



Informing the development of a Disability Sports Strategy

GfK NOP Social Research carried out qualitative research for the London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF) to help develop its Disability Sports Strategy. The research explored disabled residents' views of disabled sports provision in the borough and identified how facilities could be improved to encourage participation in physical activities.

The research challenge

The LBWF wished to develop a Disability Sports Strategy because it is hosting the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and saw this as an opportunity to promote and improve disabled sporting activity in the borough.

In order to inform their strategy, the LBWF recognised the need to consult and engage with people with disabilities who were both active and non-active in sports. GfK NOP were commissioned to conduct qualitative research to assess disabled people's satisfaction with disabled sports provision in the Borough; to understand any barriers to participation in physical activities; and to identify how facilities and services could be improved.



Why GfK NOP?

We were well placed to deliver the project as we are experienced in carrying out research amongst disabled people, covering many issues, for a number of government departments and other organisations.

What we did

Two different qualitative methodologies were used: mini-groups and depth interviews.

Mini-groups were conducted and split on the basis of disability type. Each mini-group comprised four to six participants and included a mix of gender, ethnicity and severity of disability. We felt that mini-groups were the most appropriate method for the majority of the sample because they allowed more time for each participant to have his or her say, whilst retaining the advantages of the traditional focus group discussion. We also carried out six one-hour depth interviews with participants, which were designed specifically to ensure their best levels of comfort and to aid the dynamics of the interview.

Benefits

The findings of the qualitative research were used to inform the development of the LBWF's Disability Sports Strategy by delivering insight through the following:

- Identified and explored which physical activities disabled people in the borough enjoyed
- Assessed satisfaction with current disabled sports provision
- Identified and understood any barriers to participating in sports and activities, and the impact of this
- Investigated how sports talent was identified and developed
- Assessed satisfaction and opportunities presented by school-based disability sport activity
- Explored how services and facilities can be improved to encourage participation in physical activities

Overview of GfK NOP qualitative Social Research

The qualitative Social Research team at GfK NOP consists of ten dedicated qualitative researchers and specialises in a range of interviewing techniques to ensure the most appropriate, thoughtful and creative approach, carefully tailored to the topic for exploration and to the research participants. Among the techniques employed are the traditional qualitative depth interviews and group discussions. We are also highly skilled in conducting solution-focused workshops, deliberative and reconvened focus groups, bulletin boards (online focus groups), vox pops and ethnographic interviews. Our studies encompass the full range of



public sectors including health, education and policing. In addition to accessing the views of the general public, we also have a highly established reputation for researching sensitive issues, working with people from excluded, minority and disadvantaged parts of the community:

- Asylum seekers and recent immigrants
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities
- Children and young adults
- Elderly people
- Gay men, lesbians, bisexual and transgender people
- Offenders and ex-offenders
- People with disabilities
- People with no formal qualifications
- The long-term unemployed
- Travellers

Our clients include most UK Government departments and public bodies as well as a range of other local, regional and devolved government administrations.

We have a wealth of experience conducting research into a broad spectrum of social policy areas including:

- Benefits
- Crime and policing
- Employment
- Equal opportunities
- Health and disability
- Housing
- Public information testing
- Public service evaluation
- Questions of democracy and community involvement
- Regeneration and the environment

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