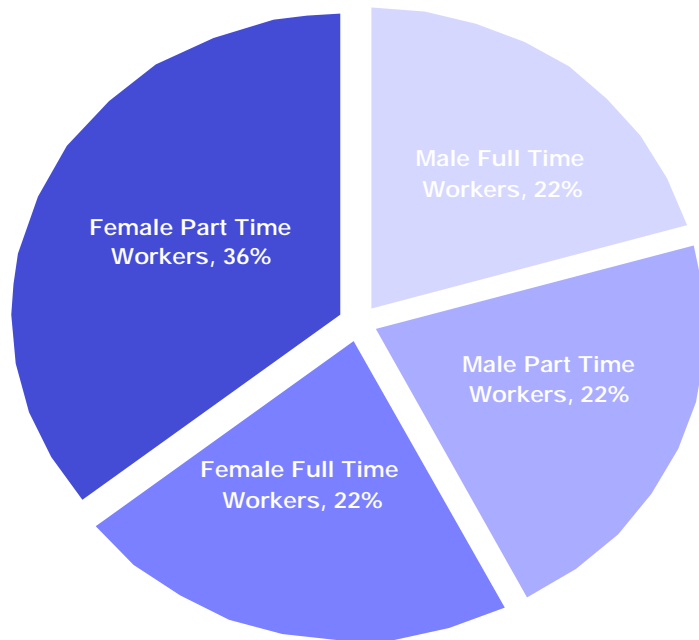


## Active Leisure and Learning in the North East

### How many jobs in the Sector?

North East distribution of employment in the sector

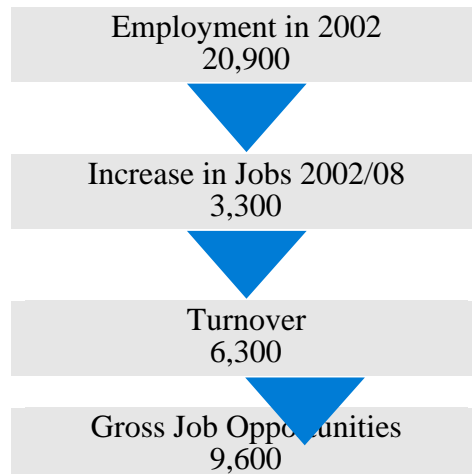


- Around 19,300 people are employed in the sports and active leisure sector in the North East in 2002, with a further 1,600 people self-employed
- 1.9% of the regional workforce is employed in the sector, a higher proportion than the national figure for the sector
- 4.5% of all sports and active leisure jobs in the UK are in the North East
- 57.5% of the workforce are women
- 57.5% of the workforce are part-time
- Besides the paid workforce, there is an estimated 298,000 who work on an informal voluntary basis including 103,000 people performing core formal voluntary roles.

Source: ABI 2002 (excludes self-employed)

### Job opportunities in the sector

- The Annual Business Inquiry shows that between 1998-2002 employment in the sector increased by over 4,300 jobs
- In 1998 Skills Foresight data for England suggested a 2.5% annual growth in employment in the sector over the next ten years, however the North East has exceeded this forecast in the four year period up to 2002 with an average growth rate of 6.5% per year
- Besides this considerable expansion, there is also expected to be a relatively high staff turnover rate. Up to 2008, 30% of current jobs will need to be filled because of replacement demand, a figure equivalent to 6,300 jobs



National Foresight data for the sector suggests that:

- Female employment will experience a slightly greater increase than male employment
- There is expected to be a higher growth in part-time employment
- The rate of growth in the level of self-employment will be modest compared to the growth in the number of employees

### Businesses in the Sector

- There are over 1,000 sports and active leisure business units in the North East

- A lower proportion of businesses in the sector (63%) are micro-businesses (employing up to 10 people), compared to 78% across all sectors in the region
- There is a higher proportion of small businesses employing 11-24 people (18%) than in the North East economy as a whole (11%)
- There are relatively few large businesses with over 200 employees
- A high proportion of people in the sector work in businesses employing 11-24 people (18% compared to an average of 12% in the region) and businesses employing between 25 and 49 employees (24% compared to a regional 14%). As a consequence of this employment in small sized businesses there is relatively less employment in micro, medium and large sized businesses

