



# Aquatics Strategy

Board approved and accepted  
20 February 2020



# Aquatics Strategy

## 2020 – 2023

*Inspiring active & healthier communities through high quality  
and inclusive aquatics provision*



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# 1. Introduction

West Dunbartonshire Leisure Trust's (WDLT) Aquatics Strategy outlines the current and future development of aquatic sport and leisure activities between 2020 and 2023. This strategy leads on from the previous Aquatics Strategy (2017-20) and complements WDLT's Business Strategy (2020-2023) and related annual delivery plans. West Dunbartonshire has extensive access to open water (Loch Lomond and related tributaries, Clyde and Forth Canal, River Clyde) and although this natural provision of water provides many benefits, it also presents several dangers to people. In order to address this hazard, a key focus within this strategy is to provide services that enable as many people as possible to learn to swim so that they can experience the benefits of swimming now and in the future. WDLT believes that swimming should be a sport for life as it has the ability to provide significant health and well-being benefits for all ages and abilities enabling them to lead healthier and happier lives.

The following information showcases several success stories that were achieved during the term of the previous Aquatics Strategy:

Project: **Introduction of Direct Debit Membership for the Learn to Swim Scheme**  
Impact: Improved efficiency and effectiveness of the programme, enabling children to continuously access and fluently progress through forty eight weeks of swimming lessons per year.

Project: **Opening of Clydebank Leisure Centre in 2017**  
Impact: Growth of aquatics provision within a new facility that provides improved access to water space as a result of its modern design. Participation in aquatic activity increased by **10%** across all WDLT swimming pools since 2017.

Project: **Implementation of the National Learn to Swim Scheme Framework**  
Impact: Swimming lesson participation increased by **34%** and the capacity uptake of swimming lessons at the Meadow Centre and Vale of Leven Swimming Pool is consistently at **85%**

Project: **Free public swimming for all Learn to Swim Scheme Direct Debit members**  
Impact: **4,000** children have accessed free public swimming since the introduction of direct debit, which is assisting their learning and the related outcomes of this strategy.

Project: **Learn-2 Management Software for Swimming Lessons**  
Impact: WDLT now provides an electronic home portal system for parents to view their child's progress within swimming lessons. The system is updated after every lesson by the teachers via hand held devices and it also sends automated email notifications to alert parents on key milestones.

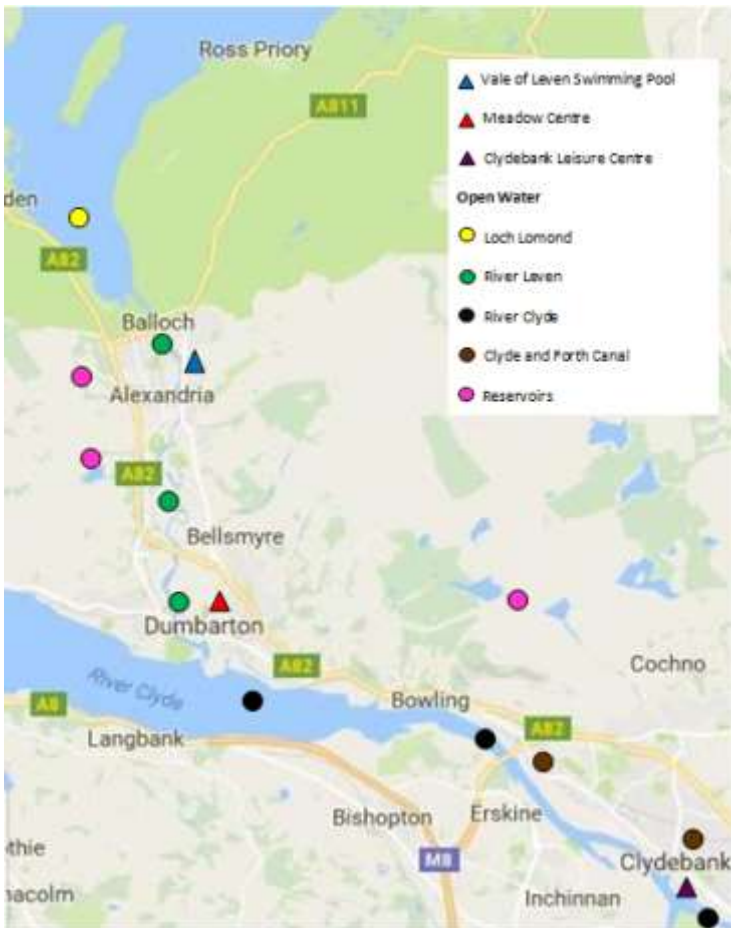
Project: **Primary School Swimming Lessons**  
Impact: On average **50%** of the **1,300** participants are complete non-swimmers however this is being reduced to **21%** with **65%** achieving the national target of 25metres before they leave primary school. A festival programme was also introduced that provides many children with an introduction to competitive swimming.

