideration of funding options.

6. Equal Opportunity Implications

- 6.1 Equalities issues were considered throughout the review. The review had a particular focus on the needs of young disabled people and young girls. A number of the recommendations have clear relevance to equal opportunities implications.

7. Anti-Poverty Implications

- 7.1 Access to youth service provision does have anti-poverty implications, access affects the opportunities and life experiences of young people and is a particular issue for young disabled people and the service must continue to ensure that it is accessible for all. A number of recommendations have been made to address access.

8. Sustainable Action for a Greener Environment

- 8.1 There are no direct actions for a greener environment arising from this report.

9. Risk Management

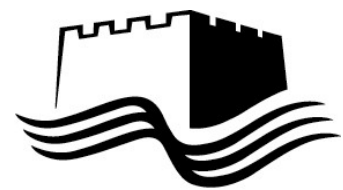
9.1 There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report.

Appendix A: Report of the Scrutiny Review Working Group on Young people's participation in sports leading up to the Olympics

Overview and Scrutiny

Report of the Scrutiny Review Working Group on
Young people's participation in sports leading up to the Olympics

Tower Hamlets Council
May 2008



TOWER HAMLETS

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Acknowledgements

The Working Group would like to thank all the officers and partners that supported this review. The views and perspectives of everyone involved has helped to shape the final recommendations of this report. We want to thank in particular the young people, partners, schools, youth centres and leisure centres who supported the consultation and so willingly took to completing and returning the Young People and the Olympics Survey which has been useful for informing the review. We hope that this report goes in some way of addressing some of the issues raised.

Working Group chair:

Councillor Ahmed Hussain

Working Group members:

Councillor Waiseul Islam

Councillor Ahmed Omar

Councillor A A Sardar

Councillor Emma Jones

Councillor Tim O'Flaherty

Councillor Salim Ullah

Other Members:

Councillor Clair Hawkins – Lead Member Childrens Services

Councillor Marc Francis – Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Services:

Mary Durkin – Interim Service Head - Youth and Community Learning

Kevan Collins - Director of Childrens Services

Helen Spedding – School and Community Sports Manager

Pauline Dunn – Acting Joint Head of Sports and Physical Activities

Simon Butler – Active Communities Co-Ordinator (Disability Specialist)

Paul Martindill – Acting Head of Cultural Services

Stephen Halsey – Director of Environment and Culture

Nick Smales – Service Head – Olympic and Paralympic Games

Living Well Community Plan Action Group

Learning, Achievement and Leisure Community Plan Action Group

Michael Keating – Assistant Chief Executive

External:

Esther Trenchard-Mabere – Associate Director of Public Health

John Ridgley, students, and staff at Marion Richardson Primary School

Halima Begum, service users, and staff at the Shurjomuki Project for disabled young people

Mile End Hospital Children with Disabilities Physiotherapy Department – young people, their parents and carers and staff members.

Scrutiny and Equalities:

Jebin Syeda – Scrutiny Policy Officer

Afazul Hoque – Scrutiny Policy Manager

Chair's foreword

The enormous success of the Olympic Games can be measured not only in terms of the quality of the festivals, culture and celebration of the Games itself, but also in the sense of excitement and involvement it invokes in local people. The event highlights important human qualities of trust, friendship, respect and 'being the best'; it's an opportunity to bring communities together.

The Olympics is a historical event for many nations, this time, it's a historical event which is taking place on the door steps of Tower Hamlets and its neighbouring boroughs. It is phenomenal in scale and monumental in the potential impact it can have and the legacy it can leave behind.

The Olympics is an opportunity to experience something monumental, it is also an opportunity to address local concerns about levels of overweight and obesity in the borough.

This report is the result of a three month long inquiry by the Scrutiny Review Working Group in which we visited local leisure facilities, local schools, third sector organisations and local venues to talk to staff, users, parents and carers and young people, including young disabled people in the borough. The visits and discussions were interesting and informative, and the results have been used to inform the recommendations in this review.

The conclusions and recommendations outlined in the report are intended to improve access and the experience and opportunities for young people to engage in sports and is an area that partners can get involved in. It is also a great opportunity to work with other host boroughs to create opportunities beyond the boundaries of Tower Hamlets.

Tower Hamlets is a host borough, this does have its privileges and I hope that the opportunity is used to benefit the young people of Tower Hamlets. I am confident that the recommendations in this report will go in some way to addressing the need to increase young peoples participation in sports, enabling young people to experience the momentum generated by the Olympics, and ensuring that the Olympics contributes to promoting healthy weight and healthy lives in Tower Hamlets. We must not forget that the work we do with children early on sets them up for later life.

I would like to say that this review has been much more glamorous than expected as we have had a film crew follow this review investigation to produce a short film. I'm very excited about this short film and I hope it reaches out to the wider community and engages them in scrutiny and demonstrates that the voice of local people can lead change.

Finally, I would like to thank all the Councillors who have participated in this review, and the individual staff members who have supported this review.

Councillor Ahmed Hussain
Scrutiny Lead, Learning Achievement and Leisure

Background and Recommendations

Background

1. With almost 30% of the population being under the age of 19 whilst the average for London is 18%, the population of Tower Hamlets is relatively young; projections indicate that the number of young people is set to grow. The diversity of the borough is well established and the diversity of the youth population is no exception; in addition to mainstream schools, there are a number of established special schools which provide services for young people with disabilities.
2. The very nature of young people, in addition to having a disability, means that services can be limiting in their accessibility for young (disabled) people. In recognition of this, and the phenomenon that is the Olympics delivered locally, the Working Group was established to ensure that the young people of Tower Hamlets, particularly young disabled people are given positive opportunities to take part in sports leading up to the Olympics and to ensure there are opportunities to try Olympic and Paralympic sports and take part in the momentum generated by the Olympics.
3. In considering and establishing ways of increasing sports participation, the Working Group undertook the following:
 - Considered current initiatives and strategy development;
 - Visited facilities available for young people, including young disabled people;
 - Considered targeted and accessible sports for young people by consulting and listening to the views of young people on their interests and barriers to sports participation;
 - Considered the use of Olympics to promote healthy lifestyles by engaging the PCT and giving consideration to partnership working.
4. The working Group agreed to investigate these issues, and hoped to make recommendations that would help improve young people's access to sports participation and make a useful contribution to enabling young people to engage in the momentum generated by the Olympics.
5. The Working Group were insistent that the review be informed by the views of local young people and undertook extensive consultation with young people and their parents and carers to identify issues that were relevant to them in sports participation. Approximately 300 young people completed the Young People and the Olympics Survey. A number of local organisations, individual parents and carers and the wider youth population were involved and this proved to be an invaluable way to inform the review. The Working Group would like to extend heartfelt thanks to the young people and the parents, carers and the organisations which helped to make this happen.
6. A key issue noted by the Working Group was that young people were interested in participating in sports but felt disconnected from the Olympics.
7. The Working Group visited 2 local leisure centres, it was noted that the facilities in Tower Hamlets have had investment over the years and in particular, the accessibility of the facilities in Mile End Leisure Centre were noted for excellence. The visit enabled the Working Group at first-hand, to experience what it is like to access leisure facilities, and was particularly informed by a Working Group member who is a wheelchair user. Members spoke to a number of users of the facilities and we know that the users found this to be useful in being able to share their views.

8. As the review progressed, consideration was also given to participation of young girls in sports.
9. This review has been progressed alongside that of a short film to promote wider understanding of the role of Councillors as community leaders and the function of scrutiny. This short film will illustrate how Councillors undertaking scrutiny reviews and local young people being engaged, can impact on the accessibility of services for young people leading up to the Olympics. It will be available to the general public and will be useful for demonstrating how scrutiny works.

Recommendations

10. The recommendations from this review focus on a number of areas that require consideration. They are intended to support young people's access to sports participation and to support the work the service has done to date on improving facilities and access.
11. For the purposes of this report the recommendations from the Working Group are set out under the following key areas:

Supporting and improving access

Experiencing the Games

Partnership working

Focusing on health

12. The findings of the Working Group has lead to the following recommendations:

Supporting and improving access

- 1) That a review is undertaken of the current pricing policy of leisure and physical activities and venues with a view to:
 - Reducing costs for parents on low income;
 - Reducing the price of provisions for young people;
 - Formulating a policy for hiring and pricing of community access sports facilities and publishing this;
 - Giving free access to leisure centres for young people who are looked after;
- 2) That the results of the Young People and the Olympics Survey is used to inform the development of strategies for young people and sports, in particular that the Building Schools for the Future programme considers the views of young people in providing a variety of sports, coaching and training based on the expressions of interest, barriers and experience of young people in sports;
- 3) That incentives are introduced (activities and costs) to encourage bringing along and introducing a friend to an activity or to leisure centre facilities;
- 4) That the service develop innovative ways of engaging young girls in sports, working with community organisations, including faith organisations, schools and parents, taking in to consideration the expressions of interest in the Young People and the Olympics Survey;
- 5) That the service look at ways the leisure centres can be enhanced to actively engage and increase young disabled people with sports and physical activities leading up to 2012 including increasing the availability of disability specialist staff to support and actively engage young disabled people into sports, working with them to address transport barriers;

- 6) That budget provisions be made to mainstream Sports Search in the work that the Council does, exploring the potential to roll out Sports Search to special schools in the borough with a view to capturing data for disabled young people;
- 7) That the Service seek to increase ways in which budget allocations can be increased to further mainstream sports activities;

Experiencing the Games

- 8) That annual borough-wide major community events are organised in which young people participate in Olympic and Paralympic sports, building champions to participate in the events through schools and sports programmes;
- 9) That the Council explore the possibility of negotiating free tickets or subsidised rate of entry to the Olympics and Paralympics for young people, particularly for disabled young people to experience the Paralympic Games;
- 10) That an extensive publicity campaign is put in place to promote positive images of young disabled people taking part in sports as part of the publicity strategy to promote Olympics and Paralympics in Tower Hamlets;

Partnership Working

- 11) That the service find ways in which the relationship with the private sector can be further developed to enhance the funding available to support young people's engagement in sports and physical activities, exploring in particular ways in which the TTK model can be adopted to engage the private sector to fund a range of sports;
- 12) That formalised agreements as part of housing stock transfer are strengthened to secure the provision of sports facilities based on a study of the local youth population, including disabled young people, existing facilities and projected needs;
- 13) That work is developed with Wood Wharf with a view to securing opportunities for water sports in the borough;
- 14) That consideration be given to what other host boroughs have been involved in to increase sports participation with a view to adopting what works well in increasing participation, and that affordable access is negotiated for young people in Tower Hamlets to leisure facilities in other host boroughs, particularly as a legacy of the Olympics and to increase contact between young people in the different boroughs through events and competitions;

Focus on health

- 15) That the PCT develop targeted work with those who are at health risk due to obesity, with primary focus on those who are particularly obese and may lack confidence to engage in sports and physical activities.
- 16) That the PCT in partnership with LBTH should deliver health promotion as part of the Olympics publicity to include messages on the damaging effects of drugs and smoking and that the publicity campaign be supported by celebrities to promote a 'cool' image of participating in sports at local venues;

Introduction and Background

Introduction

13. When setting out the 2012 vision and strategy, Lord Coe stated that the Olympics Strategy would be one which is “based around sport and getting more young people involved”.¹
14. Following the award of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympics to London in July of 2005, Tower Hamlets as one of the host boroughs has a once in a life time opportunity to secure benefits for the local community and enable local people to experience a historic event. The borough established a London 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Strategy and Programme which sets out how it would approach the Olympics to maximise growth and potential including social, economic and cultural benefits.

