



The new London Museum is coming...



Batizado at London School of Capoeira Herança in Finsbury Park

Let's talk about Sport



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© Christian Kassiel

Grandmaster Shifu Shi Yanzi practicing QiGong at Shaolin Temple in Archway

The Museum of London is in an exciting development phase, creating a new London Museum due to open in 2026. To understand more about what Londoners want to see in the museum, this research was commissioned to ask Londoners specifically about sport.

Over **900 Londoners** completed a survey or took part in an interview to share their thoughts about sport in general, the relationship to sport and their lives, and how they felt sport should be included in the London Museum.

The findings demonstrate a focus on sport within the London Museum will be both popular and thought provoking. It will provide opportunities to reflect the diversity of London and Londoners through their association with sport, and a chance to share the importance of sport to individuals and communities alike.

Building an interactive museum experience, with off-site outreach, the London Museum should approach sport as a central pillar to the lives of Londoners, pulling out themes and stories which explain how sport has developed in the city, and the impact that has had on Londoners, their communities, and the world outside.

This report shows the findings of the research, and the recommendations for next steps can be found on page 10.

Over 900 Londoners completed a survey or took part in an interview



Londoners and sport

95% of the Londoners who responded said sport was important to them.

The responses show that Londoners engage in sport as **participants** (62%), as **supporters** (60%), as **volunteers** or **within the workforce** (25%), and to **support a family member** (31%).

Whether it be **increasing physical fitness** (74%), **benefitting mental health** (58%), **removing isolation** and / or **fostering friendships** (57%), sport is credited by Londoners as having a major positive effect on them and is a hugely viable theme to include in a publicly funded museum, like the new London Museum.

Most Londoners **participate in sport at home** (70%) with nearly 65% **participating locally** or within a community venue. The local and community focus and impact of sport shone out throughout the research.

There is also a vast diversity of sport played and watched in London. Respondents told us about all of these sports, with Football, Cricket, Hockey, Rugby Union, Tennis, Athletics, and Boxing mentioned the most times. **Almost 10% of respondents specifically referenced disability sport.**

95% of the Londoners who responded said sport was important to them.



David Weir 2010 Marathon

How Londoners want sport to be presented



62%
as participants



60%
as supporters



25%
as volunteers



31%
supporting family



Runners of Ealing Southall & Middlesex Athletics Club

© Abdirahman Hamud



The research showed that Londoners engage in many different sports. This table shows many of those mentioned by the people who completed the survey.

Londoners engage in a vast diversity of sport

Hockey	Dance	Swimming
Football	Snooker	Softball
Cricket	Boxing	Korfball
Bowling	Rubgy	Motorsport
Golf	Winter sports	Special Olympics
Tennis	Medieval sport	Streetgames
Skateboarding	Urban sports	Yoga
Judo	Mountain-Biking	Baseball
Canal sports	Kendo	Horse racing
Ballet	Paralympics	Fishing
Kabadi	Olympics	Park run
Athletics	Water Polo	Gymnastics
Cycling	Ice Hockey	Table tennis
Darts	Speedway	Disability sports



Footballers from Barakah LDN

© Sagal Abdullaahi



95% of Londoners think the London Museum should include sport!

And here's what they want to see and hear

"A history of sport in London told from the people of London's perspectives".

85% want to hear about major sporting events which have taken place in London and their impact on the people and city including the Olympics and Paralympics (82%), Wimbledon (10%), The 1966 World Cup (5%), and the London Marathon (15%). (although this slightly skewed because we specifically asked a question about the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games).

59% want to learn about the **history and development of Sport in London** and how it has impacted on the rest of the UK and internationally

50% want to hear about **local legends and local sport** – the people who've made a difference to sport as volunteers, spectators, athletes, or within the workforce

42% want to hear about **unheard stories** – stories so often ignored or hidden in museums with most people asking for stories about women, then black and Asian heritage, stories about disability, and stories relating to LGBT communities

22% want to hear about where **sport fits in a wider context** – for example its impact on "fashion", "women's rights" and "science and technology"

17% want to hear about the **diversity of sport** found in London, now and throughout history

16% said they want these stories to be those of **sporting achievement** – for example "record breakers", "sporting firsts", and "Olympic and Paralympic greats".

