

East of Scotland Paralympic Experience Event 2015

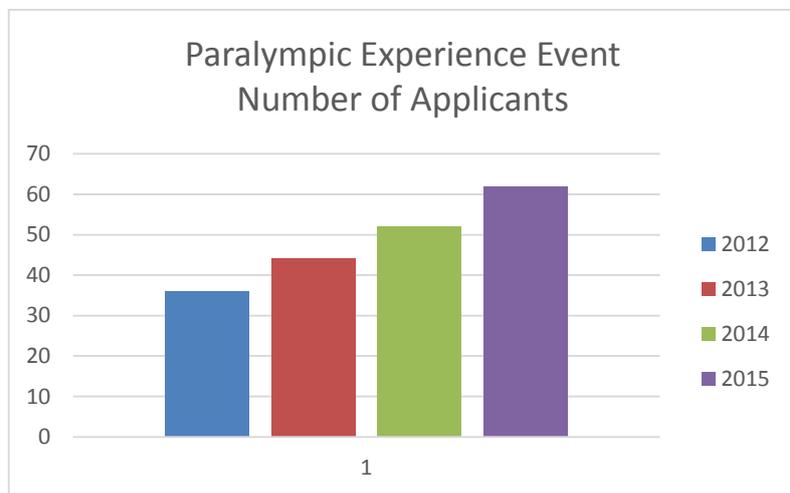
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Introduction

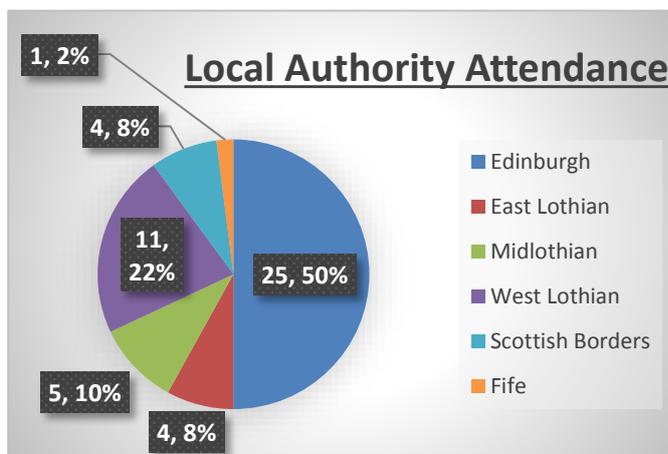
Scottish Disability Sport (SDS), in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council and Lothian Disability Sport, established the Paralympic Experience Event in 2012, with the sole purpose of introducing young people with a physical and sensory disability to sport. SDS has clearly identified a significant decrease in this demographic engaging, and this area of work forms a large part of **sportscotland's** investment. The vast majority of these individuals are within the mainstream education environment and SDS has worked with local partners to support this shift in focus when it comes to delivering and developing disability sport. All local authorities, within the East of Scotland, understand and support this ethos and recognise the benefit of identifying and supporting young people to attend. Furthermore, Education Scotland's commitment has continued to support the delivery of UK Disability Inclusion Training (UKDIT) to all physical education teachers, across Scotland.

Event Growth

The event has shown significant growth since its inception in 2012 and the graph (right) indicates the number of applications we have received year on year. SDS are confident that this increase is due to the support of our Active Schools colleagues, and other key partners, identifying and encouraging individuals to attend.



Attendance per area



The 2015 event was held at Forrester High School in Edinburgh and the pie chart (left) shows the attendance rates per each local authority in actual numbers and percentage. There were 50 young people that attended, with 12 pulling out prior to, or on, the day of the event. We also had 1 pupil attend from Fife.