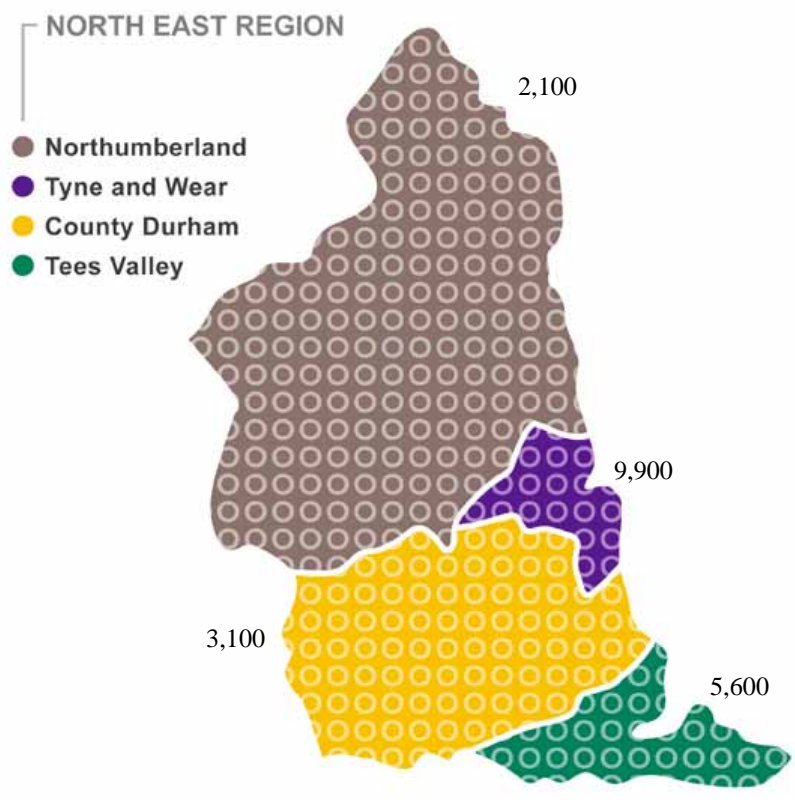
Source: Annual Business Inquiry

### Key companies in the sector

There are many well-known large companies operating in the sector. In professional sport, Newcastle and Middlesbrough have Premiership football clubs whilst there are Coca-Cola League clubs at Sunderland, Darlington and Hartlepool. Durham host County Cricket in the region and Newcastle Falcons are in the Rugby Union Premiership. Other professional sports teams based in the North East include basketball and ice hockey. Sports such as horse racing (at Redcar, Newcastle, Hexham and Sedgefield) are responsible for attracting visitors and spending in the region. The Great North Run attracts 40,000 runners, 200,000 spectators and 2,000 volunteers, extends the normal summer tourist season and contributes an estimated £2.7 million to the North East.

The North East also has a number of stadia and facilities; St. James' Park, Newcastle, the Riverside in Middlesbrough and the Stadium of Light in Sunderland have all hosted international football, Chester-le-Street is a newly created test cricket venue and the Gateshead International Stadium is a major athletics venue. The presence within the region of the Northumberland National Park presents the opportunity for a wide range of outdoor recreation. Much employment in sport and fitness is local authority based, but private clubs are an increasing source of employment opportunities. The English Institute of Sport for the region is based at Gateshead International Stadium, and there are regional support centres at Durham University, Deerness Gymnastics Centre and the University of Northumbria.

### Employment in the Active Leisure and Learning Sector in the sub-regions



- As the map shows, regionally Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley employ the most people in sports and active leisure. Employment in this sector as a percentage of total employment is highest in the Tees Valley (2.0%)

- Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley have the highest number of sports and active leisure businesses

- Businesses in this sector make up 1.6% of businesses in the region with the highest proportion in Northumberland (2.3%)

### Skills and recruitment issues in the sector

The 2003 National Employer Skills Survey was commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council, in partnership with the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) and the Department for Education and Skills, in order to provide detailed information about the extent, causes and implications of England's recruitment problems and skill gaps. It also measures employers' training activities.

In SkillsActive's sector in the region, 25% of businesses expect employment to increase in the next 12 months compared to 30% nationally. Only 1% are expecting employment to decrease in the period in the region.

