

London Region

AQUA**tic** Strategy

2015 - 2021

The Current Position

The London Population

The Region's "market" is the people living in Greater London and the 2011 Census shows a population of 8,173,941 people which represents 15.4% of the English population. (See Appendix I for age, gender, ethnicity and disability statistics)

Membership Levels

The Region's total membership (across all three categories) ranged from 19,716 in March 2013 to 22,682 with an average of 21,613. There are three membership categories:

1. Learn to swim and leisure (or non-competitive) members;
2. Athletes taking part in competitions;
3. Volunteers and other members not in categories 1 and 2.

The breakdown of the region's membership is:

Category	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	7 year mean
1	12,724	12,829	13,045	10,120	10,755	12,969	11,536	11,997
2	6,862	7,327	7,402	7,157	7,035	7,683	8,333	7,400
3	2,690	2,526	2,511	2,439	2,642	2,904	2,852	2,652
Total	22,276	22,682	22,958	19,716	20,432	25,571	24,737	22,625

There was a small spike in membership across all the categories in the Olympic year but membership fell back significantly the following year to below 2010 levels and has not recovered. However, 2014 (when the original strategy was written) Category 2 membership was higher than 2010 and there were only 1.8% fewer Category 3 members. Since then Category 2 membership has grown year on year but, in 2016, the other categories of membership fell back.

Swim England Membership in 2014

The normal four-year cycle is for membership to spike in an Olympic year as greater awareness and interest in sport is generated. Swim England saw a spike in its 2012 membership which then fell back to below 2010 levels which had not recovered to 2010 levels. Like in London, Category 2 membership was in 2014 higher than in 2010 and there were 4.4% fewer category 3 members. Unlike London, the 2014 increases in category 2 and 3 membership did not off-set the reduction category 1 membership with the result total membership fell for the second successive year.

Category	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	5 year mean
1	101,086	99,084	100,857	84,970	83,368	78,228
2	56,463	59,557	60,414	57,007	57,693	48,523
3	31,604	31,831	32,089	29,501	30,198	15,5226
Total	189,212	190,472	193,360	171,478	171,259	91,5781

London's share of the average share Swim England's membership in the period 2010 to 2014 was 11.8%.

Age Group (years)	Number London Members	London membership as a proportion of Swim England membership
0 to 9	4,533	11.96%
10 to 19	10,917	11.54%
20 to 59	5,317	12.25%
60+	623	12.18%
No date of birth provided	224	10.31%
Total	21,613	11.80

This is 3.6 percentage points lower than the region's share of the English population (15.4%) and is the breakdown by group is different to the general population of London (see appendix 1).

National Championships

The proportion of finalists and medallists at the championship from London clubs does not align to either London population or the proportion of Swim England Category 2 members in London. And our clubs reported that:

- lack of pool time availability in which to develop their talent is a key challenge with:
 - 63% of athletes reported to be training between 2 and 4 hours per week with their club, with the average being 3 hours and 11 mins,
 - athletes needing to train between 15 and 20 hours a week to reach the finals and win medals at national championships
- inconvenient training times is as a barrier to taking up the sport.

Volunteering

Club and events report that they have difficulties finding volunteers.

The 2013-14 Community Life survey showed that: 27% of Londoners took part in formal volunteering at least once a month; and 25% took part in informal volunteering at least once a month. The *Taking Part 2013 Quarter 4* survey showed that 7 per cent of all adults had volunteered in a DCMS sector (arts, museums or galleries, heritage, libraries, archives, sport) which was lower than 2012/13 but was stable against 2006/06.

Training for volunteers at club, county and regional level is an issue.

Clubs

In the club survey, clubs asked for support in identifying the development support they may need and who can best support them in specific areas.

Swim21, Swim England's recognised kitemark for the development of effective, ethical and sustainable affiliated clubs, accredited clubs the benefits as a tool to develop the club and helping to gain support from Local Authorities and/ or County Sport Partnership. But over half of London clubs are not accredited with lack of time and limited volunteers were the main reasons cited as the main reason for clubs not gaining accreditation. They asked for support in completing and maintaining of accreditation

Networks provide a talent path but are time consuming and hard to introduce because they can be seen as threats. Clubs largely operate in isolation / competition and do not readily support each other

The region

London Region has been in existence 8 years and has a cadre of enthusiastic dedicated people running the key activities in the Region and has a good cash reserve. It has a difficult relationship with the counties as three are split across regions making delegation and representation (as occurs in other Regions) much harder. Many of the structures are informal or irregular and, like the clubs and counties securing volunteers is a significant challenge.

London Region Vision and Priorities for 2015-20

Vision

Aiming to be the best

We want to be an inclusive, innovative and sustainable Amateur Swimming Association region that nurtures our athletic and volunteering talent, meets the needs of our members, and supports our clubs and affiliates.