National context

15. Nationally, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is working to improve access to culture, sport and play for children and young people, so that they can develop their talents and enjoy the benefits of participation.
16. DCMS Sports Division plays a key role in delivering a range of Government targets aimed at increasing sports participation and addressing the health agenda. These are developed jointly with Department of Health (a role for the PCT) and Department of Education and Skills (a role for local authorities). The targets are focused on increasing sports take-up for school children, tackling obesity amongst children under 11 and the wider population generally.
17. DCMS and the London Development Agency commissioned Price Waterhouse Coopers to undertake ‘Olympic Games Impact Study’² to assess the likely benefits of hosting the Olympics and Paralympic Games.
18. The study concluded that amongst a number of things, hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games would:
 - Enhance and accelerate investment in sporting facilities;
 - Motivate young people to take up sports and contribute to increased participation in sports;
 - Create a significant sports and cultural legacy;
 - Improve public health;
19. To realise its ambitions, DCMS funds sports provision to improve the quantity and quality of sports and physical activities. The initiatives range from Sports England which is funded to promote and invest in grassroots level sports to Equality in Sport which aims to increase participation in sports and physical activities by under-represented group with a target of 3%.³ This includes black and ethnic minority groups, women, physically or mentally disabled people and groups in certain disadvantaged socio-economic group. Tower Hamlets places equality and diversity at the heart of its service delivery, this review set out to ensure that disabled young people are given appropriate opportunities to participate in sports and physical activities.

¹ BBC Sport Profile: Lord Coe http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/other_sports/olympics_2012/4656275.stm

² Olympic Games Impact Study, Price Waterhouse Coopers, December 2005 For further information use the following link: <http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/E88F2684-F49E-4F45-B826-2F19F21374F8/0/OlympicGamesImpactStudy.pdf>

³ For further information use the following link: http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/Sport/

Choosing Health agenda

20. The White Paper Choosing Health: Making Healthier Choices Easier was published in November 2004 and set out the practical help Government will develop to make it easier for people to make healthier choices. It laid out a challenging programme of practical action aimed at changing the lives of many. One of the actions which came out of the White Paper was around physical activity, although many of the recommendations were focused on adults, it did recommend that children and young people should take a total of at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day.
21. In 2006, this was followed up by recommendations from National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, one of the recommendations was that local partners should *'monitor the effectiveness of local strategies and systems to promote physical activities...focusing in particular on...helping to increase the physical activities of people from disadvantaged groups, including those with disabilities as a way of tackling health inequalities'*.⁴
22. Health is high on the national agenda; obesity is a growing concern. Early this year Government released **'Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: A cross-Government Strategy for England'** with the ambition to reverse the trends in rising levels of overweight and obesity. It focuses heavily on children and tackling childhood obesity.
23. The Government has therefore set a national target for obesity to *"halt the year-on-year rise in obesity among children aged under 11 by 2010, in the context of a broader strategy to tackle obesity in the population as a whole"*

Community cohesion

24. The disturbances of 2001 in England which included property destruction and attacks on police involving large groups of people from different backgrounds lead to Government setting up a review team lead by Ted Cante⁵. The Cante review report highlights the importance of contact between those of different backgrounds. It recognises that targeted programmes at younger people (though not exclusively so), are important as they are more receptive to change and their early views will shape their future lives. In shaping what might promote cohesion, sports participation was recognised for its potential role. The report recognised the need for programmes to increase contact with those from different backgrounds, for schools based programmes with parental engagement and joint development with schools with different ethnicity profiles. Sports engagement in this context would promote cohesion.
25. 2007 saw the publication of Our Shared Future, a report by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion, this and the response to this report by Government, does recognise the role sports and culture can play in bringing people together and promoting cohesion⁶.

⁴ National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (2006) Four commonly used methods to increase physical activities

⁵ Community Cohesion: A report of the Independent Review Team, Ted Cante, 2001

⁶ Community Cohesion: A report of the Independent Review Team, Ted Cante, 2001

Local context

26. Tower Hamlets is one of the 5 London Boroughs to host the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, providing opportunities for promoting community cohesion across the 5 boroughs.
27. The world's greatest sporting occasion will be happening on the doorsteps of Tower Hamlets: the men's and women's marathons and the Paralympic marathon will pass along Whitechapel Road, Mile End Road and Bow Road, while Victoria Park will be the main venue for the walk race, as well as potentially hosting Olympic cultural events. The Olympics Torch relay passed along Whitechapel Road in April 2008.
28. The Games are also bringing opportunities to Tower Hamlets that start long before 2012 – and will continue long afterwards. There is potential for creating new jobs and homes, as well as a new park and sports facilities. In addition to the physical regeneration, it's important to ensure that young people can be part of the legacy and be given opportunities to explore sports. The memories of the Olympics opportunities should be positive for all; young people can take part in the momentum and enthusiasm generated by the Games and carry through the experience by making use of host borough state of the art facilities.

London Borough of Tower Hamlets Strategy and Programme

29. The Council has set out its strategy and programme for the Olympic and Paralympic legacy. The vision is to '*host an inspirational, safe and inclusive Olympic and Paralympic Games and leave a sustainable legacy for London and the UK*',⁷ as agreed by the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and other key stakeholders, linking to the Community Plan, it sets out with the following themes:

- Theme 1 – Creating and Sharing Prosperity
- Theme 2 – A Socially Cohesive Community
- Theme 3 – A Transformed Environment
- Theme 4 – Experiencing the Games

30. The programme sets out with aims to maximise the building and infrastructure, increase jobs and training opportunities, increase business opportunities, increase corporate social responsibility, increase physical activities and health. It aims to enhance the image of the borough, and create an environment which is sustainable. It aims to address worklessness and create new opportunities for young people and encourage civic pride.
31. The London 2012 Games Legacy Strategy indicates there are current plans to engage disabled people into sports and to use the Paralympics to challenge stereotypes.

Demographics

32. According to Office of National Statistics data for June 2005, of the population in Tower Hamlets, 21% are 0-15 years of age and 28.5% are 16 – 29 years of age⁸. Tower Hamlets has the largest population increase projection, this is across the borough with particular areas experiencing more growth than others. The boroughs young population is set to continue. GLA (2006) projections for Tower Hamlets demonstrates that currently 28.4% of the local population is under 19 years of age whilst the average for the rest of inner London is 18%. Projections indicate that the number of young people aged 5 to 19

⁷ Page 8, London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games Legacy Strategy and Programme, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, December 2006

⁸ See National Statistics website for further information:
<http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadTableView.do?adminCompAndTimeId=22330%3A198&a=7&b=276772&c=tower+hamlets&d=13&r=1&e=13&f=22329&o=50&g=346968&i=1001x1003x1006x1005&k=june+2005&l=1818&m=0&s=1205339627281&enc=1>

are also likely to increase by 2011. This makes Tower Hamlets a relatively young borough and has implications for service provision, particularly for leisure services and facilities for sports engagement.

Children with disabilities

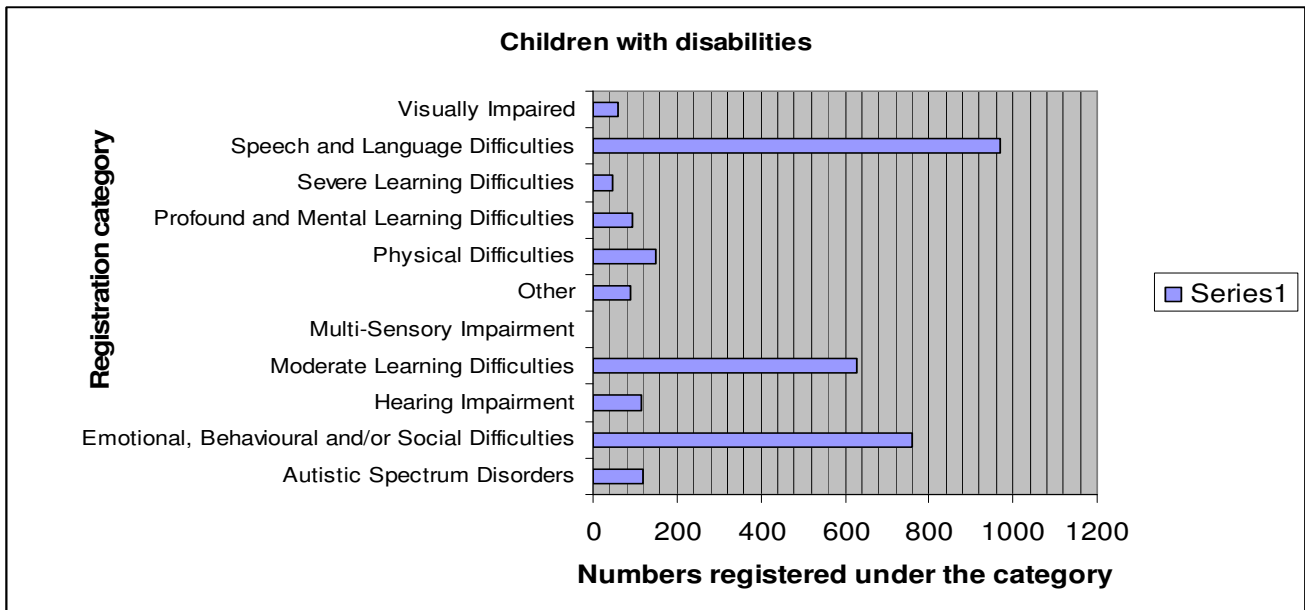


Figure 1 – Young children registered to receive services

33. Currently there are approximately 3,000 young disabled people under the age of 19 known to the Council with a disability, this is expected to be much higher given that not all young disabled people will be registered. The table above shows the forms of disability and indicates that the largest groups are those with speech and language difficulties, emotional, behavioural and/or social difficulties and moderate learning difficulties. The very nature of young children, in addition to having a disability, can limit their access to services, potentially disproportionately impacting negatively on their chances of engaging in activities.