Project: **Scotland's first Open Water Festival for school children**  
Impact: WDLT delivered the first ever Open Water Swimming festival for school pupils in West Dunbartonshire on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2018. The festival received national recognition and is now an annual event.

## 1.1 About Us

WDLT is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status and started trading in April 2012. WDLT is responsible for the strategic and operational management of West Dunbartonshire Council's Sport and Leisure Facilities; Community Facilities; Outdoor Pitches & Bowling Greens; Sports Development; Active Schools; and the delivery of the Council's major Outdoor Events.

## 1.2 West Dunbartonshire Swimming Pool Facilities Map



WDLT manages three swimming pools, namely the Vale of Leven Swimming Pool, Meadow Centre in Dumbarton and Clydebank Leisure Centre (March 2017). The map shows the location of each of these facilities. 100% of residents live within twenty minutes of one of our swimming pools, which represents excellent access to safe water.

The map also identifies some of the key natural water resources in West Dunbartonshire, demonstrating just how easily it can be accessed by local residents.

## 1.3 WDLT Mission

WDLT's mission is to ***'Inspire active and healthier communities'***.

The following addition to the above statement reflects the vision of the Aquatics Strategy and how it will contribute towards achieving this mission:

**"Inspire active and healthier communities through high quality and inclusive aquatics provision".**

## 1.4 WDLT Values

WDLT is an organisation that aspires to the highest standards in everything they do, and have the following six core values:

- Empowerment** by encouraging and helping you achieve your potential;
- Excellence** by striving to be better at everything we do;
- Inclusiveness** by removing barriers to participation;
- Innovation** by developing new ways to offer a fun and inspirational customer experience;
- Partnerships** by working with others towards shared goals and objectives; and
- Reliability** by ensuring we deliver on, and exceed our promises to our customers, staff and partners.

## 1.5 Current Situation

WDLT has a long standing history of supporting aquatic sport and activities and the continuation of this strategy demonstrates the level of ambition for the future.

Over the last three years, participation in aquatics activities within West Dunbartonshire Leisure facilities has increased by 10% to over four hundred and seven thousand participants per year. This increase is a result of the expansion of the Learn to Swim Scheme, impact of the new Clydebank Leisure Centre, improved quality and variety of provision, enhanced marketing and upgrades to health suites over the last three years. The following information provides further details related to the recent growth, development and impact of WDLT's aquatics services.

### 1.5.1 Learn to Swim Scheme

WDLT currently provides a total of **three hundred and sixty nine** swimming lessons to **two thousand one hundred** children and adults per week. These lessons include baby & parent/guardian, learn to swim, disability and adult classes. Table 1 present's baseline figures for lesson provision at each site and highlights growth since 2017.

Table1 – Growth of swimming lesson provision since 2017

Venue	Lessons/Week	Increase from 2017
Clydebank Leisure Centre	142	+35
Vale of Leven Swimming Pool	157	+7
Meadow Centre	70	+13
<b>Total</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>+55</b>

## 1.5.2 Teaching Workforce

WDLT currently employs Swimming Development Officers and Teachers who are all trained and mentored to deliver high quality swimming lessons to children and adults. Continuous Professional Development workshops are provided in partnership with Scottish Swimming that enable staff to keep up to date with new skills, techniques and knowledge related to the delivery of swimming lessons and the management of swimming projects. In April 2019 a new Scottish Swimming Teacher Qualification (SSTQ) was launched and a number of employees were upskilled in 2019 with further plans to upskill the full team in 2020 and 2021. Table 2 outlines Swimming Teacher qualifications in WDLT:

Table 2 – Qualifications held by Swimming Development staff

Qualification (UKCC)	No. of Staff with Qualification
SSTQ teachers	8
Level 2 (Lead Teacher)*	3
Level 1 (Assistant Teacher)*	12
Tutor	1

\* Level 1 and 2 Swimming Teachers will be upskilled to the new SSTQ in 2020/202

The new qualification will provide with a more modern and practical approach to the training, resulting in more teachers having the right knowledge, skills, values and behaviours to teach larger groups of children or adults with less supervision. The courses have been adapted to make them more technology driven with pre-course online learning and lots of practical experience on poolside, resulting in a national award that can be embedded into an SQA course such as an HNC or HND.