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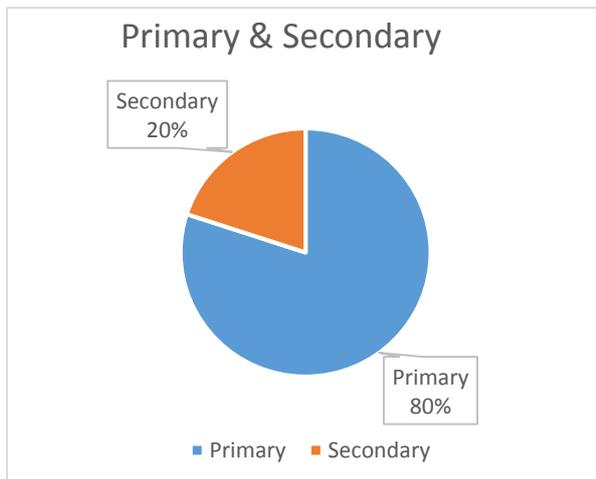
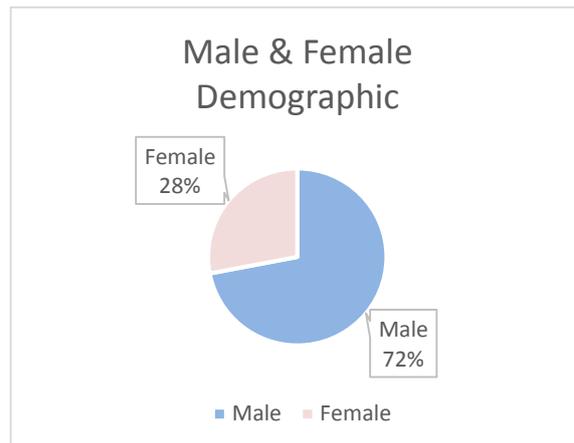
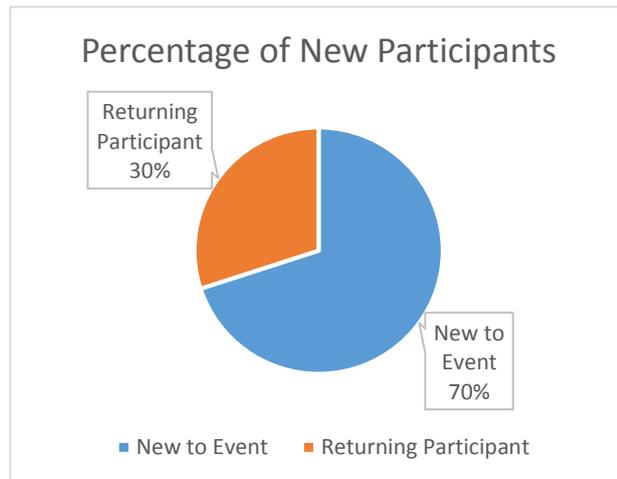
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About the Participant

The 2015 event saw a very large increase in new participants, with 70% of attendees, never having attended before. This clearly shows that the message is getting through to the relevant pupils. On the flipside, only 30% returned to the event. The feedback received from the previous year was largely positive, so this low return rate can be attributed to the young people getting the necessary experience and information needed to access sport.

As the event is on a Friday, it relies heavily on parents attending (and perhaps taking a day off work) so it is understandable that young people might not return year on year. The ethos of the event has always been on quality (rather than quantity), raising awareness and supporting young people towards extra-curricular sport. Therefore, this is not a concern at this juncture.

The male / female demographic (right) clearly shows that with 72%, the event is attended by a higher proportion of males. Similar to other initiatives that targets young women in sport, the Paralympic Experience will also need to be mindful of encouraging young women, with a physical or sensory disability, to access sporting opportunities.

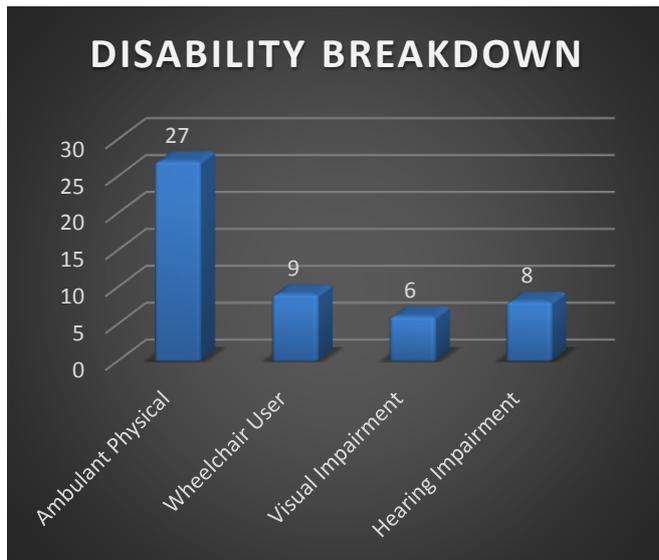


Unsurprisingly, the vast majority of pupils whom accessed the 2015 event were from primary schools. The pie chart (left) indicates that 80% were of primary age and this figure is extremely high. It is clear that more focus is required to engage pupils within secondary education. SDS have identified that these pupils are more challenging to engage in disability specific sports opportunities.

