

ATHLETE SURVEY 2014

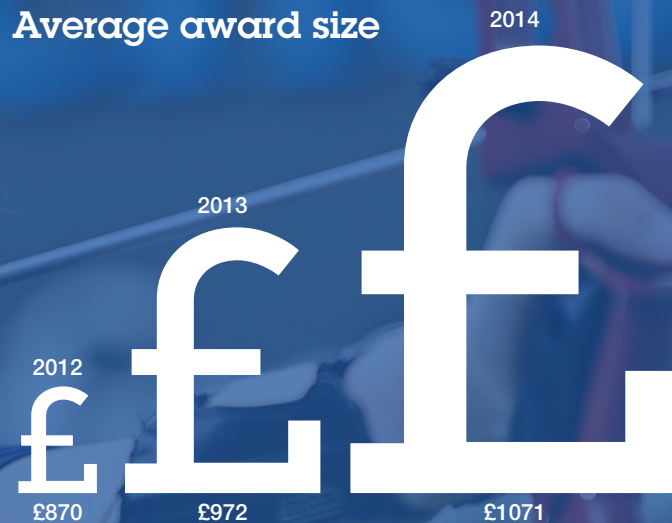


INTRODUCTION



In 2014 SportsAid supported 1,400 athletes throughout the UK, distributing £1.5 million to help them overcome financial challenges. These athletes compete in more than 60 different sports and have been identified by these sports as the country's brightest prospects.

Average award size



2014

2013

2012

£870

£972

£1071

100%

say SportsAid's support is helpful or essential

The average award this year was £1071 per athlete. This is up on 2013 and 2012. The evidence from this (and previous) annual athlete surveys is that this contribution makes a big difference (see "Impact" on page 9).

Methodology

Over several weeks during August and September, SportsAid asked of all the athletes who had so far received a SportsAid Award in 2014, and for whom the charity held a current email address, to complete a survey consisting of about 60 questions. The questions focused on their life inside and outside of sport to find out more about the challenges they face and how the charity can help them.

The sample was 652 SportsAid athletes across the UK from a possible 1,105 athletes who were invited to complete the survey – giving a response rate of 59% and a robust set of data (a 99% confidence level at a 3% confidence interval), which was analysed for SportsAid by Nunki.

All of the photos in this report are of athletes who have been supported by SportsAid this year, the majority of which were supplied by the athletes themselves.

SURVEY RESULTS

Demographics

The majority (60%) of the athletes SportsAid supported in 2014 are under 18, but with disabled athletes making up a fifth of the sample – and with these athletes typically being a few years older (ie 62% of them are over 18) – the average age overall is 18.

More than half of the athletes (51%) got into their sport before their tenth birthday.

Most are already targeting major international competitions such as the junior European or world championships. The majority of disabled athletes (57%) are already targeting Rio while non-disabled athletes are more likely to be targeting Tokyo 2020.

There is an even split between male and female athletes overall but among disabled athletes there is a male bias (60:40).

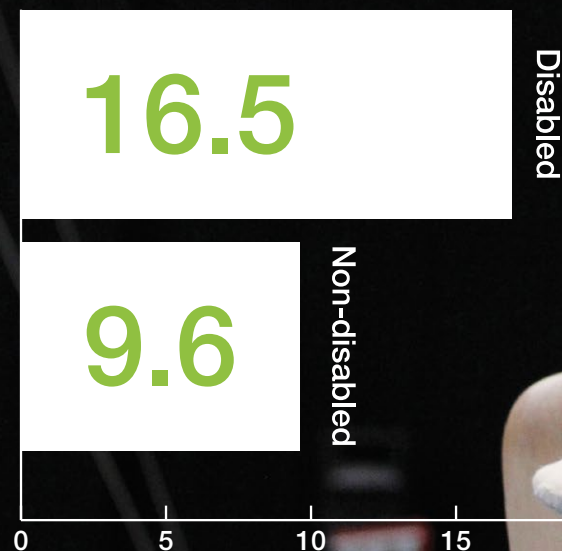
A postcode analysis showed that 20% of the athletes come from “financially stretched”, “urban adversity” or “non-private” households. Disabled athletes are more likely to live in these areas (27% vs 19%) and may, as a result, be more likely to be under greater financial pressure than non-disabled athletes.

Athletes from less affluent areas invariably place a higher value on the financial support they receive from SportsAid (eg 100% of those in non-private households said their SportsAid Award was “essential”), though it should be stressed that, across the board, 100% of the athletes describe the charity’s support as “helpful” or “essential”.

The majority took up their sport before they turned

10

Average age when they took up their sport



SPORT



In 2014, SportsAid supported athletes from more than 60 different sports.