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## 1.5.3 Other Aquatic Activities

There are several other aquatic activities that are delivered by WDLT and examples of these services are shown below:

- Aqua Fitness Classes
- Aqua Natal Classes
- Pool Disco's, Family Nights and Inflatables
- Access for clubs and groups (e.g. kayak clubs, disability groups)
- Open Water Events
- School Swimming Programme (lessons and festivals)
- Programmed swimming (e.g. power swim/lane swimming)

Some other areas of development include Water Polo, Rookie Lifeguard and Private Swimming Lessons (one to one, one to two ratio of child to teacher). There is little or no provision of these services at present, however the potential to introduce new activities and services will be investigated and progressed over the term of this strategy.

### 1.5.4 Participation Trends

The opening of Clydebank Leisure Centre and the creation of the Aquatics Strategy (2017-20) provided an exciting platform to enhance existing and develop new aquatics programmes. One of the most significant achievements, as shown in figure 1, is the growth of participation in swimming lessons, which has increased by 34% since 2016/17.

**Figure 1 - Swimming Lesson Participation**

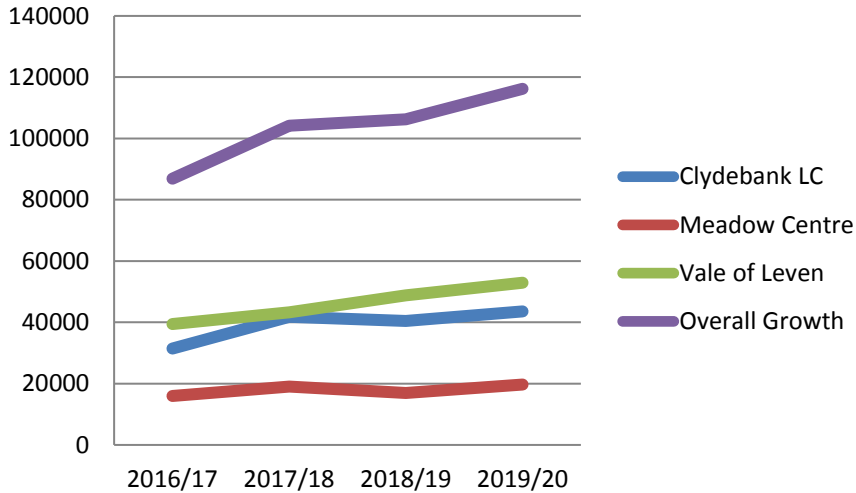
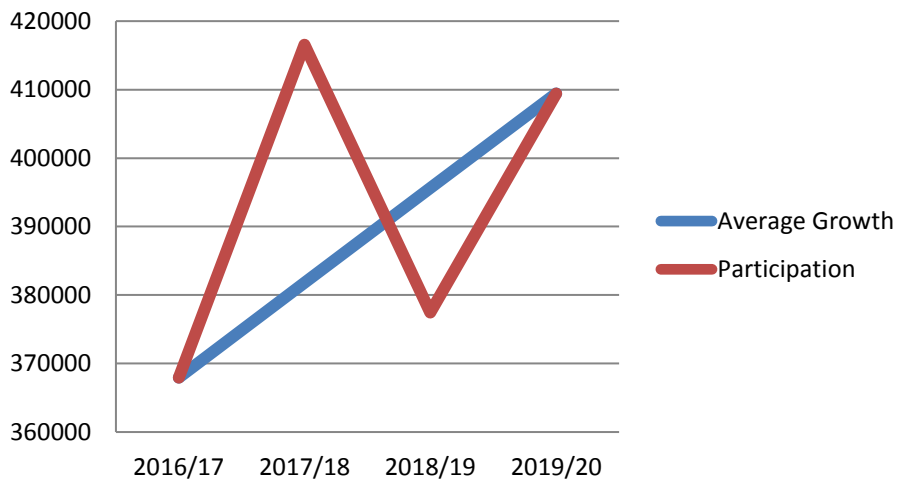