Physical Disability, Frailty	14
Learning Disability	133
Substance Misuse	1
Vulnerable People	1
Grand Total	149

Figure 2 – Young people know to the Council aged 18-24

34. There are also a number of young people in the borough aged 18-24 who are registered with the Council with a disability, again this is thought to be higher as there will be those who are not accessing services and therefore not registered. Disabled people in the borough must be able to access local services.

35. In 06/07 10% of 18 to 24 year old population were benefit claimants, compared to the 6% of the London population. At the time of the 2001 Census, 33,714 counts were classified as having a limiting long-term illness. 7% of the 16-24 year old population were claiming Disability Living Allowance⁹. This demonstrates that diversity of the borough also means

⁹ The figures used here are from the National Statistics website unless otherwise stated. See the following for more information:
<http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadTableView.do?adminCompAndTimeId=22797%3A248&a=7&b=276772&c=tower+hamlets&d=13&r=1&e=4&f=22628&o=229&g=346968&i=1001x1003x1004x1005&l=1724&m=0&s=1205330570625&enc=1>

that there are communities who will have particular needs which provisions need to be made for if the Council is to deliver equitable services.

Inequalities and deprivation

36. Tower Hamlets is currently ranked as 4th most deprived out of 354 local authorities in England. The impact of deprivation and how it manifests itself can vary; one of these is to deprive access to services for local people due to income barriers. Unemployment rate for 06/07 was 13.2% in Tower Hamlets comparative to 7.6% in London and 5.5% in England. This demonstrates an increase in unemployment rates locally and nationally against the rates for the previous year.

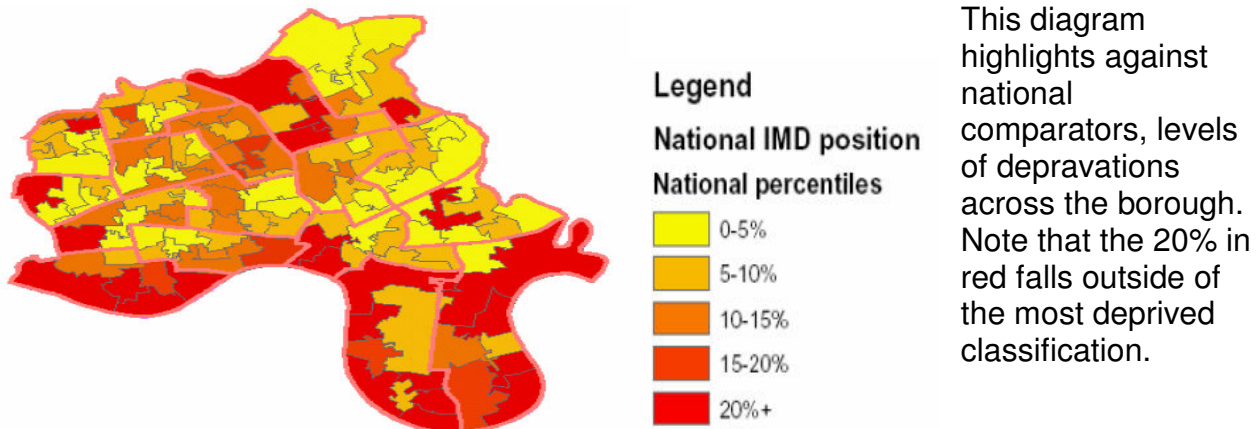


Figure 3 – Levels of deprivation

Infrastructure

37. It should be recognised that the built environment can impact on the level of physical activities undertaken; issues here can range from transportation to get to and from venues, cycling lanes, availability of open spaces and design and layout of buildings. The availability of local facilities in addition to leisure facilities can impact on the level of physical activities; these can include local community centres and access to sports facilities/grounds in schools. In Tower Hamlets there is an under-representation of open spaces for young people to use for physical activities and also very high demands for football pitches outstripping the local supply for local young people and businesses who want access, housing and the supply of affordable housing continues to push for the development of local new build in Tower Hamlets.

38. Housing has historically been an issue for all communities in Tower Hamlets, overcrowding is a particular issue with some wards experiencing the highest levels of overcrowding in the Country. Overcrowding is recognised as having links to poor health and its negative implications for educational attainment of young people. Given the young profile of the borough and the levels of overcrowding, the provision of leisure services for giving young people somewhere to go and something to do becomes even more pertinent.

39. This sets a challenge for the provision of services in making sure that they can meet potentially increasing demands, particularly given the high levels of development in the infrastructure leading to increased demands for services. Access to local services for young children is key given that many, particularly very young children will not be able to travel out to leisure facilities.

Health agenda – tackling obesity

40. The RELACHS¹⁰ study from 2001 is a cross-sectional, school-based study of a representative sample of children in years 7 to 9 in secondary schools in inner East London. It shows that 43% of adolescent girls in Tower hamlets only exercise once a week or less outside of school. 9% never exercised outside school.
41. The RELACHS study tested the perceptions of young people of their local community, testing a range of issues from sports facilities, safety, places for young people to meet, tidiness and public transport. Of the areas tested, Tower Hamlets generally scored higher than the comparative boroughs of Newham and Hackney. For sports facilities in particular, the facilities in Newham scored higher by girls in comparison to Tower Hamlets. We know that since 2001, the leisure facilities in Tower Hamlets have had major investment across the borough and it now has some excellent facilities.

National Child Measurement Programme - 2006-07

	Overweight				Obese				Coverage	
	Reception	+/-%	Year 6	+/-%	Reception	+/-%	Year 6	+/-%	Reception	Year 6
Tower Hamlets	11.1	1.3%	14.2%	1.4%	14.6%	1.4%	23.0%	1.7%	83%	88%
England	13.0%	.1%	14.2%	.1%	9.9%	.1%	17.5%	.1%	83%	78%

Figure 4 – Percentage of obese and overweight in Tower Hamlets and England 2006/07

42. National Child Measurement Programme¹¹ research shows a positive relationship between deprivation and prevalence of obesity, children in local authorities classified as deprived are more likely to be obese in reception and in Year 6 although the relationship is much stronger in Year 6. The readings in Tower Hamlets are slightly different to the national picture in that prevalence of levels of obesity are higher in both reception and Year 6. Obesity is also a concern for disabled young people.

Local participation

43. Sport England is the brand name of the English Sports Council which is a distributor of Lottery funds for sports. Its role is to provide the strategic lead for sport through advising, investing in and promoting community sport in England. Its ambition is to get two million people more active in sport by 2012. The target set by government is to increase participation in sports and physical activities by 1% annually. The Local Government White Paper: Strong and Prosperous Communities drives for an emphasis on partnership working with community engagement. Community Sports Networks were developed to deliver more localised sports participation, with increased delivery through partnerships with a range of organisations.

¹⁰ Health of Young People in East London, the RELACHS study 2001, Queen Mary's School of Medicine and Dentistry, 2003.

¹¹ National Child Measurement Programme: 2006/07 School Year, headline results, 2008

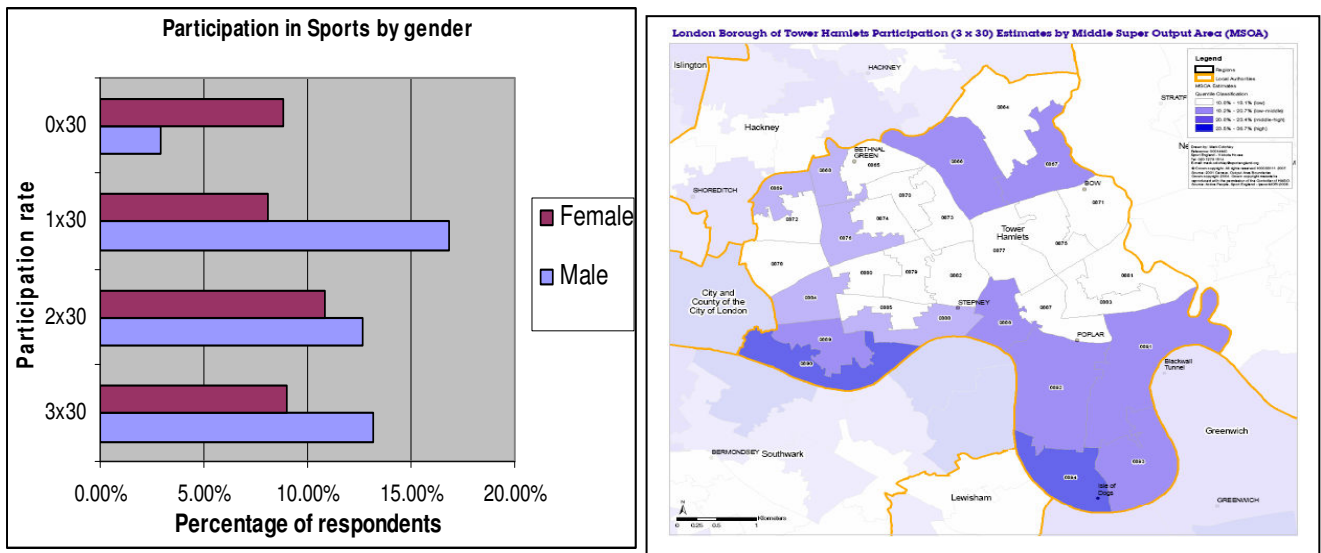


Figure 5 – Sport England – local participation

44. Sport England researched the rate of participation in sports activities for 30 minute intervals; the figures above demonstrate that young women aged 16-24 years of age are less likely than men to undertake exercise of at least 30 minute intervals.
45. LBTH in conjunction with GLL initiated a Girls Health and Sports Activity Day in 2007 building on the successes of the previous year of a similar event. Similarly, a session was designed for disabled young people. The purpose of these events is to engage community groups in sports activities and to enable them to 'taste' the activities the borough has to offer. The long term impact of this it is hoped will be increased usage of leisure facilities by female and disabled users.
46. It is interesting that the research undertaken by Sport England on take-up of sports and physical activities mapped out across the borough (Figure 5) demonstrates that the percentage of participation increases in areas which are marked out on the map above as outside of the 'most deprived', making a stronger link between deprivation (Figure 3) and sports participation. It should also be recognised that leisure facilities are predominantly in the more affluent parts of the borough.