90% compete in an Olympic or Paralympic discipline

Category	Percentage
Compete in a Commonwealth Games discipline	50%

50% compete in a Commonwealth Games discipline

Most (90%) of these athletes compete in an Olympic or Paralympic sport. Exactly half compete in a Commonwealth Games sport and of them, 94% say this event is valuable to their progression.

People inspire people

A full three-quarters of the athletes credit a family member, coach or another athlete as being the reason they took up their sport. This is typically true both for disabled and non-disabled athletes although disabled athletes are less likely to cite their families as their inspiration (25% vs 38%) and are, in comparison, more likely to say London 2012 (19% vs 3%) was the reason they took up their sport. This is consistent with the fact that disabled athletes are typically older than non-disabled athletes when they take up their sport (16.5 years vs 9.6 years). Will non-disabled athletes catch up in future SportsAid surveys?

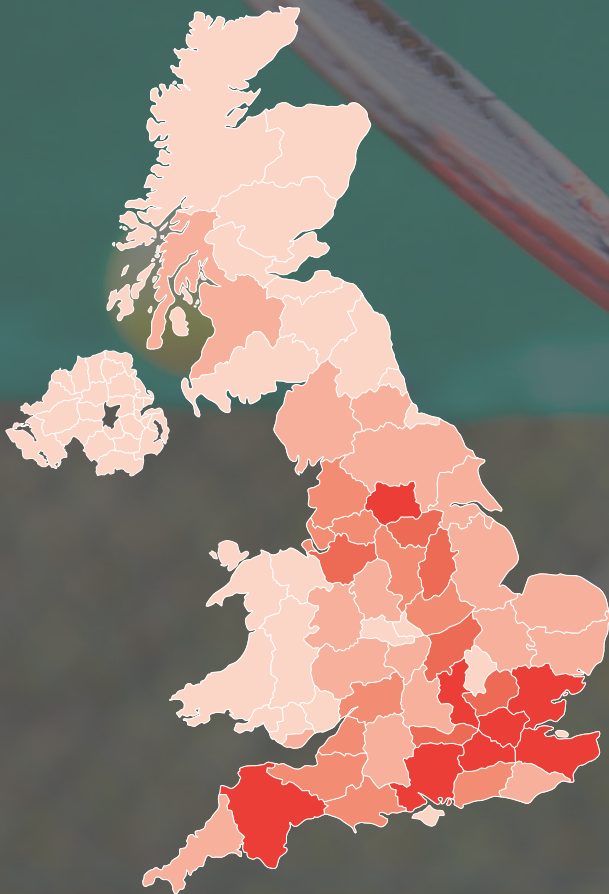
75%

were inspired by a family member, coach or another athlete

TALENT

Where is the talent?

Talent hotbeds (not adjusted for population size) are London, Devon, the Home Counties and West Yorkshire.



AMBITION



What is your ultimate ambition?

Ambitions typically centre on competing and winning medals at the international level, as you might expect, but here disabled athletes seem to place less emphasis on becoming professional sportsmen and women (11% vs 25%) and more on wanting to inspire others to take up sport (11% vs 3%).



TRAINING

How much do you train?

The majority (61%) of the athletes already train for more than 15 hours a week.

Most (84%) train between 5pm and 9pm. In these training sessions the athletes cover, on average, 42 miles a week (eg by running, cycling, swimming, skiing etc). Breaking this down by sport: cyclists, netball players, triathletes and snowsport athletes cover the most ground while weightlifters, climbers and archers cover the least.

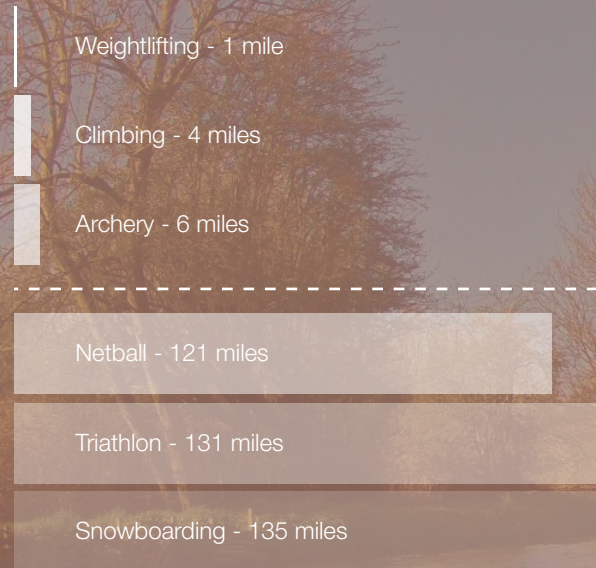
How far do you travel each week for sport?

