

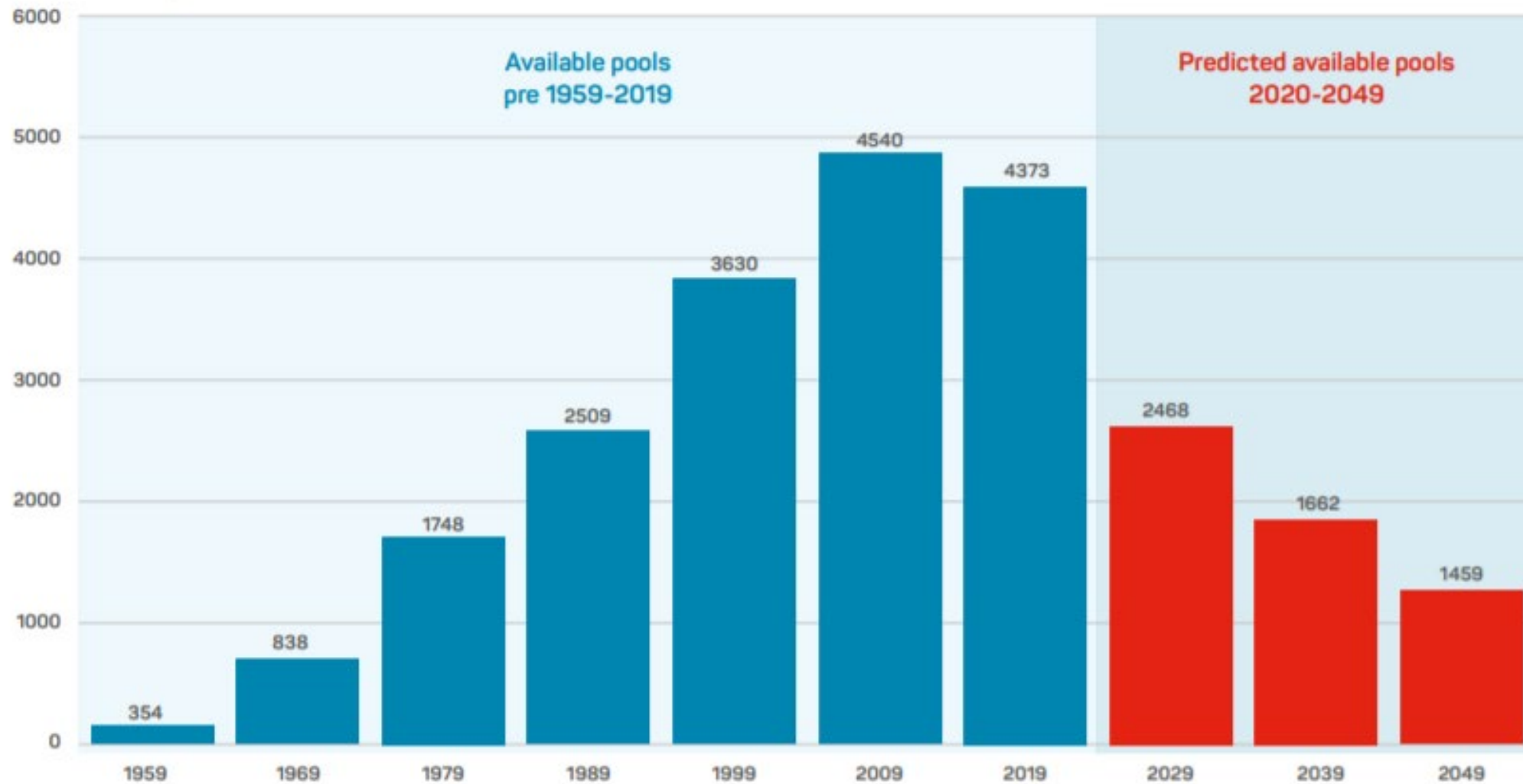


# A Decade of Decline:

## The Future of Swimming Pools in England

Report 2021

## Number of pools available at the end of each decade



Based on current pool build trends,  
the number of available pools could  
**decrease by more than**