The National PE, School Sport and Club Links Strategy

47. The National PE, School Sport and Club Links Strategy, which uses a annual collection of data on 5-16 years olds participation rate demonstrates that in Tower Hamlets the participation rate has increased to 81% from 53% in 2003/04. Amongst a number of things, it demonstrates that:

- Tower Hamlets is above average for primary schools in relation to a target of 2 hours participation;
- The vast majority of primary schools now have two hours of curriculum time;
- The borough has the highest inter-school participation data of all the East London boroughs.
- There are a vast range of sports being offered, including disability sports and less traditional ones such as fencing;
- Most sports are developed with a real effort to promote them at a local school level (curriculum out-of-hours and localised festivals), borough level and with a club; new clubs are being established to ensure an exit route for pupils. These include new judo, fencing and badminton clubs;
- Tower Hamlets has had an increasing amount of success at various levels in a range of sports for individual schools and also for borough teams;

- There are more borough representative teams and this is an important 'layer' in efforts to develop clear pathways to excellence through the opportunities provided.

This establishes that there are a number of successes, including the work to support talented young athletes to progress to high performance programmes.

48. It should be noted that the current efforts on the Olympics is focused on infrastructure and facilities planning and the service expects more local level engagement after the Beijing Olympics. It is anticipated that this will be within Tower Hamlets, across the 5 boroughs and also across London. At the time of the review, strategies were being developed to action this. Locally there a number of coaching and competitions in place which includes Olympic and Paralympic sports such as Judo, Fencing, Boccia etc and these will continue to be developed through the strategies.

Key Findings

49. Given the local demographics of the borough in the context of deprivation and its link with sports participation, the complexities of the current infrastructure and having established the health agenda locally; the Working Group considered other key findings to put forward a number of recommendations which the Working Group believes will encourage sports participation in the local context.

Supporting and improving access

50. It is established and recognised that Tower Hamlets has a young population and the 'somewhere to go something to do' factor is pertinent. Provisions for young people to access sports facilities range from local estate based multi-use games areas, ward level schools facilities, community areas where there are pools and multi-use games areas and also borough-wide catchments like Mile End. The provisions are made across the sectors from the public, voluntary and the private sector.

51. The Working Group were pleased to hear that there has been significant investment in sports facilities in the borough with a heavy investment programme starting in 1999 with refurbishments and the introduction of new facilities. It was established that there is a programme of activities, courses and competitions to engage young people in sports including Paralympic training and more general disability sports training. The Working Group felt encouraged to find that the Coach Development and Volunteer Programme was attracting and developing coaches including coaches for disability sports. User figures for young people under the age of 19 who have a membership have increased from 20k to 26k attendances for the year 07/08. Tower Hamlets also has two Sports Colleges in the borough; Langdon Park and Bishop Challoner Boy's School which are excellent local school based sports specialist centres.

52. However, despite the facilities and the current incentives, the Working Group raised concerns that young people were unable to access existing facilities due to high pricing. There was also the issue that the pricing policy for community access facilities varied across the Borough and that residents perhaps need to know how prices are decided. The Working Group also brought to attention that the hiring and booking of local venues can also vary and it was unclear who decides who can hire and what rates should be charged. This has the potential to impact differentially on community groups. The policy on booking was unclear and examples were given of inappropriate pricing and where corporate bookings were made by businesses in Docklands the community was unable to use the facilities despite no-show from the corporate booking.

53. The Young People and the Olympics Survey also indicates that cost of taking part in activities can be a barrier. The parents and carers engaged felt that their children (particularly where disability was concerned) were not getting basic needs met due to the high demand for facilities and costs of taking part in sports and physical activities. This was exacerbated where there is more than 1 child in the family and parents had to pay to enter the facilities.

54. The Working Group understand about the position of young children who are looked after, placements are often placed outside of the borough, the Corporate Parenting Group recognises that these children often have strong links to the borough with extended family and friends based in the locality. Pricing of activities can be a major barrier for these young people and the Working Group felt that these children needed to gain access to facilities, which would support them to maintain links with the borough.

Recommendation:

1. That a review is undertaken of the current pricing policy of leisure and physical activities and venues with a view to:
 - Reducing costs for parents on low income;
 - Reducing the price of provisions for young people;
 - Formulating a policy for hiring and pricing of community access sports facilities and publishing this;
 - Giving free access to leisure centres for young people who are looked after

55. The Sports Strategy 1999 – 2025 consultation findings illustrate that football is the most popular sport within the borough, consistent with the national trend. The consultation undertaken as part of this review also confirmed this; it also demonstrates that young people are interested in a range of sports. However, there are difficulties in facilitating sufficient number of football pitches as demand exceeds supply. It is excellent that the development of the Playing Pitch Strategy 2008 will identify ways to address this and add new facilities or increase the capacity of existing facilities through the use of new pitch technology, the Working Group were pleased that local people were being consulted in the development of this piece of work.

56. The Service has taken on board the importance of cultural sensitivity for the boroughs sports provision to encourage participation from a wide spectrum of people; for example providing separate swimming slots for women. Current provisions include six leisure centres, four schools with extended community use and ten parks with sports facilities. Sports provision is facilitated by both the voluntary and private sector and since 1999, a total of eight new sports facilities have been introduced across the borough.

Young People and the Olympics Survey

57. As part of the consultation with young people and their parents and carers, a survey was undertaken with local young people. It was distributed to young people across the borough through a number of different channels:

- Youth clubs and leisure centres;
 - Schools;
 - The Tower Hamlets website featured an on-line version with an article in East End Life which encouraged residents to take part;
 - A session took place to ascertain the views of older disabled children via the Shurjomuki Project;
 - A consultation session also took place with pupils from Marion Richardson School;
 - Surveys were completed at the Youth Service Fair at Limehouse Youth Centre;
 - Consultation took place at the Childrens Physiotherapy Department at Mile End Hospital, engaging young people and their parents and carers.
- Approximately 300 surveys were returned.

Key findings of consultation with young people

58 The survey asked young people where they would like to find information on sports available in the borough:

- 45.1% would like to get information through their local school;
- 35.2% felt this information would be most usefully contained in East End Life;
- 24.5% would like information through their local youth service facility;
- 26.5% felt the Idea Stores would be the best place to display information.
- Other suggestions were around providing information on the internet.

Interest in sports

59. Young people are clearly interested in sports and would like to try a range of sports if the opportunity was available for young people to try, the stronger messages were about having a mentor/coach to introduce young people to sports and encourage them to play, with competition and prizes to make the participation 'fun'. For parents and carers, the barriers were about fear of safety and transportation, the provision of transport with support from a 'professional' – a person in the establishment who parents can trust, to oversee the safety of their children would encourage them to allow their children to take part in sports. Young people expressed that there are a number of ways in which young people can be encouraged to take part in sports. Incentives such as reduced cost of activities and incentives which encourage young people bringing a friend along and introducing them to an activity would greatly encourage them to take part in sports, some of the other points raised are summarised below:

- A stronger role for schools and teachers to play in engaging young children into sports;
- Opportunities to try different sports activities, organised sports events and sports events which are hosted by celebrities;
- Transport arrangements to get young people to sports venues;
- Specific services for disabled people/separate provisions for disabled people;
- Training and coaching for young people to develop an interest in sports;
- Opportunity to experience the Olympics & free tickets to the Olympic games;
- Cheaper, reduced or free access to facilities;
- More competitions and local leagues, prizes and awards;
- Parents on board to encourage their children to take up sports activities – parents have a key role to play;
- More awareness and advertisement of opportunities;
- Involve young people and their friends as they can be shy, create opportunities for making friends, young persons to bring in other young people to encourage them into sports;
- Girls only activities;
- Highlight the health benefits of taking part in sports activities and make it look cool with celebrities involved;
- Provide more equipment, particularly adapted equipment for disabled people;
- Run sessions in a safe and welcoming environment ;
- Give demonstrations of different sports for those who are unsure;

Expressing interest in Olympic sports

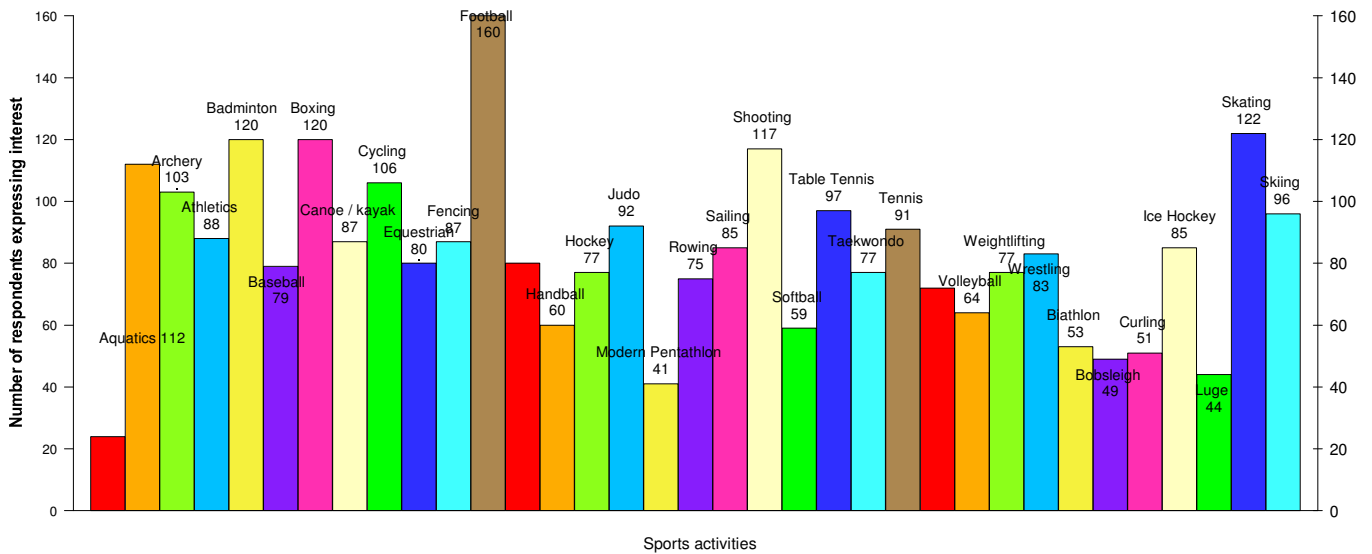


Figure 1 – The range of sports young people are interested in.