The 2016 Swim England's Vision was "a nation swimming" and it set its mission as "Creating and healthier, happier and more successful nation through swimming".

Priorities

To deliver our vision we have set four interlinked priorities:

- A** activating our talent
- Q** quality volunteers
- U** upholding our clubs
- A** advancing the London Region

For each of these we have set up working groups / committees to refine the strategy and develop detailed action plans.

Activating our talent

We will activate our aquatic talent by:

1. stimulating people of all ages and backgrounds to take up swimming and then to take up aquatic sports;
2. assisting our members to achieve their full potential (whether that is to learn to swim, enjoy the non-competitive aspects of the sport, or to compete and win at the highest levels);

Swim England Objectives

- Substantially increase the number of people able to swim
- Significantly grow the number and diversity of people enjoying and benefiting from regular swimming
- Create a world leading talent system for all our aquatic disciplines

Commitment

3. promoting championships and competition.

We want:

- more category one members enjoying the non-competitive aspects of the sport and its disciplines;
- more category two members enjoying the competitive aspects of the sport; and
- more London members appearing in national finals, winning medals and becoming national champions.

This will have the benefit that more London aquatic talent is identified and can be nurtured. More London members achieving success will have the benefit of stimulating more people to take up the aquatic disciplines as an activity or as a sport.

Quality volunteers

We will maintain and grow the network of high quality volunteers in clubs, counties, and the region, and at competitions through:

1. continuous development of transferable skills which can be used to the benefit of clubs and members; and
2. prizing and promoting excellent practice.

We want:

- clubs, counties and the region to be able to recruit, develop and retain the skilled volunteers and sustainable workforce they need; and
- volunteers to enjoy, feel proud, fulfil their potential, and be rightly recognised for their contribution and achievements.

Upholding our clubs

We will uphold our aquatic clubs by:

1. encouraging and supporting effective planning and management;
2. supporting their development of skilled club volunteers (see priority Q);
3. championing the role of clubs.

We want:

- our clubs to be sustainable;
- to see more disabled people taking part in the sport;

Swim England Objective

Deliver a high quality, diverse and motivated workforce within swimming

Swim England Objectives

- Substantially increase the number of people able to swim
- Significantly grow the number and diversity of people enjoying and benefiting from regular swimming
- Create a world leading talent system for all our aquatic disciplines
- Deliver a high quality, diverse and motivated workforce within swimming
- Provide leadership and be able to be the recognised authority for swimming
- Strengthen our organisational sustainability for future generations

Commitment

- to see more Asian, black or other minorities taking part in the sport; and
- our clubs to be valued and supported by everyone in all sections of the community and in all sectors.

Advancing the region

We will advance the London Region by:

1. the Board actively looking for and implementing opportunities to drive the region forward;
2. working with the Swim England regional team and Aquatic Officers to promote swimming;
3. promoting the disciplines and clubs;
4. ensuring effective communications;
5. ensuring good governance (including establishing the right structures and being primarily accountable to our members);
6. achieving our strategic targets; and
7. securing the financial and human resources we need.

Swim England Objectives

- Provide leadership and be able to be the recognised authority for swimming
- Strengthen our organisational sustainability for future generations

Strategic Plan

Activating our talent

We want to drive up category 1 and 2 membership of London clubs particularly in the 10 to 19 age group and the 60+ age group (the age groups where we perform worst) so that:

Swim England Target

6,000 more category 2 memberships.

- the region's shares of Swim England category 1 and 2 membership are closer to London's share of the English population (15.4% of overall Swim England membership rather than current 12.3%).
- there are more category 1 and 2 members in London thereby allowing more London aquatic talent to be identified and nurtured.

Each discipline will:

- measure and improve its performance by -
 - understanding its current position relative to the National picture,
 - identifying barriers to improved performance, and developing a costed plan to overcome them,
 - setting a stretch measurable target for improved performance at it's National Championships, such that it more closely aligns with our population, and exceeds our proportion of Swim England membership
 - managing progress and reporting to the Board annually
- work with the groups driving Volunteering and Clubs to provide the support network to talent;
- bring value and additionality to the work of Swim England officers working in the Region; and
- run quality competitions.

Quality volunteers

We need to drive up category 3 membership of London clubs in the 10 to 19 and 20 to 59 age categories by 50% so that the region's share of Swim England category 3 membership is closer to London's share of the English population.

We will form a working group on volunteering to:

- understand the club survey results, barriers to volunteering and volunteering issues at clubs, and events;
- link actively with and bring additional outputs the Swim England volunteering programme;
- ensure effective pathways for volunteers in all roles;

deliver

- support volunteers in their roles;
- ensure there is a welcoming environment for volunteers and to recognise and value their outstanding contributions;
- produce a costed plan to, along with other partners including the counties, signpost, promote and organise the training and support needed to allow London clubs to recruit and hold active volunteers; and
- report annually to the Board on the progress to the target membership.