15% want to hear about the impact of sport on **mental and physical health and wellbeing**

12% want to hear about how sport has affected **spaces and places** – the building of stadia, changes to infrastructure, and impacts on the workforce

6% want to hear about **Fan Culture** – often identified in the research specifically relating to football

Case Study

Londoners want to hear untold stories in the London Museum. Eddie Joseph is one of the unsung heroes of London sport. A police constable at Waltham Forest by day, Joseph showed a commitment to Ice Hockey and changing lives throughout his life. Joseph's commitment and passion for Ice Hockey and the support and development of the young people of East London, led him to become the driving force behind the Lee Valley Lions. A player himself in the 80s and 90s, Joseph described himself as a stalwart of the game – not a star in any one position, but a grafter and worker, committed to the team, passionate about the game, and undoubtedly talented across the rink.



Eddie Joseph



How Londoners want sport to be presented in the London Museum

Sport is dynamic and Londoners want the history of sport in London to be told through stories about people and places. They want to experience it through interactives, objects, films, images, events, and activities which make those stories come to life!

36% of respondents said they want the **experience to be interactive**. This varied from “the use of AI” to trying out different sporting experience for example “starting blocks” or “replicating sporting events” to holograms sharing their stories.

24% of the respondents said they wanted to see **film, images and listen to audio** which shared major events in London’s sporting history, and let them hear from the people who were involved.

17% of respondents specified they wanted to see **objects** - for example the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Cauldron and torch, the 1966 World Cup – but they focused on asking for stories rather than specific objects

6% of the respondents said they’d like the experience to **include statues and/or models**, for example “a walk-through of the Olympic stadium”

Londoners want the **history of sport** in London to be told through stories about people and places



© Julio Etchart

Latin Americans watching a football match played between Latin American teams on Clapham Common

How Londoners want sport to be presented



36%
as interactive



24%
as film, images
and audio



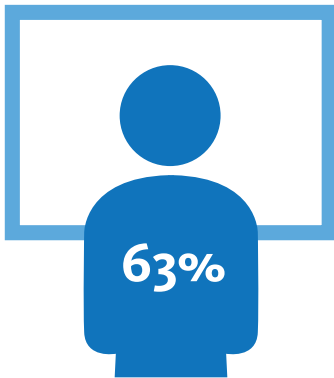
17%
as objects



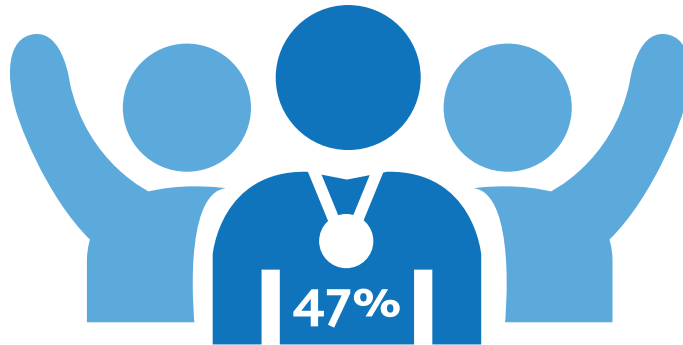
6%
as statues
and models



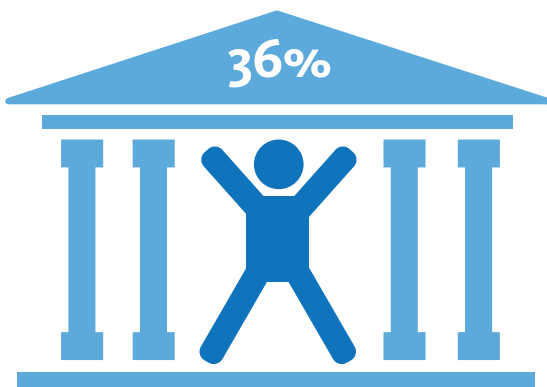
How Londoners want to experience sport in the London Museum