Figure 2 provides an overview of participation in all aquatic activities across WDLT. The distinctive peak in 2017 relates mainly to the huge surge in interest in visits to Clydebank Leisure Centre when it opened in April that year. The blue line represents the average growth since 2016 and highlights a positive trend in overall participation in aquatics within WDLT facilities. The average growth in participation equates to a 10% increase in all aquatics disciplines during the term of the last strategy (2017-2020).

**Figure 2 - Aquatics Participation 2016-2020**



The priorities outlined in section 6 of this Aquatics Strategy will build on our strengths and provide avenues for continued growth in participation.



## 2. Executive Summary

This Aquatics Strategy sets out WDLT's strategic priorities and outcomes for the next three years (2020 – 2023). It has been established to provide additional focus and a strategic approach to all aquatic activities and services delivered by WDLT. It is envisaged that by achieving the outcomes within this strategy:

- participation in existing and new swimming programmes will increase
- skill acquisition will be enhanced through improved swimming lesson provision
- our workforce will become more qualified and knowledgeable
- a sustainable infrastructure will be further developed to provide a fluent pathway into continued participation and performance.
- Improved access to wet side activities

In addition, the strategy provides the WDLT Board and other key stakeholders with a clear direction for aquatics provision in WDLT and West Dunbartonshire as a whole.

### 2.1 Strategic Context

WDLT Business Strategy (2020-2023) has the following four strategic outcomes and several priorities that enable the organisation to meet the varied needs of residents. The Aquatics Strategy will have a significant role in the following areas:

#### WDLT Strategic Outcome 1: Grow the Business

Priority	Aquatics Strategy (2020-2023) – Impact will include...
Increase Participation	15% growth in participation in the Learn to Swim Scheme by 2023
Healthy Lifestyles	Increased recreational swimming and Aquatics related Live Active referrals
Partnership Working	The National Learn to Swim Framework will continue to be implemented
Marketing	The profile of aquatic activities will be enhanced via social media platforms
Clydebank Leisure Centre	Significant growth in the Learn to Swim Scheme at CLC

#### WDLT Strategic Outcome 2: Improve Customer Experience

Priority	Aquatics Strategy (2020-2023) – Impact will include...
Equipment & Technology	The impact and use of the Learn2 resource will be enhanced for customers
Workforce Development	The new SSTQ course & CPD courses will be delivered annually
Equality of Access	Improved opportunities for all to participate in aquatic activity
Customer Care Standards	High standards of cleanliness of pools and changing rooms

#### WDLT Strategic Outcome 3: Financial Sustainability

Priority	Aquatics Strategy (2020-2023) – Impact will include...
Maximise Income Opportunities	Improved utilisation of pool space at all three swimming venues
Effective control of Expenditure	A Management Forum that will monitor all WDLT aquatics services
External Funding	Successful implementation of funded disability swimming programme

## WDLT Strategic Outcome 4: Governance

Priority	Aquatics Strategy (2020-2023) – Impact will include...
Policies and Procedures	Updated operating procedures for managing pool based programmes
Risk Management	Updated risk assessments for pool based programmes

### 2.2 Scottish Swimming

WDLT works in close partnership with the National Governing Agency for Swimming in Scotland, Scottish Swimming, to ensure that our aquatics provision is benefitting from not only their support and guidance but also sharing and learning from other Leisure Trusts and local authorities.

Scottish Swimming’s mission is “to inspire our members and partners in the development of aquatics, providing leadership and expert support, resulting in more people taking part and reaching their full potential”.

Scottish Swimming’s Strategic Objectives are to:

- Increase the number of people of all ages and abilities participating in swimming for health, fitness and fun.
- Support and develop stronger, more sustainable clubs that will provide increased and quality opportunities for people to participate at all levels.
- Enhance the aquatic pathway, ensuring high performance results through effective athlete development and quality coaching.