**40%** by the  
end of the  
decade

That's almost

**2,000**  
pools



This could mean

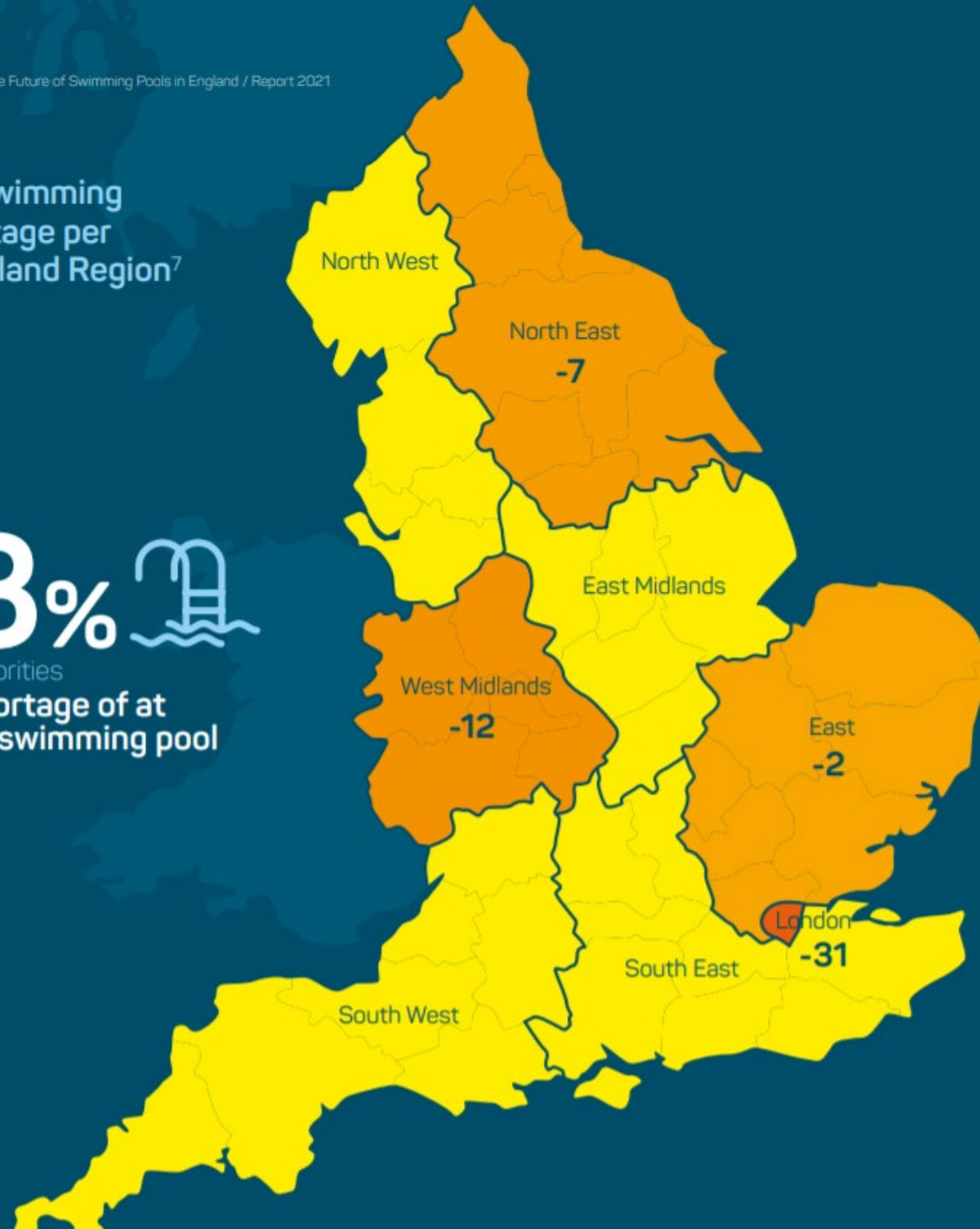
**3.86**  
million

people shut out of the  
activities they love



### Current swimming pool shortage per Swim England Region<sup>7</sup>

Currently  
**23%**   
of local authorities  
have a shortage of at least one swimming pool