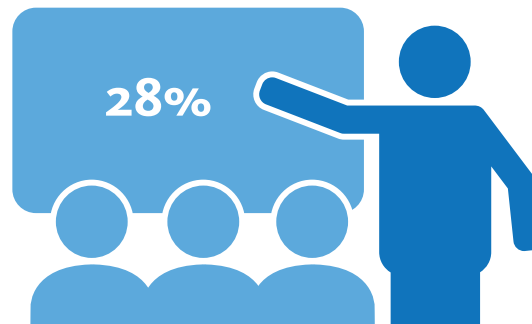
want to visit an **exhibition**



want to take part in through **public activities** like watching sport on big screens, meeting sporting heroes, and informal workshops



would like to take part in **sporting activities** on site



would like to take part in **formal workshops** on site



would like to experience the history of sport in London through **digital kiosks**

As well as within the London Museum, **Londoners want to experience the museum's collections remotely:** through **online exhibitions** (47%), **podcasts** (33%), **webinars** (17%) engagement, and in their **local communities** at a local museum (48%), at a **local sports venue** (35%) or within another **local community venue** (31%).



What Londoners think about The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the London Museum

Londoners were asked specifically about how they wanted to see the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games reflected in the London Museum.

82% of Londoners think the Games should be included.

Of those:

64% said they want to learn about the people involved - athletes, volunteers, and spectators

16% wanted to learn about the impact of the Games on Stratford

Nearly **10%** stated they want the 2012 Games to be discussed in context with the 1908 and 1948 Olympic Games, and the development of the Paralympics

7% stated they want to hear about the legacy of the Games.

15% stated they'd like to see films, images, and photographs of the event (for example highlights of the Games, the venues, the ceremonies, music and atmosphere), **9%** stated they'd like to see objects and memorabilia included within an exhibition, and **6%** would like to see the Games depicted through a show.

It's clear that this major sporting event had a huge impact on Londoners and its inclusion in the London Museum will be a popular addition.

It's clear that this major sporting event had a **huge impact** on Londoners

Case Study

Objects will form a central part of the London Museum and Londoners were keen to say how important the 2012 Cauldron is to them.

A crucial element of each Olympic and Paralympic Games is the lighting of the Cauldron to signal the start of the Games. Each host Olympic and Paralympic venue creates a Cauldron to shine over the Games for the duration of the event. For the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the cauldron was designed by Thomas Heatherwick. The official London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games petal is on loan from the British Olympic Association to the Museum of London.

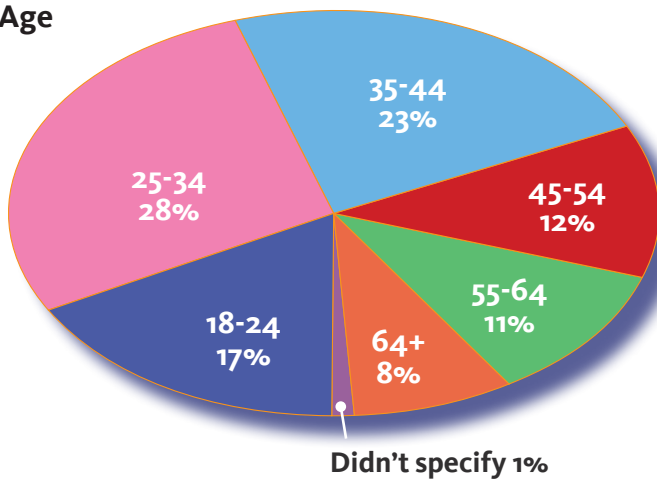




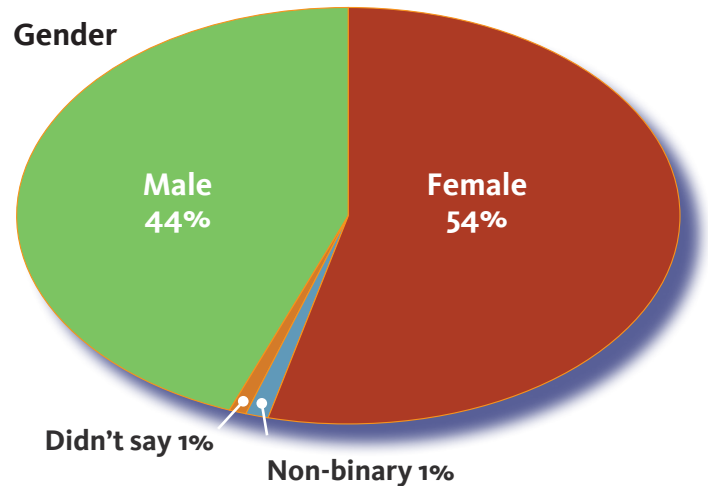
The demographics of the Londoners who took part in the research

The survey sample was closely matched to the population of London as a whole. Where there were differences, the answers were weighted so that they mirror the true population split.