Upholding our clubs

The London Region will put clubs at the heart of our business. Our goal is to have strong and sustainable clubs that meet the needs of their communities, both now and for the future, and to encourage more people to join aquatics clubs. We will:

- develop a tool to define and identify clubs needing support so we can focus on their needs;
- support clubs in using swim21 accreditation as management tool – not as an end in itself - our target is 75% of clubs accredited;
- provide support to clubs in developing to understand and meet the needs of their members and their communities;
- help clubs develop effective working relationships with schools, providers and organisations in their areas;
- where appropriate, will signpost clubs to access advice, funding and support from other bodies such as Swim England, county associations, and local sports partnerships;
- act as voice for London Region clubs in raising common concerns with Swim England and other bodies; and
- work with clubs to -
 - develop their workforce and volunteers (see also priority Q),
 - improve the retention of older 'club' swimmers,
 - grow the participation of disabled and minority group athletes;
- help clubs share good practice.

Swim England Targets

85% satisfaction survey of clubs around the skills of their workforce.

84 formal club networks.

Advancing the region

The London Region strives to achieve high standards of governance throughout its management structure. We will:

- promote the teaching and practice of all the swimming disciplines, raise awareness of the sport and stimulate public and corporate opinion in favour of providing proper, affordable facilities and support for clubs;

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- ensure that this strategy is delivered by monitoring and evaluating our and our partners' performance and taking any necessary recovery action;
- ensure that decisions are made without influence of personal interest and in the best interest of the Region's clubs and their members as a whole;
- continue to develop rigorous policies and procedures and ensure that decisions are published and communicated;
- strive to ensure that the Management Board recruits individuals with relevant skills and experiences and enable board members to access appropriate training;
- benchmark the London Region against other regions in a range of areas to measure performance;
- continue to hold an Annual Council Meeting to report to our member clubs on the decisions of the Management Board;
- set budgets that are fair and realistic, balancing the need to develop disciplines within funding available;
- ensure that the principles of Best Value are applied and act responsibly when setting fees and charges;
- continue to establish parameters for funding of disciplines by -
 - planning further ahead,
 - publishing time frames,
 - funding deadlines;
- develop and publish a viable sponsorship plan;
- provide business planning and management training for the regional board and chairs of discipline committees; and
- work in partnership with all agencies to ensure a cohesive approach to the Sport

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Measuring Success

Activating our talent

London Category 2 membership				
Age Group (years)	Baseline		2020 Target	
	Number of members	% of Swim England Membership	Number of members	% of Swim England Membership
10 to 19	5,063	11.4%	Increased numbers in all age groups	14.5%
20 to 59	1,677	16.9%		17.3%
60+	122	16.2%		10.5%
Total	7,157	12.3%		15.4%

Measure	2020 Target	2020 Stretch Target
Finalists at senior championships	11.9%	15.4%
Medallists and senior championships	11.9%	15.4%
Senior champions	11.9%	15.4%
Finalists at age group and youth championships	11.5%	14.5%
Medallists at age group and youth championships	11.5%	14.5%
Age group and youth champions	11.5%	14.5%
Medallists at masters championships	12.4%	15.2%
Masters champions	12.4%	15.2%

Quality volunteers

London Category 3 membership				
Age Group (years)	Baseline		2020 Target	
	Number of members	% of Swim England Membership	Number of members	% of Swim England Membership
10 to 19	140	4.8%	Increased numbers in all age groups	14.5%
20 to 59	2,035	8.7%		17.3%
60+	270	9.3%		10.5%
Total	2,560	8.2%		15.4%

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Upholding our clubs

- total club membership will have grown in both absolute terms and relative to Swim England membership;
- 75% of clubs will be engaged with swim21; and
- club surveys will show that clubs feel they have effective working relationships with their partners and that they are supported by the appropriate bodies in addressing their challenges.

Advancing the Region

- annual satisfaction surveys high levels of awareness of and satisfaction with London Swimming and its role.

London Population Statistics 2011

Age Group	Number in London	Proportion of English Population
0 to 9	1,074,304	17.08%
10 to 19	928,524	14.46%
20 to 59	4,923,774	17.30%
60 and over	1,247,339	10.54%
Total	8,173,941	15.42%

Gender	Number in London	Proportion of English Population
Male	4,033,289	15.47%
Female	4,140,652	15.37%
Total	8,173,941	15.42%

Ethnic Group	Number in London	Proportion of English population
Total White	4,887,435	59.8%
Total Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Groups	405,279	5.0%
Total Asian / Asian British	1,511,546	18.5%
Total Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	1,088,640	13.5%
Total other ethnic group	281,041	3.4%
Total	8,173,941	15.42%

Disability	Number in London	Proportion of English population
Disabled	1,157,165	12.37%
Not disabled	7,016,776	16.07%
Total	8,173,941	15.42%