

Leisure Centres and Swimming Pools - UK - April 2010

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What is this report about?

A boom in secondary spending on items such as food, drink and merchandise as a result of the government's free swimming initiative has been helping to keep the leisure centres and swimming pools market buoyant, with revenues up 14% in the past five years and admissions 10% higher.

What have we found out?

- Energy efficiency is becoming a big issue for the industry as a result of a combination of the 150% increase in gas and electricity prices between 2004 and 2009 and the impending introduction of a carbon trading scheme that rewards the most efficient centres.
- Private contractors are finding it increasingly difficult to increase their market share as a result of the growth in sites run by not-for-profit leisure trusts, which increased in number by 9% between 2007 and 2009.
- Leisure centres and swimming pool users are concentrated among a relatively small proportion of the population: more than six in ten adults haven't visited a centre during the past year, while more than a third of adults have never visited one.
- Swimming remains the most popular activity undertaken at a leisure centre, with more than half of users going with friends or family and a third on their own, while just over half of users visit the gym or health club. The next most popular dry-side activity among women is fitness classes, whereas for men it is indoor sports like racquet sports or football.
- Lack of interest in exercise is the main reason given by a third of non-users for not using leisure centres. Participating in outdoor exercise like running and cycling and indoor home exercise instead are the other main reasons.

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