Age



Gender



Ethnicity

Asian/British Asian (Includes any Asian background, for example, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Indian, Pakistani) **19%**

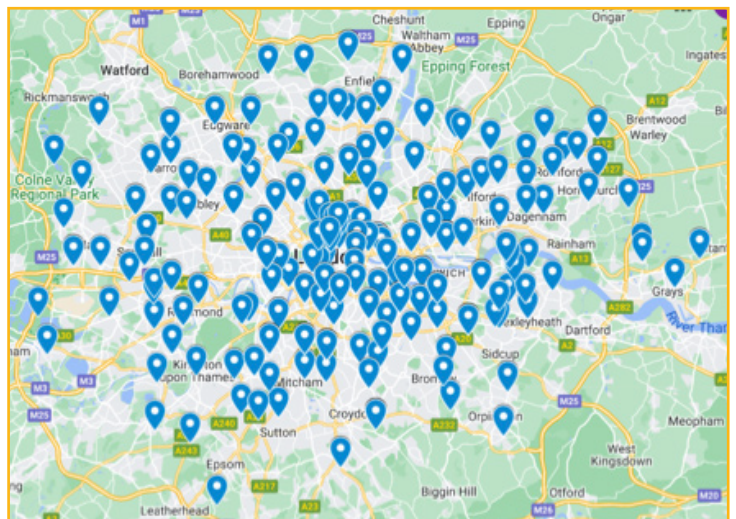
Black, African, Black British or Caribbean (Includes any Black background) **11%**

Mixed or multiple ethnic groups (Includes any Mixed background) **9%**

White (Includes any White background) **61%**

Disability/Neurodivergent: 14%

Geographical reach



London demographics

Roughly **46%** of the population of London comes from a non-white background

The gender balance of London is estimated to be **49%** male and **51%** female

22% of the population are estimated to be disabled and / or neurodivergent



The research has highlighted a range of activities for the London Museum to consider as they develop their plans. They include:

- 1. Conduct more research on the number and types of sport engaged with across London.** Ensure that this includes street games, sports which were previously popular in London but which have since fallen out of fashion, and sports which have been brought to London via immigration.
- 2. Create and develop partnerships with local sports clubs, sporting individuals and under-represented community groups.** This will be vital in ensuring relevant collections and stories can be told, with a local emphasis in the museums permanent and temporary exhibitions and services and co-curation viable.
- 3. Conduct further research on major sporting events** which have taken place in London and their relationship to Londoners.
- 4. Conduct research on the different sports born in London,** their influence in London and on Londoners, and their influence outside of the city.
- 5. Explore opportunities to tell the story of sport through wider society and opportunities** to remove barriers for non-sport's enthusiasts.
- 6. Conduct research into the different opportunities to provide hands on sporting experiences** within the museum – how do other sporting museums do this, how do they put these experiences into context of the sporting story?
- 7. Develop partnerships with mental health professionals** to explore opportunities for social prescribing, reminiscence provision, and wider mental health support using the sporting collections.
- 8. Explore opportunities to underpin the galleries with educational outputs and opportunities** to link directly to not only the National Curriculum, but the U3A, undergraduate provision, send provision, teacher training, and home education.
- 9. Develop a digital engagement strategy** to support the sporting development and delivery of the new museum in the short, medium and long term.
- 10. Develop a menu of public engagement activities** linked to the sporting exhibitions and test out public interest.

What next...

The London Museum is due to open in 2026.

Until then, the museum team will building on this research, working hard on developing their ideas, and working closely with Londoners to create an incredible museum experience!



The London Museum by day