To support the delivery of these strategic objectives and to ensure there is a cohesive approach to the delivery of aquatics in Scotland; Scottish Swimming has developed a National Framework for Aquatics. This framework will be used by Scottish Swimming to provide the required support that will enable WDLT to create a quality environment that provides:

- A clear, progressive and inclusive pathway offering opportunities for all
- A clear, progressive and inclusive pathway offering opportunities for all
- A culture of safe, enjoyable and challenging experiences
- An effective workforce that has the right skills and knowledge to lead, develop and support the delivery of a quality environment through a child and athlete centered approach.
- Strong and sustainable structures that deliver effective support systems
- Effective and balanced water management programming
- A platform for sharing best practice and improving communication and links between all partners

WDLT will ensure that strong partnership working continues with Scottish Swimming now and in the future with the shared aims of helping more people learn to swim and enjoy the vast benefits that are gained from regular participation in aquatic activity.

### 3. Our Objectives

The following objectives are a continuation of the objectives detailed in the previous Aquatics Strategy. They remain highly relevant to the aims of the services involved and are seen as being essential to WDLT’s ambition to further grow and develop Aquatics programmes over the next three years.

Lane 1	<b>Increase the number of people of all ages and abilities participating in aquatics activity for health, fitness and fun</b>
Lane 2	<b>Support the development of stronger, more sustainable aquatics clubs and organisations</b>
Lane 3	<b>Enhance and support our workforce</b>
Lane 4	<b>Provide participants with equitable access to our aquatic facilities by aligning operations across WDLT</b>
Lane 5	<b>Increase the awareness of aquatics through branding and marketing</b>
Lane 6	<b>Enhance services to improve our services and the financial sustainability of aquatics provision</b>

### 4. Key Performance Indicators

By 2023 West Dunbartonshire Leisure will:

KPI - 1	<b>Increase the no. of attendances across all pools by 10%</b>
KPI - 2	<b>Increase the number of children in the learn to swim programme by 15%</b>
KPI - 3	<b>Increase income generated from aquatics activities by 15%</b>
KPI - 4	<b>Increase the number of participants in aquatics clubs by 10%</b>
KPI - 5	<b>Improve service quality and record a Net Promoter Score of 80 or more by 2023.</b>

### 5. Monitoring

The Aquatics Strategy will be monitored and reviewed in the following ways to ensure all key actions are achieved:-

1. A review of key actions within the aquatics strategy will be held at quarterly management team meetings to discuss progress.
2. A Performance Report will be presented to the Board of Directors on a six monthly basis.
3. An Annual Delivery Plan will be agreed that will outline the specific actions that will enable WDLT to achieve the follow strategic priorities.

## 6. Strategic Priorities

The following table outlines WDLT's strategic priorities for aquatics in West Dunbartonshire from 2020-2023. It also demonstrates how these priorities impact upon the Key Performance Indicators (section 5) and WDLT's Strategic Outcomes.

<b>Lane 1</b>	<b>Increase the number of people of all ages and abilities participating in aquatics activity for health, fitness and fun</b>
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Priorities	Key Performance Indicator(s)	WDLT Strategic Outcome(s)	Year		
			20/21	21/22	22/23
Continue the implementation of the National Framework for Swimming in Scotland to enhance participation in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn to Swim Scheme</li> <li>• Parent and Baby lessons</li> <li>• Adult Swimming programmes (e.g. power swim)</li> <li>• Open Water Swimming</li> <li>• Other Aquatic Disciplines (Water Polo &amp; Rookie Lifeguard)</li> </ul>	KPI-1, KPI-2, KPI-3, KPI-4, KPI-5	WDLT SO1	✓	✓	✓
Work in partnership with West Dunbartonshire Council to maintain School Swimming lessons	KPI-1	WDLT SO1	✓	✓	✓
Work in partnership with Dunbartonshire Disability Sports Club to increase aquatics opportunities for people who have or are affected by a disability	KPI-1, KPI-5	WDLT SO1, SO2	✓	✓	✓
Provide semi and non-programmed aquatic activity at all pools (e.g. lane swimming, casual use)	KPI-1,	WDLT SO1	✓		

