

# How do you increase the opportunities for people with disabilities to access swimming?

## Solihull: Aquability

### Background

Solihull had a lower proportion of disabled people playing sport at a moderate intensity at least once a week for 30 minutes compared to the West Midlands and the national average (Activity Alliance Active People Survey 6).

Swimming was identified in a local leisure survey as a key activity adults and young people would like to take part in. As a result a local pool based activities programme was designed; Aquability.

### Challenges

The main challenge centred on how to execute an inclusive marketing campaign. Planning the right range of communication channels was essential in helping to maximise the number of people reached.

### Approach

Partnerships between Solihull Council, Parkwood Community Leisure, Active Partnerships, NGB and local disability organisations were formed to help drive visibility of the Aquability programme.

The campaign used a variety of channels in order to get the message across to the widest possible audience. The channels were chosen based on Activity Alliance and Swim England guidance as well as local participant and organisation feedback.

#### Publicity included:

- Social Media Posts.
- Solihull Council Press Releases.
- A4/A5 posters distributed at Solihull Active disability registered participants local community centres, libraries, GPs, parish councils.
- Internal promotion through the 'Family Information Service' and council run day centres.

- Advertising in the 'Solihull Active' generic disability leaflet.
- Website homepage, news posts and dedicated webpage.

### Results

The two Solihull leisure centres involved within the project are committed to their ongoing status as IFI accredited centres and their inclusion on the 'Disabled Go' website.

**"Behavioural insights, an understanding of how to help people to make better decisions about physical activity and utilising evidence of what works for this target group is essential."**

**Solihull Active Project Team** 



**2** Solihull Leisure Centres involved with the project have become NCDS Deaf Friendly Centres

Activities for people with disabilities **remain a priority** for Solihull's physical activity and sports strategy

#### Find out more:

If you are interested in getting more involved with a similar project, please contact [equality@swimming.org](mailto:equality@swimming.org)