60. The graph above establishes that young people are clearly interested in football and also a range of other sports, and felt that they would be interested in sports if they were given the opportunity to try them, skating, badminton, boxing, shooting, cycling, aquatics and archery came out strongly.

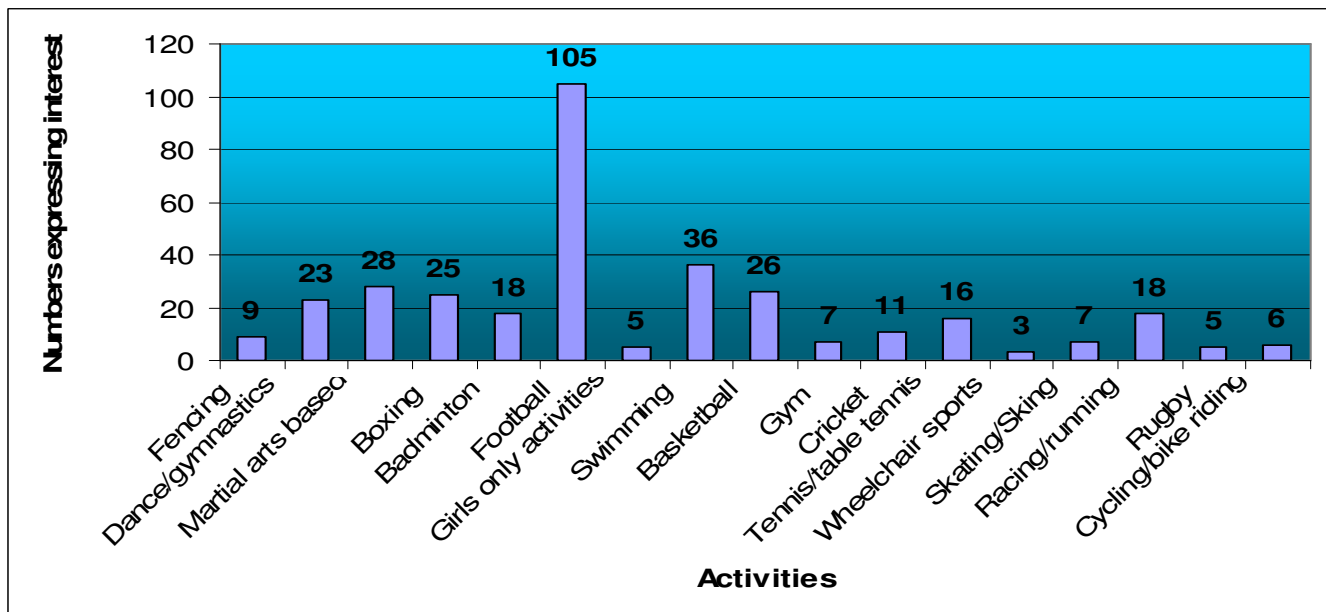


Figure 2 – The range of sports young people would like coaching and training in.

61. Parents and carers were seen as key people in influencing the interest young people develop in sports, and schools were seen as places for developing young peoples interest.

62. Not having qualified coaches was also raised as an issue; with training and coaching, it was felt that young people would be encouraged to develop an interest in sports and are more likely to become competitive.

63. Young people were asked if specialist centres should be developed across Tower Hamlets for developing sports. Overwhelmingly, the vast majority of young people

thought this was a positive way to develop sports engagement and talent. Young people were also asked what sport they would be interested in developing through coaching and training. Figure 2 above illustrates that whilst again, Football was the top sport for young people; they were interested in coaching and training in a range of sports. The Working Group were keen that this interest be taken into consideration when developing the Coaching Programme and when planning for provisions under Building Schools for the Future programme and any strategy development under sports provision.

Recommendation:

2. That the results of the Young People and the Olympics Survey is used to inform the development of strategies for young people and sports, in particular that the Building Schools for the Future programme considers the views of young people in providing a variety of sports, coaching and training based on the expressions of interest, barriers and experience of young people in sports;

Barriers

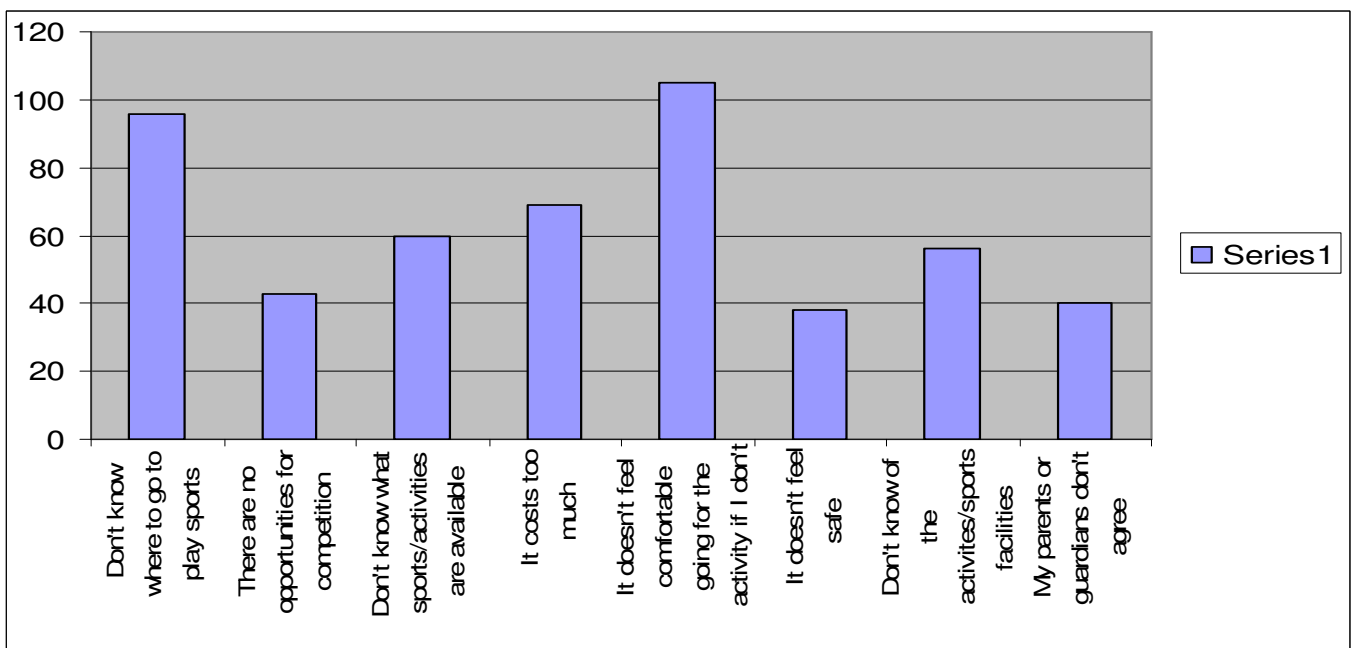


Figure 3 – Barriers for young people.

64. Of the existing sports opportunities available in the borough, young people were asked what stopped them from getting involved currently. The key findings are as follows:
- 38.0% of young people said they did not feel comfortable attending a sports activity if they did not know people there;
 - 34.8% felt they did not know where to go to play sports in the borough, with a further 21.7% feeling they did not know enough about which sports were on offer;
 - 25.0% were concerned that the costs of sporting activities were prohibitive;
 - 20.3% were concerned that a new activity might not be suitable for them;
 - 15.6% felt that there were too few opportunities for competition at present;
 - 14.5% were influenced by parental views, with another 13.8% refraining from activities if they felt they were not safe.
 - A number of young people felt there were not enough single-sex activities and this prevented them from getting more involved.

Recommendation:

- 3. That incentives are introduced (activities and costs) to encourage bringing along and introducing a friend to an activity or to leisure centre facilities;

Barriers for young disabled people

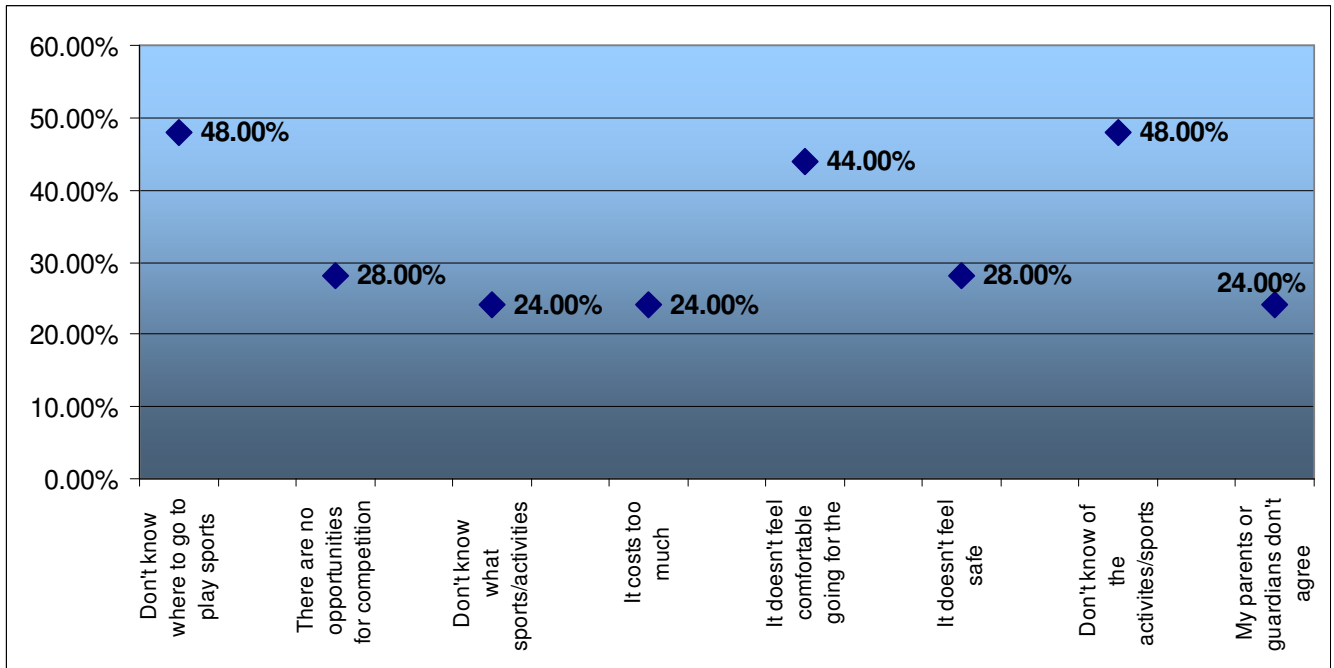


Figure 4 - Barriers for young disabled people

65. The barriers for young disabled people were distinct; a significant 48% did not know where to go to play sports and did not know of the activities and sports suitable for them. The third biggest barrier for young disabled people (44%) was not feeling comfortable going for the activity if they didn't know people there, demonstrating the important role parents/coaches and those working with young (disabled) people play. The young disabled people who contributed to the consultation often had assistance from 'professionals' or parents and carers to access facilities. A barrier for them was transport arrangements to take young people to venues. It was felt that if sports development became more centralised, transportation barriers might be exacerbated.