<b>Lane 2</b>	<b>Support the development of stronger, more sustainable aquatics clubs and organisations</b>
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Priorities	Key Performance Indicator(s)	WDLT Strategic Outcome(s)	Year		
			20/21	21/22	22/23
Work in partnership with local swimming clubs to increase their capacity by 10%, access facilities and enhance their long term sustainability.	KPI-4,	WDLT SO1, SO2		✓	
Enhance the pathway from Learn to Swim Scheme into local swimming clubs through the Club Ready sections in the framework and club transition groups.	KPI-1, KPI-2, KPI-4	WDLT SO1, SO2	✓		
Support local swimming clubs in all areas of development in partnership with Scottish Swimming.	KPI-4, KPI-5	WDLT SO1, SO2	✓	✓	✓
Identify local swimmers that meet the criteria to access WDLT's Talented Sports Performer Scheme	KP-4, KPI-5	WDLT SO2	✓	✓	✓

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<b>Lane 3</b>	<b>Enhance and support our workforce</b>
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Priorities	Key Performance Indicator(s)	WDLT Strategic Outcome(s)	Year		
			20/21	21/22	22/23
Create effective recruitment, training and CPD opportunities for all employees with aquatic responsibility in their job role.	KPI-2, KPI-5	WDLT SO1, SO2, SO4	✓	✓	✓
Deliver the new Scottish Swimming Teacher Qualification course and hold internal conversion courses to upskill the current teaching workforce.	KPI-5	WDLT SO1, SO2, SO3	✓	✓	✓
Upskill staff in other WDLT service areas to support aquatics delivery	KPOI-1, KPI-2, KPI-3, KPI-5	WDLT SO1, SO2, SO3	✓	✓	✓

<b>Lane 4</b>	<b>Provide all citizens with access to our aquatic facilities by aligning operations across WDLT</b>
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Priorities	Key Performance Indicator(s)	WDLT Strategic Outcome(s)	Year		
			20/21	21/22	22/23
Provide quality access and support to individuals and groups who have or are affected by a disability	KPI-1, KPI-5	WDLT SO1, SO2	✓	✓	✓
Enhance the use of available pool space in West Dunbartonshire to meet demand and grow participation in wet side activities.	KPI-1, KPI-3, KPI-5	WDLT SO1, SO3	✓	✓	✓
Improve pathways between all aquatic programmes (e.g. learn to swim to rookie lifeguard, water polo etc.)	KPI-1, KPI-3	WDLT SO1, SO3	✓	✓	✓
Continue to use Learn 2 in order to improve information gathering, reporting and communication with parents/carers.	KPI-5	WDLT SO1, SO2, SO3	✓	✓	✓
Enhance the close partnership working between the Swimming Development Team, facility managers and Duty Officers.	KPI-1, KPI-2, KPI-4	WDLT SO1, SO2, SO4	✓	✓	✓

**Lane 5 Increase the awareness of aquatics through branding and marketing**

Priorities	Key Performance Indicator(s)	WDLT Strategic Outcome(s)	Year		
			20/21	21/22	22/23
Enhance the marketing of all aquatic activity via digital and non-digital methods	KPI-1, KPI-5	WDLT SO1, SO2	✓	-	-
Create an aquatics resource that provides an effective single portal (one stop shop) for all information on aquatics provision and development in West Dunbartonshire	KPI-1, KPI-2, KPI-3, KPI-4, KPI-5	WDLT SO1, SO2, SO3	✓	-	-
Increase the profile of aquatics via social media channels	KPI-1	WDLT SO1, SO2	✓	✓	✓

**Lane 6 Enhance services to improve the financial sustainability of aquatics provision**

Priorities	Key Performance Indicator(s)	WDLT Strategic Outcome(s)	Year		
			20/21	21/22	22/23
Identify key areas of growth within aquatics programmes and investigate potential of WDLT Surplus Funds and external funding to support costs.	KPI-5	WDLT SO1, SO3	✓	✓	✓
Deliver competitively priced aquatics programmes	KPI-3	WDLT SO2, SO3, SO4	✓	✓	✓
Benchmark aquatics programmes with other leisure trusts to identify opportunities for growth.	KPI-1, KPI-5	WDLT SO1, SO2	✓	✓	✓
Introduce a programme of private swimming lessons (one to one, one to two and one to three) at all three sites	KPI-1, KPI-3, KPI-5	WDLT SO1, SO2, SO3	✓	-	-
Increase holiday programme provision and related participation levels	KPI-1, KPI-3, KPI-4, KPI-5	WDLT SO1	-	✓	✓



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