## Projection of swimming pool shortage per Swim England Region in 2030<sup>8</sup>

Total shortage 792

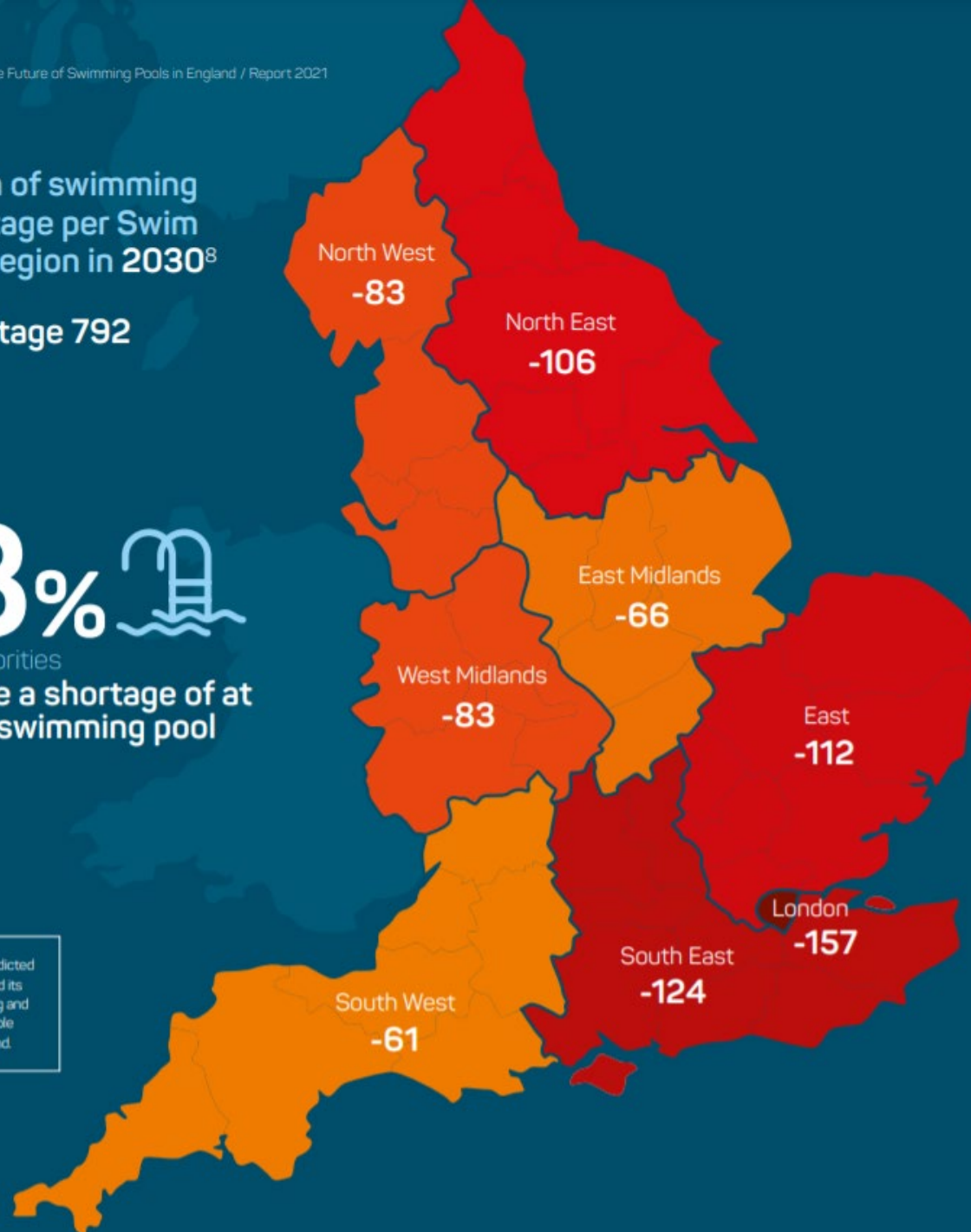
By 2030

**73%** 

of local authorities