150 miles

Each athlete travels, on average, more than 150 miles a week to get to their training sessions and competitions – explaining why travel is typically their single greatest cost, above kit and accommodation (see “Costs” on page 8). That’s the equivalent of travelling from London to Cardiff every week or from London to Bali every year.



What distance do you cover in training each week?



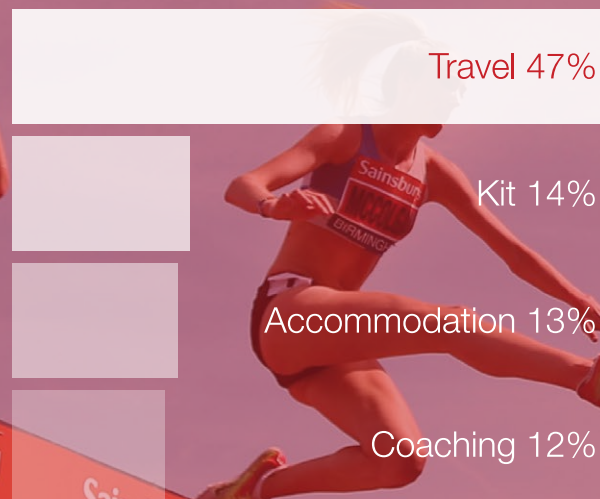
Imagine running, cycling and swimming the distance from London to Chesterfield (more than 130 miles) every week. That’s what the typical SportsAid triathlete covers in training alone (while they’re still at school).



COSTS

How much do you spend?

Average annual expenditure remains around the £6,000 mark, with the top three expenses being travel (47%), kit (14%) and accommodation (13%).



98%

say their costs are as high or higher this year than they were last year

Volleyball, goalball, five-a-side football and seven-a-side football are the least expensive sports to pursue while disability snowsport, tennis and equestrian are the most expensive.

£23,408

Average annual cost of competing in disability snowsport

IMPACT

What difference does SportsAid make?

The top five consequences of SportsAid's support are "relieving the financial pressure" (91%), "helping me to progress" (75%), "helping me to train more often" (61%), "helping me to compete more often" (59%) and "giving me more self-belief" (50%).

Relieves financial pressure 91%

Helped me progress 75%

Train more 61%

Compete more 59%

Self-belief 50%



BEYOND SPORT

Education

Education is more of a focal point for non-disabled athletes than disabled athletes (89% vs 52%). Similarly, disabled athletes are more likely to say they expect to work at the same time as pursuing their sport (37% vs 22%). This is partly driven by the difference between the average ages of the two groups but also by the additional financial pressures that disabled athletes may be experiencing, or may expect to experience, during their sports career.

Beyond sport, what's next?

Education



Work



0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

KEY



37%

of disabled athletes expect to work at the same time as pursuing their sport



BEYOND SPORTSAID

60%

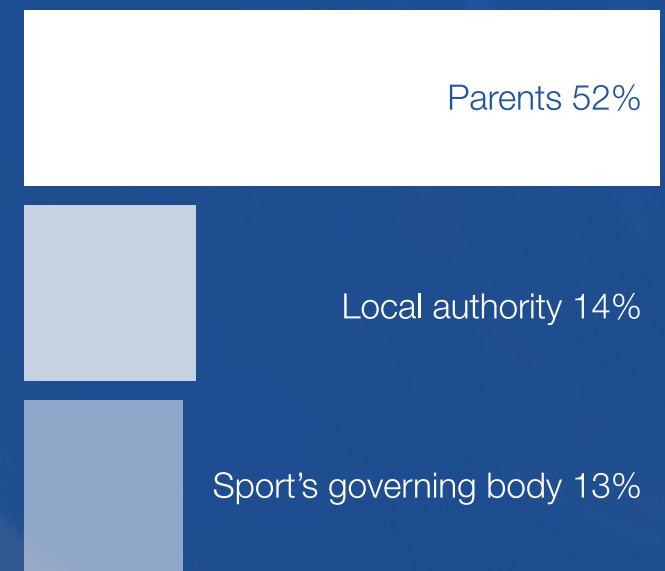
of the athletes receive no external financial support at all beyond SportsAid

Family

Parents are vital to most athletes' success and almost 90% of the athlete say their parents have a "good" or "very good" understanding of their sport.

Most athletes (60%) receive no other external financial support other than SportsAid. More than half (52%) cite their parents as a major source of income while 14% receive support from their local authority.

Where else does the money come from?



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