Employers were asked their views on the levels of skills required to do each job. Across all occupations nationally in the sector, the skills most required at advanced and high levels are customer handling skills (27% of employers say this is required at an advanced level, 46% at a high level), communication skills (24% advanced, 48% high) and team working (20% advanced, 49% high). Notable is the low level of IT skills required.

24% of establishments had vacancies at the time of the survey. In employment terms vacancies form 3.3% of employment in the region. 15% of establishments in the region with vacancies are finding at least one position hard to fill, equivalent to 3% of all establishments.

Nationally the skills establishments found difficult to obtain from applicants are communication skills (40% of establishments with a hard to fill vacancy), team working skills (38%), customer handling skills (33%), technical and practical skills (28%) and problem solving skills (27%).

Comparing employers within the SkillsActive SSC area with employers across England, the main difference is that they are more likely to state that the hard-to-fill vacancy is caused by aspects of the job; poor terms and conditions (39 per cent compared to 21 per cent) and shift work (30 per cent compared to 15 per cent). They are less likely to give reasons associated with the number of applicants or their skills or experience. Because of this the proportion of hard-to-fill vacancies in the SkillsActive SSC area that are skill shortage vacancies is lower (at 35 per cent) than for England as a whole (50 per cent).

The implications of hard to fill vacancies are an increased workload for other staff (93% of establishments report this), difficulties meeting customer service objectives (48%), difficulties meeting required quality standards (47%) and difficulties introducing new working practices (39%).

It is estimated that 24 per cent of establishments in the SkillsActive SSC area suffered from internal skills gaps, higher than the 22 per cent reported for England as a whole. This data suggests that some 13 per cent of employees in the sector are not fully proficient at their current jobs. In the North East a higher proportion of establishments are reporting skills gaps (32%) and this equates to 9% of their staff.

It is evident from this that the volume of skill gaps far exceeds that of recruitment problems, as in other sectors and across England. This would suggest that there is a need for sufficient emphasis on workforce development to address these gaps as well as looking at skill supply and the quality of entrants into the sector. In the North East the skills that need to be improved were reported as customer handling skills (51% of establishments with a skill gap), communication skills (44%) and problem solving skills (39%).

### **Pay and conditions in the sector**

- The average annual salary for full-time leisure and sports managers was £26,300 in 2003
- Sports coaches, instructors and officials earn an average of £24,800 per annum
- Fitness instructors and sports and leisure assistants both earn around £15,000 nationally

*Source: New Earnings Survey 2003*

### **Education and training provision in the North East**

- SkillsActive, in partnership with employers and key organisations across the Sector, has developed a framework for Apprenticeships. The mandatory outcomes for completion lead to a Level 2 or Level 3 S/NVQ, some Key Skills awards, a Technical Certificate and other industry-relevant skills. The occupational strands cover Coaching, Teaching and Instructing (a sport or activity), Instructing Health and Fitness, Activity Leadership and the Outdoors, Spectator Control, Operational Services and Operations and Development, and Playwork.
- There are a wide range of Further Education college-based courses in areas such as sport science and fitness instruction as well as general courses in active leisure and learning.
- There are currently five Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVES) in sport-related subjects established or in development in England. None of these is based in the North East.
- Higher-level qualifications are available at undergraduate and postgraduate level. These include degrees in subject areas such as physical education, sports development, sports coaching, sport science and physiology and sport and recreation management. Providers include:
  - Durham University's School of Applied Sciences which offers a BA Sport degree and postgraduate research programmes in sport, plus a PGCE in Physical Education
  - Northumbria University's School of Psychology and Sports Sciences which offers a wide range of courses including a BA Sports Development with Coaching, BSc Applied Sport and Exercise

Science, BSc Psychology with Sports Sciences. BSc Sports Management, BSc Geography with Sport Studies and postgraduate courses in Sports Management

- Northumbria University also offers a Cert HE in playwork, a HND in playwork and a degree in playwork and social welfare
- Sunderland University's School of Health, Natural and Social Sciences offers a BSc in Sports Sciences, BSc Sport and Exercise Development and BSc Sports Studies
- Teesside University's School Of Social Sciences and Law offers a HND Sport and Exercise, BSc Sport and Exercise with routes in Applied Exercise Science, BSc Sports Therapy and postgraduate courses in Sport and Exercise and Exercise Prescription

### **Other fact sheets in the series**

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SPR04 – South West

SPR08 – Eastern England

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