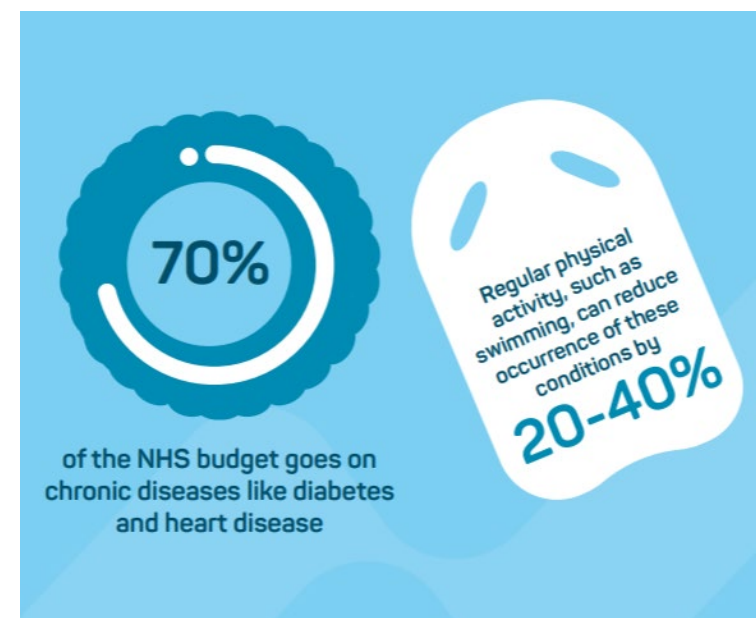
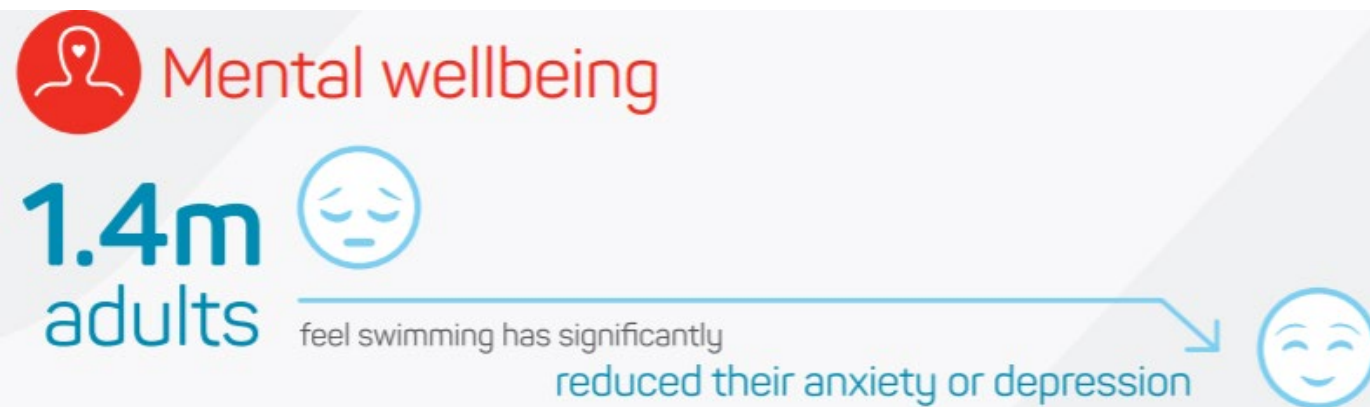
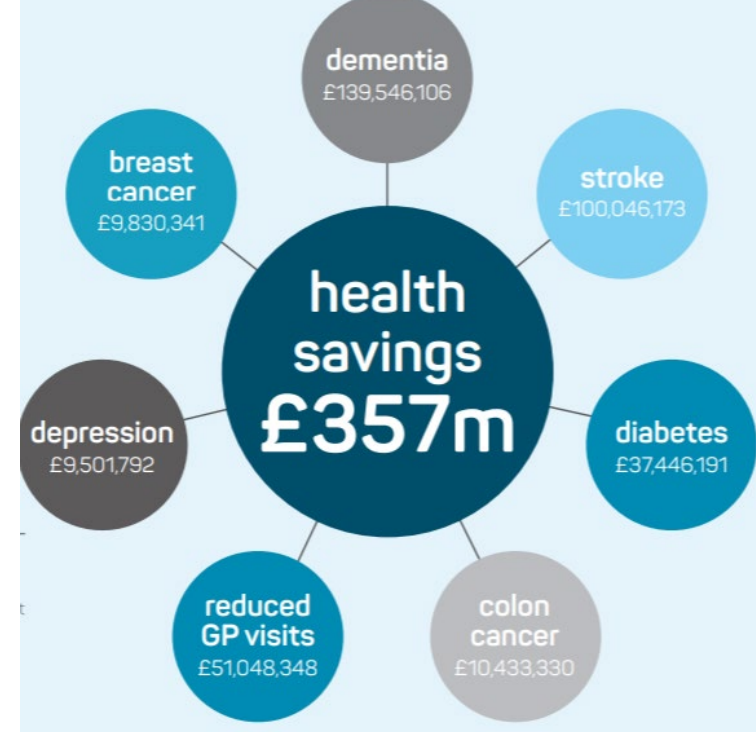
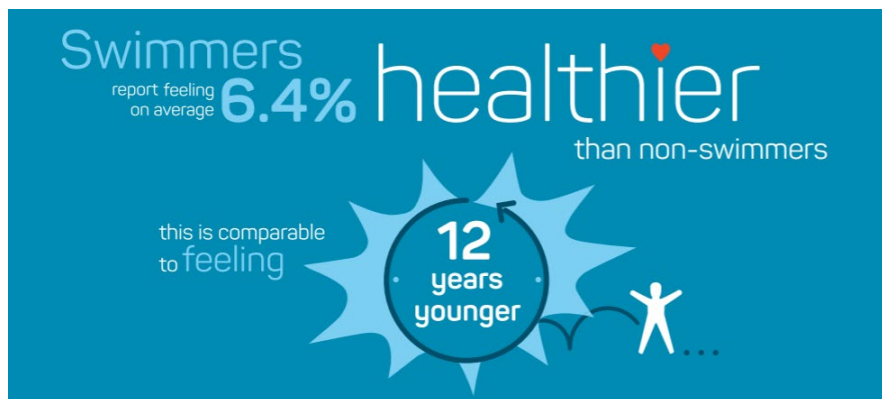
could have a shortage of at least one swimming pool