Barriers by gender

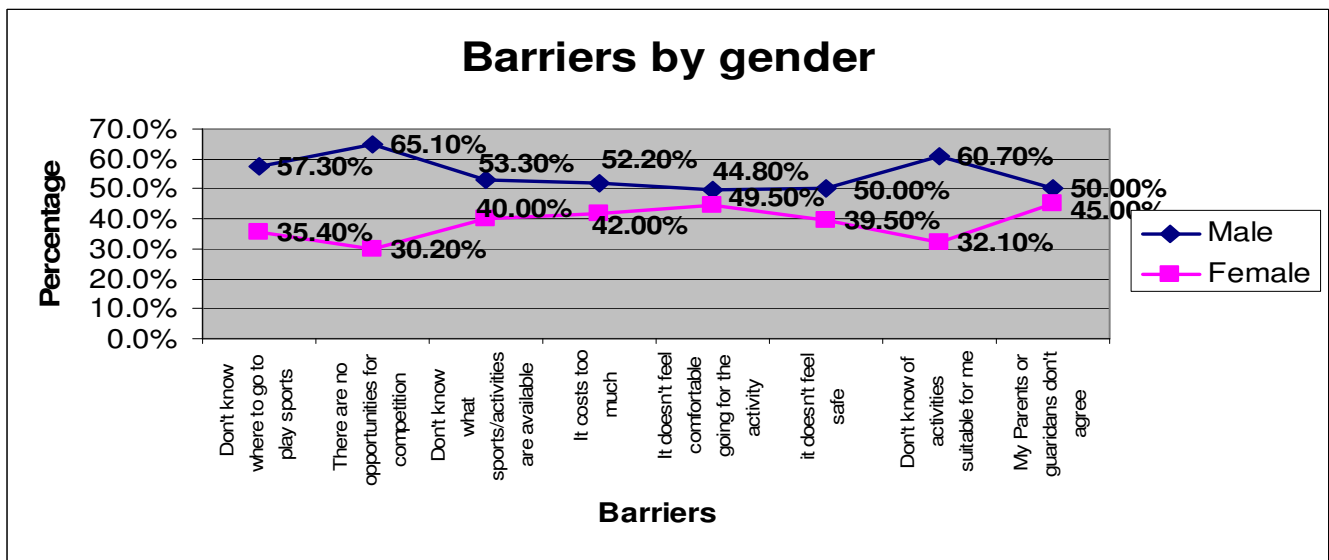


Figure 5 – Barriers by gender

66. The biggest barrier for young boys was a lack of competition (lowest concern for girls) and not knowing which sport would be suitable for them, this would correlate strongly with the number of young people who feel that having a mentor or coach and being able to try different sports would enable them to develop interest and take part. For young girls, the biggest barrier was not feeling comfortable with going to an activity if they didn't know anyone there and also issues around parents not prioritising and agreeing for young girls to undertake sports activities. This would indicate that professionals and those working with young girls and schools have an important role to play in working with parents and young girls to establish contact. The role of Councillors was identified as an influential role in their capacity as community leaders to encourage parents to engage their children in sports and physical activities. Evidence discussed under Experiencing the Games also supports the need to address barriers for girls.

Recommendation:

4. That the service develop innovative ways of engaging young girls in sports, working with community organisations, including faith organisations, schools and parents, taking in to consideration the expressions of interest in the Young People and the Olympics Survey.

67. Many young people were unable to identify Olympic and Paralympic Games. Using images in the sessions helped to develop understanding. Using images of Paralympic sports encouraged disabled young people to become more engaged in the consultation process, facilitators felt that it gave them confidence to realise that disabled people can take part in sports.

68. Tower Hamlets has a Active Communities Coordinator who is a disability specialist, this was recognised as a positive attribute but also felt to be limited in access. Specialist coaches and staff with understanding of disability would improve experience for disabled young people, this would be particularly beneficial for frontline staff as they often define whether a customer comes back to use the service. This view was shared by both Members of the Working Group and the users in the consultation, in particular disabled users of leisure facilities.

Recommendations:

5. That the service look at ways the leisure centres can be enhanced to actively engage and increase young disabled people with sports and physical activities leading up to 2012 including increasing the availability of disability specialist staff to support and actively engage young disabled people into sports, working with them to address transport barriers;

Sports Search

69. Sports Search is a school club links physical education tool consisting of 10 physical tasks, with online data on tasks completed entered into the system during curriculum ICT. Children are individually matched to sports to which they are attitudinally and physically best suited and then sign posted to a local sports club through this online database. Participation and performance data is recorded and compiled in report format. Sports Search supports the obesity agenda, identifies Gifted and talented, and the Healthy Schools Initiative. Tower Hamlets is noted for being the most successful local authority to deploy Sports Search. Into its second year, over 2000 year 7 students have completed the programme.

70. Football, swimming and cricket were the sports boasting the most amount of active pupils. No facilities (both a perception of and an actual lack of) was the predominant

reason behind non participation in sports. Time constraints, not being allowed, travel concerns and laziness were also registered. Aggression and lack of confidence also featured as reasons for aversion to particular activities. Generally, attitudes towards PE were positive with children stating fitness, health, fun, and football as reasons why lessons were enjoyable.

71. Given that Sports Search is so instrumental in identifying gifted and talented young people, progresses the health agenda and encourages young peoples interest in sports, the Working Group were keen that funding for this activity be mainstreamed as part of the work that the Council does in order to ensure that the work continues to benefit young people and that any budget provisions should be adequately supported by the Council.
72. Members were concerned that Sports Search was not mainstreamed and did not include disabled children and were keen to see this introduced. The current set up of the tool is not designed for use by young people with disabilities. If the tool could be developed to facilitate monitoring of sports for disabled young people it would help to develop young disabled peoples attitude towards sports and physical activities. Tower Hamlets should look at progressing Sports Search by extending it to special schools or find ways of capturing data on disabled people, working with the PCT particularly on the health agenda.

Recommendation:

6. That budget provisions be made to mainstream Sports Search in the work that the Council does, exploring the potential to roll out Sports Search to special schools in the borough with a view to capturing data for disabled young people;

73. It should be acknowledged that the recommendations around improving access will incur costs which should be noted in the context of the Leisure Management Contract and the need to achieve income to recover the costs as part of the contract. In addition to this, the service has experienced budget reductions in real terms over the last two years and implementing the recommendations would incur funding implications. The Working Group were keen that sports participation be supported by the Council through budget allocation.

Recommendation:

7. That the Service seek to increase ways in which budget allocations can be increased to further mainstream sports activities;

Experiencing the Games

74. The consultation with young people demonstrates that whilst some young people could identify with the benefits of taking part in sports and understood Tower Hamlets was one of the host boroughs, many young people saw the Olympics as an event about people coming into the borough and making money, this came out much stronger for young disabled people. In the focus groups, very few of the young people identified the potential to experience the Olympics or Paralympics and felt very disconnected from it.

Young people's experience of sports

75. The Young People and the Olympics Survey asked respondents about their experiences of watching and participating in sports:
- Whilst 29.9% of young people had already seen live sports at a venue, a further 41.7% had not but would like to in the future;

- 38.8% felt that they would participate in a new sport that they had not tried in the future;
- Of those young people who said they had tried a new sport, 62.5% were boys, compared with just 36.1% of girls;
- 68.7% of young people already watch sports on TV.

76. The results suggest that there is work to be done in motivating and making young people feel confident about taking part in sports, and that this may be a particular barrier for young girls in the survey, there were also concerns that this may be the case with those who were particularly obese and that targeted work may need to be developed. Young boys felt that the spirit of competition would encourage them to take part in sports.

Experience of sports for disabled people

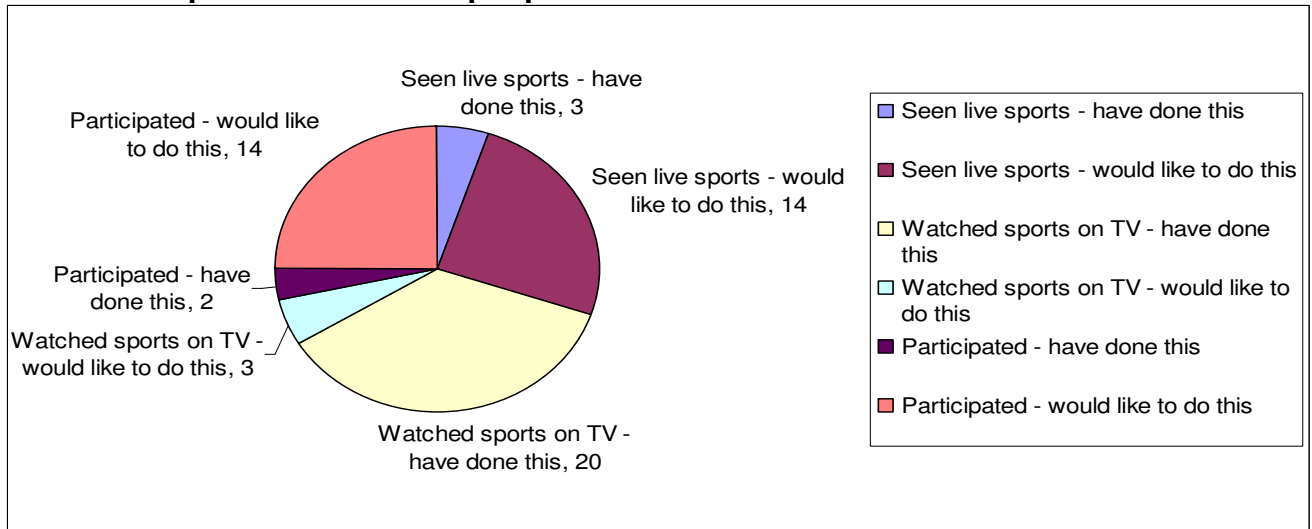


Figure 6 - Disabled young peoples experience of sports

77. The sports experience of disabled young people demonstrates that whilst disabled young people may watch sports on TV, they are less likely to have participated in sports or seen live sport at a venue for the experience of watching live sports. Not too dissimilar to non-disabled young people, they have a keen interest in undertaking sports and would like to participate and see live sports at a venue.