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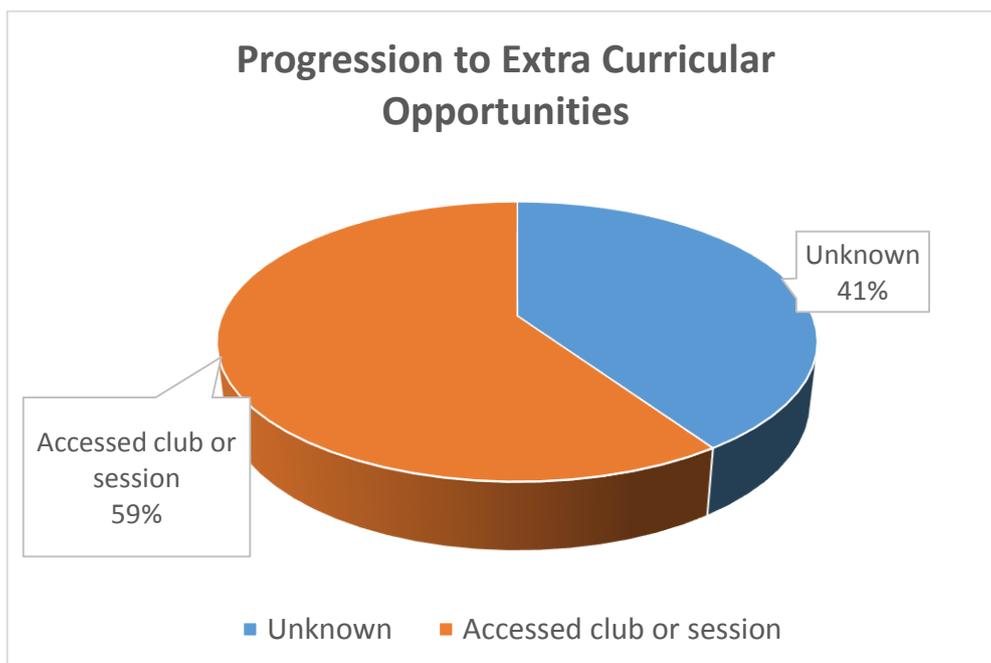
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Disability Breakdown



Of the 50 individuals that attended the event on the day, we can see from the graph (left) that the majority of those have a physical ambulant disability, whereas only 9 were wheelchair users. Notably, there were only 6 individuals with a visual impairment, which is extremely low and this is an area where we should be able to see significant growth. Furthermore, SDS has engaged with national organisations, that support those who are blind or visually impaired, and we hope to use these partnerships to increase awareness of both disability sport (as a whole) and this event.

Progression to Clubs



One of the biggest challenges when delivering any event is robustly measuring those who progress to club sport as a direct result. SDS undertakes a significant amount of follow up, with each individual and the clubs involved, to see who has progressed on to further opportunities. From the information gathered we can confirm that of the 37 pupils (who attended the event for the first time), 22 have either joined a sports club directly or attended another Scottish Disability Sport or Lothian Disability Sport event. As indicated in the pie chart above this accounts for 59% of all new attendees. The other 15 pupils (41%) are classed as unknown at this stage and further work is required to find out their position.

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Summary

The Paralympic Experience is a targeted sports specific event which offers individuals with a physical or sensory impairment an opportunity to access sport in a supportive environment. The partnership working that exists to deliver this event is unique and is a fundamental reason as to why the event has grown and been successful. Scottish Disability Sport, in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council and Lothian Disability Sport, with the buy in and support from each local authority, is a model of good practice. Hopefully this annual event provides a focus and a mechanism for everyone to engage with inactive groups, encourage participation and promote the benefits that sport can bring.