Results based on predicted population growth and its demand for swimming and the forecasted available water space in England.





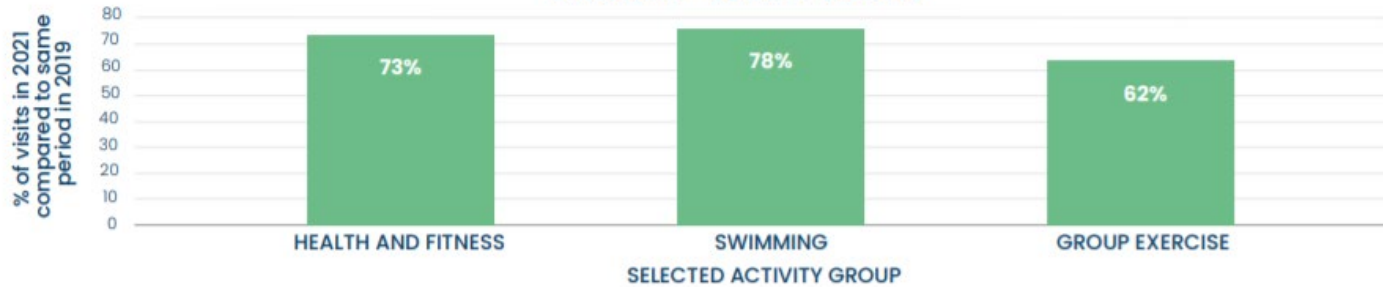
Women and girls benefit the most –  
swimming more than  
**doubles**  
their self confidence



### ACTIVITIES ARE RETURNING AT DIFFERENT RATES

Across activities, the recovery rates for health and fitness, swimming and group exercise has differed in recent weeks.

