



Sport England Strategy 2008-2011

Executive Summary

The Olympics provide a focal point for developing a world-leading community sport system

1. With the Olympics and Paralympics due to come to London and the UK a little over four years from now, it is an appropriate time to take a clear look at the sport development system and its fitness for purpose. Therefore in December 2007 the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport asked Sport England to review its strategy for community sport in England.
2. During the first half of 2008 Sport England ran two rounds of consultation with over a 100 stakeholders from across the sport sector and also benefited from the support and guidance of a Ministerially-appointed External Challenge Group. Using the insight gained there, Sport England has developed a new strategy for community sport in England, for the period 2008-11. An unprecedented level of consensus means that Sport England will focus on the creation of a world leading community sports system which will ensure that:
 - a substantial – and growing – number of people from across the community play sport;
 - talented people from all backgrounds are identified early, nurtured and have the opportunity to progress to the elite level; and
 - everyone who plays sport has a quality experience and is able to fulfil their potential.
3. The new strategy aims to address the fundamental challenges facing sport, and particularly community sport, in England. As such it features a significant shift in focus and direction.

Sport for sport's sake

4. Government, Sport England, National Governing Bodies and the other elements of the sporting landscape should focus around a shared goal – maximising English sporting success in all its forms. This is not an elitist agenda – rather that achieving the goals requires expanding the talent pool and improving the quality of what we do at every level. We are looking for a new partnership between Government, its agencies and the NGBs empowering those with the passion and expertise to do even more. Sport England will also continue to work alongside local authorities, who drive local provision and are a key partner in delivering a world-leading community sport infrastructure. Overall, the aim is to create a vibrant sporting culture in England.
5. In the future Sport England's role will be to focus exclusively on sport. Sport can and does play a major role in achieving wider social and economic benefits - notably on the health front. However, the driving force behind the strategy and investment is to address the needs of sport participants across the country. This provides a clear distinction with the physical activity agenda being driven by a number of departments, including the Department of Health and Department of Transport.

A seamless pathway from school to community to elite

6. The new strategy brings an unprecedented clarity to the roles of the three key bodies within the sports landscape. The Youth Sport Trust has clear responsibility for school sport. Sport England focus on ensuring quality opportunities exist beyond the school gates and enabling children and young people to migrate seamlessly from the school environment to community sport. Sport England's work with the Youth Sport Trust on the Five Hour Offer, its focus on reducing drop-off in participation at the age of 16 and its ambitions to develop a modern sports club network in partnership with National Governing Bodies, will be key components of this transition. A test of these changes will be increasing participation in NGB-accredited clubs to a third of all 5-16 year-olds by 2010.
7. At the elite end of the spectrum responsibility sits with UK Sport. Sport England's role will be to ensure that talent systems – which individual NGBs are responsible for developing – are linked with elite programmes. By working with NGBs to increase the quality, diversity and size of the talent pool feeding into the elite system, Sport England will play a critical role in ensuring that sporting success can be sustained.
8. For an individual this means that their high-quality school experience will be replicated in the community environment and they will have the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

National Governing Bodies will be at the heart of delivery and funded via a simple single-pot

9. The new strategy reflects a shift in emphasis and role for National Governing Bodies. The recognised experts in their sport, NGBs will be 'commissioned' by Sport England to deliver against the key outcomes highlighted above. The NGBs will have greater autonomy over the investment of public funds within their sport – along with greater responsibility for the delivery of the outcomes.
10. During the second half of 2008 NGBs will be developing their Whole-Sport Plans to illustrate how they propose to deliver against these outcomes. These plans will be assessed and reviewed by Sport England, with NGBs then being given a single four-year grant to deliver. The single pot will replace the range of funding streams currently operating and reduce bureaucracy.
11. Using UK Sport's Mission 2012 as a benchmark, monitoring will focus on performance against the outcomes rather than micro-management of output measures. NGBs themselves will also be expected to deliver and operate at high standards of internal organisation and democracy, ensuring that the voices of all levels and participant groups are heard. It is important that NGBs reach and serve all sectors of society.

More frontline coaching – deployed expertly

12. Coaches and coaching play a critical role in the achievement of all three public outcomes – developing talent, improving satisfaction and encouraging participation. Sport England will work with sports coach UK to focus investment on frontline coaching through Governing Bodies. The NGB Whole-Sport Plans will identify the systemic resources that they require to support the employment of these coaches. Sport England will also work with the Youth Sport Trust and NGBs to develop a Coaching for Young People strand, increasing the availability of high quality coaching to young people in key sports at an early age to deliver the Five Hour Sport Offer.

The particularly English passion for volunteering will be maximised

13. Volunteering is a particular strength of community sport within England. Some 1.9m people volunteer in sport for at least an hour each week – equivalent to a full-time workforce of over 80,000 employees. Sport England will maximise this natural resource through working with National Governing Bodies to attract and retain more volunteers, reduce the burdens faced by volunteers and ensure professional support enhances voluntary systems. Sport England will also work with the broader voluntary sector and partners such as Volunteering England to ensure that best practice is being appropriately deployed within the sport sector.
14. In addition there will be specific initiatives such as Recruit To Coach where Sport England will increase the voluntary coaching workforce by 4,000 people and work with the Youth Sport Trust to increase this by a further 4,000.

A modern network of sports clubs will be the centrepiece of people's sporting experience

15. The sports club is core to people's experience of sport – coaching, facilities and competition all centre around the club structure. Over 10m adults in England play sport in a club environment.
16. Sports clubs mean different things to different people and Sport England will work with National Governing Bodies to ensure that an accessible, modern, sports club structure is developed within each sport. This will drive up participation, improve satisfaction and retention and allow those with talent to fully develop. Underpinning this will be Sport England activity with partners such as the Football Foundation to develop multi-sport clubs that will provide a diverse range of opportunities to fit with modern lifestyles and needs.

Creating opportunity for all

17. There is a need for new thinking in this area. All young people in particular should get a range of opportunities.
18. For NGBs, developing the girls' and women's game, disability sport, and reaching out to diverse communities, is not an optional extra but a vital part of what they will be required to do. If any sport does not wish to accept this challenge, funding will be switched to those that do.

A simplified way of working that will reduce bureaucracy and release more funding into frontline delivery

19. Sport England itself will act as a national, strategic level commissioner upholding the public interest by ensuring that partners deliver. It will also add value to the sport sector through the development of centres of excellence and provision of regional and local knowledge and connectivity to delivery partners.
20. Significant measures such as the creation of a single pot, driving delivery via National Governing Bodies and bringing focus to regional and local activity, will yield significant efficiency gains – both within Sport England and from the perspective of delivery partners.

A clear set of measurable achievements to pursue and deliver

21. Sport England is committed to delivering:
 - 1m people doing more sport by 2012-13.
 - A reduction in post-16 drop-off in at least five sports by 25% by 2012-13.
 - A quantifiable increase in satisfaction (actual measure to be determined¹⁰).
 - Improved talent development systems in at least 25 sports.
 - A major contribution to the delivery of the Five Hour Sport Offer.
22. This strategy is not about imposition – rather it is about the empowerment of experts and enthusiasts in building partnerships fit for this new era.

¹⁰ The existing satisfaction baseline from Active People provides information about the provision of sport in an area. A new baseline will be developed in the first half of 2008-09 which will ascertain participants' satisfaction with the quality of their experience.