

29 March 2007

Marie Williams  
Capacitybuilders  
77 Paradise Circus  
Birmingham  
B1 2DT

Dear Ms Williams,

Please find enclosed Sport England's response to the Capacitybuilder's consultation 'Destination 2014: Investing in change'.

Sport England's primary role is to sustain and increase participation in community sport, therefore we have tailored our response to highlight our experience in the delivery of sporting activities by the Third Sector that is of the greatest relevance to your consultation. This response also represents views from Sport England regions. We have structured our response to address:

- Sporting infrastructure
- Equalities & Community Cohesion
- Unmet infrastructure challenges

Sport England in its Framework for Sport has identified as a priority the need to build the capacity of sports volunteers and voluntary community organisations in order to provide high quality and sustainable opportunities to help increase levels of participation in sport. This can only be achieved by working in partnership at a local, sub regional, regional and national level and includes the need to not only build but embed, invest in and value the relationship between the sport voluntary community sector and the generic Third Sector.

Sport England is working with partners from the public, private and Third Sectors to develop the Delivery System for Sport across England. The Delivery System is sports' delivery chain connecting participants and local deliverers to policy makers in a simple and co-ordinated way. This is the mechanism through which increased and sustainable opportunities to get more people actively involved in sport are delivered. Third Sector infrastructure organisations are considered key within sport's system and to help build the link between the generic voluntary sector and voluntary sports organisations, Sport England has invested in a number of interventions including an investment for a national 'sport post' has been made in both Volunteering England and NAVCA. A copy of the Delivery System Policy has been enclosed for your information. Developing a collaborative approach between sport and Capacitybuilders to embed sport within



the Third Sector, would enable Delivery System Partners to contribute to the objectives outlined within Destination 2014.

The contribution the sport Third Sector can make to social and economic regeneration needs to be recognised in the period your vision covers. Sports volunteers equate to a full time army of more than 80,000 people. If 1.9m people volunteer for an average of 1.5 hours each per week, this is equivalent to some 81,430 full time employees.<sup>1</sup> If this is based on a minimum wage for workers aged 22 or over (£5.35 p.h) this is equivalent to £793m of output per annum in the sports arena alone. Volunteering is likely to be increased and sustained through the activities of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and other major sporting events. With adequate resources, the Delivery System for Sport could further 'grow' the potential of volunteering and mentoring in sport and achieve many socio-economic benefits for local communities at the same time. This structured approach is an example of best practice that we believe other areas of the Third Sector could benefit from.

The annex response provides further detail to demonstrate sport's contribution to the Third Sector and where partnerships could be maximised with increased capacity built into the sector in order to deliver the objectives outlined in your consultation paper that match with those of Sport England.

Should you require any further information or clarification about either the Delivery System for Sport or the Active People Survey, please do not hesitate to contact my colleague, Rachel Graham, Policy Manager, on 0207 273 1665 or e-mail [rachel.graham@sportengland.org](mailto:rachel.graham@sportengland.org)

Yours sincerely,

**Stephen Baddeley**  
Interim Chief Executive

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<sup>1</sup> Based on a median of 6 hours per 28 day period and 35 hours per week.



## **Sport England's response to Capacitybuilder's consultation on Destination 2014: Investing in change.**

Sport is delivered by a number of organisations and agencies from the public, private and Third Sector. There are approximately 106,400 affiliated sports clubs and organisations whose existence is sustained by volunteers. Many of these clubs will be responding to the local needs of the community by providing opportunities to participate in sport. Governing Bodies of Sport are also a form of voluntary community association with their reliance on volunteers at a national, regional and local level. Given the importance of sport in this regard we believe that sport does not yet receive sufficient recognition for its valuable contribution as a sector within the Third Sector. We believe that recognition of its role may also provide opportunities for developing the infrastructure support for volunteering in this sector and by so doing encourage more people to undertake sport and physical activity. As a key contributor, a reference to developing working with sport should be made within the document.

Sport England is working with partners from the public, private and Third Sectors to develop the Delivery System for Sport across England. The Delivery System is sports' delivery chain connecting participants and local deliverers to policy makers in a simple and co-ordinated way. This is the mechanism through which increased and sustainable opportunities to get more people actively involved in sport are delivered. It is in place to ensure that national sporting priorities and outcomes are delivered successfully on the ground, by providing individuals and communities with access to good quality sporting opportunities that meet their needs. The System provides clarity on roles and responsibilities for key partners in and beyond sport and encourages collaborations across sectors to deliver shared outcomes and priorities. The key elements of the Delivery System at the local level are the County Sports Partnerships (CSPs) and the Community Sports Networks (CSNs).

### **Sporting infrastructure**

To increase participation in sport, it is important that the delivery chain is customer and citizen focussed so that individual issues can be addressed at a local level. Sport England recently published the findings of the largest local survey ever undertaken across England to investigate and map levels of sport and active recreation.

Sport England's Active People Survey involved a total of 363,724 adults living in England. The survey is unique in providing reliable statistics on participation in sport and active recreation for all 354 Local Authorities in England (a minimum of 1,000 interviews were completed in every Local Authority in England).