**PARTICIPATION RECOVERY BY KEY ACTIVITY GROUP  
WEEKS 16 - 18 2021 VS 2019**



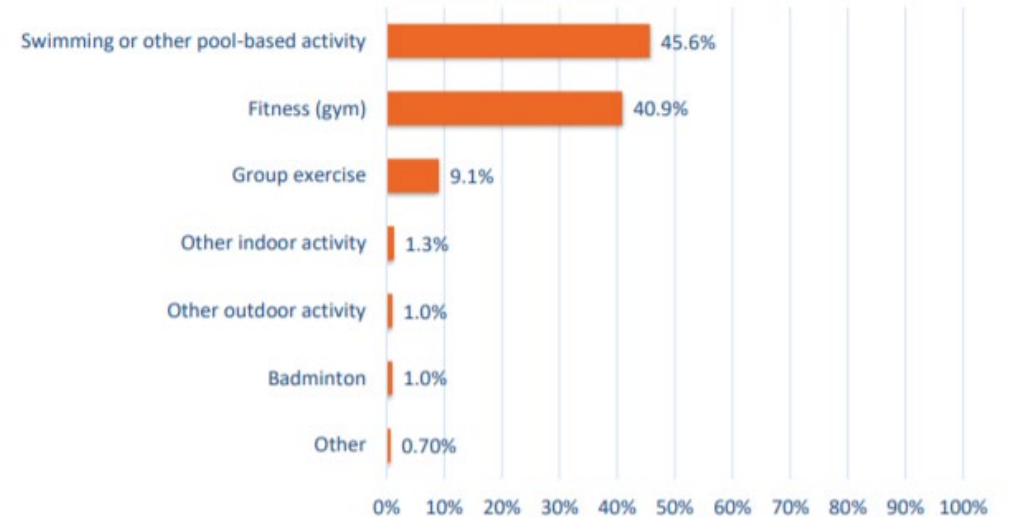
Data from Sport England's Moving Communities platform

### Question 1

What was the main activity you participated in on your last visit to the leisure centre?



### Main Activity Participated In





# Greener pools



## St Sidwell's Point

St Sidwell's Point pool in Exeter, will become the first swimming pool in the UK to meet the 'Passivhaus' energy efficiency standard when it opens shortly. It is expected to save the local council £200,000 each year in energy costs alone, meaning it would take fewer than 10 years to pay back the increased construction costs.

Advances in technology, such as microfiltration, enables the pool operator to waste less water and use fewer chemicals, resulting in further savings in heating and enhancing the swimming experience.

CASE STUDY



CASE STUDY



## Paragon Pool Concept

Swim England has worked with Paragon Structures Ltd to develop a concept design<sup>10</sup> for a cost-effective and environmentally-friendly pool facility at a works cost estimate of £2,500 per sqm.

This could bring the construction cost of a pool facility build down to around £4 million.

CASE STUDY



## Leisure Local

Sport England's 'Leisure Local' concept can play a role in the leisure offer for some areas. While there will always be a need for larger pools to support our aquatic sports, there is a role within the facilities mix for smaller facilities aimed at reaching the inactive with an emphasis on activity space for informal recreation and play.



# What is needed?

# 1

## Government

£1 billion of government investment and support into public leisure facilities to develop the next generation of pools.

### This should include:



### Capital investment in infrastructure

Funding is needed to build the new pools (and refurbish the existing pools) we need for the future.

# 2

## Local authorities

Local authorities that are short of water space as identified through a strategic needs assessment, should include new pool(s) in any Levelling Up Funding application they make.



### Grants

Part of this fund should be allocated to supporting local communities to undertake a strategic needs assessment for their area.

# What is Swim England doing?



Swim England will continue to be a strong voice for the swimming community, lobbying for the much needed investment into facilities to safeguard the future of our sports and all the amazing activities that take place in pools up and down the country.



With unparalleled expertise as the national governing body for swimming, diving, water polo and artistic swimming in England, our dedicated facilities team can provide expert guidance on new and refurbished pool design, pool management and health and safety.

We engage with both the public and private sector to ensure swimming pools are built or refurbished 'fit for purpose'.



The Swim England Facilities team provides insight and leadership to the wider sector through our work on national and international standards for the design and operation of swimming facilities.



Swim England's 'Business Solutions' offer provides a suite of free and paid for products and services for all pool owners and operators to utilise. From workforce and learn to swim audits that establish benchmarks and recommendations, to detailed latent demand analysis and pool viability studies, Swim England has a toolkit of products to support pool optimisation.



Our Business Engagement team, with field experts in all regions of the country, can work with pool owners and operators to maximise the efficiency of their pool programming to support a pool's profitability.



The way in which we build and manage our facilities will change. Working collaboratively with partners, Swim England will ensure the facilities of the future are greener and more environmentally sustainable through our continued research into the latest building design and monitoring and evaluation technology including the heating and treating of swimming pool water.

Over the past **five years** we have engaged with and supported over

# 80%

of **new pool builds** and refurbishments within England to help ensure the facility is **built fit for purpose and sustainable** for the communities they serve