Experience of sports by gender

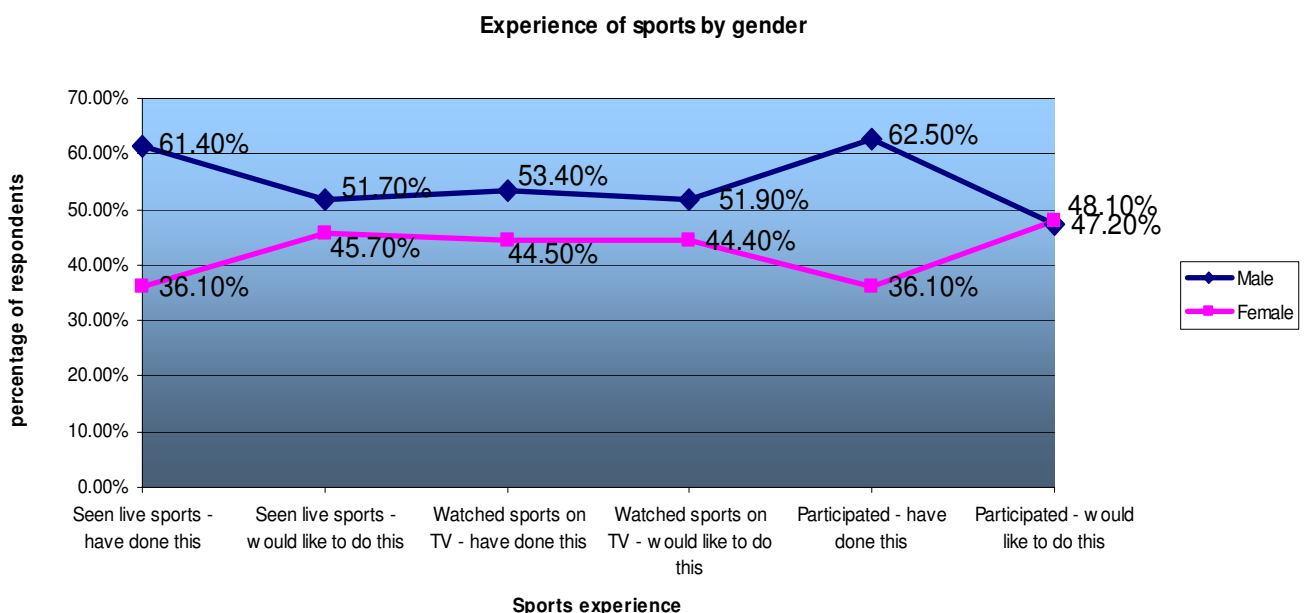


Figure 7 – Experience of sports by gender

78. The trend in experience of sports by gender is interesting. Boys are more likely to have experienced live sports at a venue more so than young girls, although there appears to be less disparity in the level of interest in wanting to see live sports at a venue. Similarly, young boys are more likely to have experienced participating in a live sport which they have found out about than young girls and again there is almost no disparity by gender in the level of interest young boys and girls have for participating in live sports. Discussions took place that whilst faith did not prohibit young girls from taking part in sports, the provision of sport can influence whether they take part in sports. Young girls indicated that girls' only activities taking into consideration cultural and faith understanding would encourage them.
79. The results indicate that whilst young people may have similar levels of interest, boys by far have a richer experience of sports than girls and that work needs to be developed not only with schools but also with community organisations, including faith organisations and parents to engage young girls in sports and physical activities.
80. Members were concerned that residents of Tower Hamlets would not experience the momentum generated by the Olympics and Paralympics Games. Particular concerns were raised about disabled young people being able to gain access to experiencing the Olympics. It was suggested that annual borough-wide community events in which young people, including young disabled people participate in sports is organised and participants include those developed through schools sports programmes.
81. Generally, young people and the parents and carers involved were not optimistic about the opportunities to participate in sports and to experience the momentum generated by the Olympics. Residents recognised that there were particular young people who were being developed to take part in sports through the recent coverage in East End Life.
82. Parents and carers felt it was important to ensure the engagement of young disabled people and felt that if local disabled young people could get access to experience Olympic and Paralympic sports, it would be a great experience for them and could potentially encourage a greater interest in sports participation. A positive publicity campaign with Olympics branding would generate more interest and atmosphere.

Recommendations:

8. That annual borough-wide major community events are organised in which young people participate in Olympic and Paralympic sports, building champions to participate in the events through schools and sports programmes;
9. That the Council explore the possibility of negotiating free tickets or subsidised rate of entry to the Olympics and Paralympics for young people, particularly for disabled young people to experience the Paralympic Games;

83. Some concerns were raised about the perceptions of young disabled people's participation in sports and that this can often be negative from the perspectives of both young people generally and, young disabled people themselves. It was felt that work could be done with organisations working with disabled young people specifically, and through publicity generally to promote positive images of young disabled people taking part in sports activities and promoting the health benefits of sports and physical activities amongst this group.

Recommendation:

10. That an extensive publicity campaign is put in place to promote positive images of young disabled people taking part in sports as part of the publicity strategy to promote Olympics and Paralympics in Tower Hamlets;

Partnership Working

84. Tower Hamlets is one of the host boroughs in the delivery of the Olympics. Sports participation is delivered through partnerships, the health agenda has a close relationship to sports and physical activities establishing a role for the PCT.
85. School Sports Partnerships are a positive attribute to the borough and well established with schools working in 'cluster' partnerships to develop sports in schools across the borough. This includes initiatives such as releasing PE teachers to work across schools for one day per week and volunteering and leadership schemes for older pupils. Using data to support participation in sports, Tower Hamlets is able to participate in Youth Games and was recognised as the most improved school in 2006/07. Tower Hamlets leads the East London boroughs in terms of the number of 5-16 year olds taking part in competitions.
86. Participation and sports engagement can increase educational attainment. A discussion took place on a sports project (TTK) which was being supported through funding from the private sector, the Working Group felt that other forms of sports can be supported and the same principle can be applied to other sports and stronger links can be made with the private sector to draw in funding to increase sports participation.
87. LBTH is in a 15 year contract with GLL which is a not for profit company. Although GLL might work with the PCT and third sector organisations on initiatives, there is currently no links with the private sector. It was felt that there is potential for developments given that Canary Wharf is in the borough and that this link could be further explored and exploited.

Recommendation:

11. That the service find ways in which the relationship with the private sector can be further developed to enhance the funding available to support young people's engagement in sports and physical activities, exploring in particular ways in which the TTK model can be adopted to engage the private sector to fund a range of sports;

88. The Working Group raised concerns that opportunities for improving and establishing facilities should not be wasted. Given the high level of new build developments in the borough, the Working Group felt that developers can be better used to increase sports participation. Housing stock transfer is highly developed in Tower Hamlets and the stock transfer process can be better utilised to secure provisions.
89. Concerns were raised about the lack of sports facilities and water based sports facilities as an opportunity and experience for local young people. Members thought that in working with developers and the housing stock transfer process that formalised agreements should be strengthened to secure provisions taking into consideration existing facilities, the projection of young people in the area, and the need for sports facilities with a view to securing adequate and appropriate provisions which is suited to the area.

90. The particular opportunities Wood Wharf development provides was identified for its potential to deliver local provisions and members felt strongly that this should not be bypassed as there are limited water based sports facilities in the borough. It should be noted that the service recognises that there are barriers to participation in water sports activities, these activities require water confidence or participants to be able to swim 25m or more, this can often be a barrier.

Recommendations:

12. That formalised agreements as part of housing stock transfer are strengthened to secure the provision of sports facilities based on a study of the local youth population, including disabled young people, existing facilities and projected needs;
13. That work is developed with Wood Wharf with a view to securing opportunities for water sports in the borough;

91. The Working Group considered how other local authorities were preparing themselves for the Olympics and the range of activities/programmes in place to encourage sports participation. The following details what the other host boroughs have in place:

London Borough of Hackney.

- **Schools of the Heart Programme** – This programme works with schools across the borough bringing art, literature and science together with the Olympic ideals of mutual understanding, friendship, solidarity and fair play for young people.
- **Hackney Youth Sports Fund** – In late 2007 the Council announced a £220,000 fund to boost sports development. The cash will be spent on promising individuals and clubs across Hackney, giving them the support, resources and training needed to achieve their potential. The Fund is financed by a £300,000 out of court settlement the Council was given by sporting giant Nike over its unauthorised use of the Hackney logo on its sportswear. The remaining £80,000 has already been used by the Council for coaching, equality training and to promote disability sports. The fund will run until 2012 and is divided into two sections for individual athletes and community clubs.
- **The London Youth Games** - the Council and The Learning Trust are working with local schools, colleges and sports groups to identify young sporting talent and give them the best possible opportunities to compete. In June 2007 around 400 youngsters from Hackney participated in the mini games for primary school children, and the main games for secondary school children. Their efforts resulted in Hackney reaching 23rd place in the London borough league table.
- **The Goalball Club** – Goalball is a Paralympic sport for the visually impaired. It is a fast game, played with a basketball filled with bells, and is suitable for all ages. Weekly Goalball sessions for all have recently been launched at a Hackney Leisure Centre.
- **The Olympic Park** – The main focus for the games will be located at Hackney Wick and will contain an extensive range of new sporting facilities. The Council has committed to ensuring that these facilities are kept in existence after 2012 to allow them to be used by local residents and community groups for sporting activities. There is no reason why young people of Tower Hamlets should not have affordable access to these sporting facilities.

London Borough of Waltham Forest

- **Sports Action Zone** - The Olympic Action Zone is an Active England and Big Lottery funded project being delivered across both Waltham Forest and Newham. The project, delivered by Leyton Orient Community Sports Programme, aims to reach young people in the most deprived areas in the borough to divert them from crime and improve their health.
- **Sports Academy** – Again in conjunction with Newham, Waltham Forest is supporting some of its talented athletes to join the Newham Sports Academy, which aims to support a number of local sportspeople in their aim to participate in the London 2012 games. Academy athletes receive standard support in sports psychology, medicine, strength and conditioning training and will also meet sport specific requirements.
- **‘Come and Try’ sessions** – The Council is organising a 'Come and Try week' twice a year encouraging sports clubs in the borough to open up their doors for free to encourage local residents to go and try a new Olympic or Paralympic sport for free. This is something that Tower Hamlets could benefit from given the large number of young people who have an interest in trying different sports in the Young People and the Olympics Survey.
- Waltham Forest will host Paralympic tennis and archery, after 2012 residents will have use of the state of the art National Hockey Centre and other sporting facilities. There are also plans for a land bridge over the A406 joining the north of the Olympic Park to the rest of the Olympic Park which will benefit Waltham Forest residents.

London Borough of Greenwich

- **Sports Search** – a web-based scheme that aims to encourage more young people to take part in sport. By taking part in physical tasks and filling in an online survey they can identify the sports and activities to which they are best suited to. As well as matching skills and abilities to specific sports or activities, the website provides links to local clubs and sports facilities. Tower Hamlets is currently doing this.
- **Increasing Participation in Sports** – Greenwich are looking at the opportunities presented by the Olympics to introduce wider access to activities for people of all ages and abilities. The Council are aiming to increase the number of people taking up sport through a number of events, all of which will also be linked to programmes to support healthy living.
- **The 2012 Diversity Toolkit** – This document provides practical working guidelines for the various groups and projects in Greenwich involved in the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. It will also be used to develop and monitor activities that will help promote equality and cohesion. The document sets out practical guidelines that help contribute towards Greenwich Council's legacy objectives for the Games, of which equality and inclusion is a priority.
- **Sports Promotion** – The Greenwich Sports Promotion Unit is devoted to nurturing and developing groups that might normally find it difficult to access the broad spectrum of leisure activities and facilities across the borough. The Unit works in partnership with sports governing bodies, local clubs, schools, Greenwich Leisure Limited, public, private and voluntary sectors, to help encourage interest in and access to sporting activities throughout the borough and also offers assistance with club funding.

- **Greenwich Starting Blocks Trust** – This is a charity committed to supporting young people's sporting talent. It provides bursaries to give young, up-and-coming athletes a chance to develop their talents. Since Greenwich Starting Blocks was launched, the Council have been working with sports bodies to identify local talent. They believe there are around 20 young athletes who, with the right encouragement, could make the national squad in 2012.

London Borough of Newham

- **Going For Gold** – Newham's Strategy for Sports Participation and Healthy Living published in 2005 outlines the ways in which the Council will approach this issue, with a particular emphasis on their role as a Host Borough for the 2012 Olympics.
- **Sports for young people with disabilities** – Newham provide a number of sports and activities for young people with disabilities. There are two after school clubs that cater for young people, aged 11-16 years, with special educational needs (SEN) & disabilities. The clubs offer free sports and activities such as football, basketball, and dance.
- **Newham Gold Card** – This allows residents aged 6 to 21 years old access to many free sporting activities. This allows residents aged between 6 and 16 years old to swim for free at local leisure centres in the borough during the school holidays.
- **Estate Based Sports Programme** – Newham provides free estate-based sports activities throughout the year for young people in Newham, aged 8 to 19 years old. All sessions are delivered by qualified coaches and open to young people of all abilities. These include basketball, football, non-contact boxing, fencing, gymnastics, fencing and street dance.
- **Inclusive and Active** – Newham has become the first borough to sign up to Inclusive and Active, a London-wide sports plan for disabled people. The pledge promises better sports facilities and more opportunities for participation, including training to help coaches and instructors meet the needs of disabled people.
- **The Game on Festival** – this is run every year in Newham to mark the countdown to the Paralympic Games in 2012. Newham Sports Academy has two disabled athletes on its support programme for elite performers and has identified another ten. The borough has three disability-focussed sports clubs offering goalball, power wheelchair football and multi sports while its water sports centre offers kayaking, sailing and boating to people with special needs.
- **Paralympic sports** – Newham have also set up an action group for young disabled people to identify more ways in which they can get involved in sport. To offer a wider range of sport activity, the council aims to set up five Paralympic sports clubs and work more closely with sports clubs to help them cater for disabled people.

92. It is clear that host boroughs are developing a number of initiatives to encourage young people's participation in sports leading up to the Olympics. The Working Group felt that host boroughs should be engaging with other host boroughs with a view to increasing cross-borough opportunities for young people to engage in sports, and establishing contact between different groups.

93. The Young People and the Olympics Survey shows a strong desire for young people to be engaged in sports. The spirit of competition was marked out in the activities contained in the Children's Services Olympic Strategy, however the Working Group felt that this was

focused in secondary schools and not at primary school level and that the spirit could be further extended in working with other boroughs to increase sports experiences. This will be an opportunity for young people to make contact with young people in other host boroughs and promote community cohesion; it would also give access to facilities in other boroughs for the young people of Tower Hamlets. The Working Group felt it was important that the young people of Tower Hamlets were able to gain access and use the facilities left by the legacy of the Olympics and would encourage joint working to ensure that young people across the host boroughs are able to afford access to the facilities.

94. Whilst it is clear from the strategies and current initiatives presented to the Working Group that Tower Hamlets has put a number of initiatives in place to ensure young people participate in sports, the Working Group felt that lessons can be learnt from work being undertaken by other host boroughs and that in working with them there is potential to offer access to host borough facilities for the young people of Tower Hamlets. Given the levels of deprivation in Tower Hamlets, the Working Group felt it was important that affordability was considered in negotiating access for local young people.

Recommendation:

14. That consideration be given to what other host boroughs have been involved in to increase sports participation with a view to adopting what works well in increasing participation, and that affordable access is negotiated for young people in Tower Hamlets to leisure facilities in other host boroughs, particularly as a legacy of the Olympics and to increase contact between young people in the different boroughs through events and competitions;

Focus on health

95. The Tower Hamlets London 2012: Olympic and Paralympic Games Strategy Action Plan Strategic Objective 6 indicates the desire to engage communities in activities and events and a desire to meet communication needs. The Working Group raised concerns that the community were not yet aware of this and felt that this needed to be actively done with disabled young people. Stereotypes needed to be challenged and perceptions of and from disabled young people needed to be looked at. Concerns were raised that communication should include health agenda and that the PCT should be involved.
96. The Working Group received the Children's Services Education Olympic Strategy in draft form and were pleased it is being established to increase sports participation in addition to a number of other things.
97. The Working Group were pleased to see that activities and programmes had already been running and others being planned to increase young peoples participation in Olympic sports, including community based participation opportunities. Provisions for disabled young people in schools is being covered. The health agenda is clearly being marked out although it was felt that the focus on health was in primary schools and that the work on health should continue into secondary schools when young children are often introduced to chicken and chip shops and peer pressure, particularly around smoking.
98. There were some concerns that the opportunity to use the Olympics for health purposes can bypass, the Working Group would ask that the PCT in partnership with LBTH look at the issues of drugs and smoking as part of the health promotion work and the Olympics. The promotion of the health agenda should not only sell health benefits, it should attempt to make participation in sports look 'cool' and should be supported by celebrities to encourage young peoples participation in sports. The concept of celebrities encouraging

young people to participate in sports was also established in the Young People and the Olympics Survey.

99. A presentation from the PCT made it clear that funds had been sourced to address health issues and obesity in particular. Proposals were yet to be developed to show how the Olympics can be used as a catalyst to promote healthy lifestyles, the Working Group were keen that any issues picked up from the consultation were addressed by the PCT or relevant partners.
100. The results of the Young People and the Olympics Survey suggests that there is work to be done in motivating and making young people feel confident about taking part in sports, this may be more of a barrier for young girls in the survey, there were also concerns that this may be the case with those who were particularly obese and that targeted work may need to be developed to assist them with a view to reducing obesity.

Recommendations:

15. That the PCT develop targeted work with those who are at health risk due to obesity, with primary focus on those who are particularly obese and may lack confidence to engage in sports and physical activities.
16. That the PCT in partnership with LBTH should deliver health promotion as part of the Olympics publicity to include messages on the damaging effects of drugs and smoking and that the publicity campaign be supported by celebrities to promote a 'cool' image of participating in sports at local venues;

Concluding remarks

101. The Working Group has made a number of recommendations with a view to increasing opportunities for young people to take part in sports and physical activities. The focus for the Group has been to improve access and opportunities, increase opportunities to experience the Games, strengthen partnership working and consider addressing the health agenda as part of the Olympics.
102. The Olympics is a historic event for the world and no less for Tower Hamlets and its residents, the excitement and energy that surrounds the potential to experience the Olympics should not bypass local residents. Whilst a number of events may take place locally, and local people can experience it, the opportunity for local young people to gain entry to the Olympics and Paralympics would be a truly memorable experience. The Working Group understand that it may be challenging to obtain tickets for the Olympics, they believe that it is worthy of challenging LOCOG to put forward free tickets for the Paralympics for young disabled people.
103. The consultation with local young people shows that they are very interested in participating in sports and physical activities and the Working Group urge that the Council and partners delivering provisions for young people should reflect on the views of young people in designing and making provisions available.
104. The PCT were keen to engage and the Working Group were pleased for this and ask that the PCT work together with Tower Hamlets to address the 2 recommendations on health.
105. Other recommendations have also been made to forge working relationships with other host boroughs to consider what works well in increasing sports participation and to find ways to increase young peoples opportunities to gain access to facilities in other host boroughs, particularly as a legacy of the Olympics. Establishing working relationships with other host boroughs would also establish contact between different groups across the boroughs and encourage community cohesion and the Working Group strongly urge the service to support this agenda in the lead up to the Olympics to defuse any potential for territorialism to develop around the infrastructure legacy.
106. The Working Group hope that the recommendations will help to improve young peoples opportunities for engaging in sports and that the Olympics will generally engage young people and that the review will support the activities and programmes the service has already established.
107. Finally, the DVD produced as part of this review will demonstrate how scrutiny works and how the voices of local people can influence policy and service provision. The Working Group hope that it goes in some way to demonstrating that decisions made by the Council are not made up alone by Councillors or officers but influenced by local people and can have a real impact on the lives of local people.

Scrutiny and Equalities in Tower Hamlets

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