The Active People Survey gathered data on the type, duration and intensity of people's participation in different types of sport and active recreation, as well as information about volunteering, club membership (member of a club where they play sport), and receiving tuition

from an instructor or coach, participation in competitive sport and satisfaction with local sports provision. For example the survey found that:

- 21% of the adult population aged 16 and over (8.5 million people) take part regularly in sport and active recreation.<sup>1</sup>
- 25% of the adult population (10.2 million) are members of a club where they take part in sport.
- 18% of adults (7.3 million) have received tuition from an instructor or coach over the last 12 months
- 1 in 20 people in England volunteer in sport for at least 1 hour per week
- There is considerable variation across ethnic groups with only 3.6% and 2.9% of the black and Asian population respectively volunteering at least one hour a week. 4.8% of the white population volunteer at least one hour a week.
- 6.7% of 16 – 24 year olds are volunteering as opposed to 5.5% of 45 – 54 year olds.

The Active People Survey not only highlighted the challenges for participation and volunteering in sport but also regional disparities that cannot be addressed by a one-size-fits-all approach by those organisations who not only provide the opportunities for grassroots participation and their funding but also infrastructure support.

For example; the national figure for volunteering is 4.7% of the population, but there are some large regional disparities that highlight the necessity of a tailored approach;

- In the North East, for instance, 4.2% of the adult population (88,425 people) contribute at least one hour a week volunteering to sport - volunteering levels ranged from 7.3% in Durham to 2.5% in Gateshead.
- Whereas in the South West: 5.2% of the adult population (215,079 people) contribute at least one hour a week volunteering to sport - volunteering levels ranged from 7.6% in West Somerset and West Devon to 3.6% in Bristol, Gloucester and Plymouth.

Active People data enables an evidence-based approach to be taken towards participation and sport funding, allowing for focussed effort on those areas of the country where volunteering and participation is particularly low, as well as offering opportunities to find out why other areas have high levels of each. This data enables Sport England and its partners to investigate further what works on the ground by identifying best practice and promoting it widely across the sector.

Further analysis of this information could start to identify why these differences exist and what the potential barriers are, not only for individuals and cohorts of participants but also for service providers from the public, private and Third Sectors. Sport England would like to see infrastructure development recognise these spatial challenges. Through the evidence based approach provided by the Active People Survey and our Delivery System we are assisting local

authorities who share demographic similarities but where sporting activity varies to share best practice. This is an approach we believe others could learn from when looking at infrastructure provision across the country.

Sport England would value the opportunity to use this information in conjunction with Capacitybuilders and Change Up consortia to identify where best to provide joint support to each other.

### **Equalities & Community Cohesion**

Sport England's strategy, The Framework for Sport in England<sup>2</sup>, identified the need to improve and widen access to sport opportunities for key priority groups: individuals living in deprived communities, women and girls, people with disabilities and black and minority ethnic communities. It is key to the Delivery System to engage with these priority communities to increase participation in sport but also to encourage working and volunteering within sports clubs and related activities, in some instances to act as role models. Encouraging participation from these groups requires time, focus, resources and a basic infrastructure to support this type of programmes.

Sporting activities and events contribute to the development of stronger social networks and more cohesive communities. They provide opportunities for social engagement, often with alternative peer groups, which can create awareness of difference and break down barriers for individuals and communities. This can be achieved through active participation in sport but also as a volunteer or supporter. The contribution of sport was highlighted by the Home Office's government strategy in 2005 to increase race equality and community cohesion.

To be able to increase participation in sport and active recreation and therefore for communities to reap the wider social benefits of this participation, it is vital that the Delivery System for Sport understands and actively consults with individuals and VCOs in the local community with regards to how each community would like to participate in Sport. The Delivery System, in particular the Community Sports Networks (CSNs), working at the local level, are starting to identify priorities to increase participation and widen access in sport and active recreation. This includes local consultation with diverse communities to ensure that the CSN delivery plans reflect local needs. We believe this requires tailored targets and approaches.

Building capacity is required locally to engage effectively in this process, to avoid duplication and over consultation with the same communities and individuals. Different and innovative ways to consult should be considered, to make it less formal and more comfortable to participate in the process. For example; using an existing group meeting, open invitation events to show plans for redevelopment or engaging children and young people to draw / design what activities and facilities they would like to see. To maintain confidence in the process, learning and actions need

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<sup>2</sup> To read the Framework for Sport document click here - [www.sportengland.org/national-framework-for-sport.pdf](http://www.sportengland.org/national-framework-for-sport.pdf)

to be reported back. This is not happening on a regular basis and therefore trust is lost between communities, volunteers and paid staff, acting on behalf of statutory and non-statutory agencies.

As much of sport is delivered through voluntary community organisations, it is important that they are enabled to participate in consultation to understand what local communities require from them. We need to support voluntary sports clubs to develop the capacity to reflect better community needs and connect more effectively with other VCOs in their area. It is of paramount importance that community groups represent the local communities that they serve. Through partnership working, shared outcomes and common themes can be identified to ensure there is a diverse representation of the local community in these groups.

Planning to respond to the needs of communities may identify shortages in appropriate training, workforce and sports activities. The recognition of the role of sport at a local level and improving the relationship with the voluntary sector infrastructure at a local and sub-regional level should provide greater opportunity to find additional volunteers, manage volunteers, provide appropriate training and support local sports clubs and organisations to develop their current activities and staff. It is also recognised that sport does not have to be delivered in a 'traditional sports club' setting. The Delivery System can, in return, offer support to other voluntary community organisations to provide sport (and other) activities.

Sports Clubs can add to cohesive communities by providing both long and short term opportunities for citizenship and involvement in community life. Building capacity at a local level to maintain these relationships is key to enabling positive and proactive responses to the sporting and active recreational needs of the local communities. Encouraging creative partnerships to flourish will require support and resource at a local level, alongside strategic regional or national direction. Providing this support for local community sports organisations can encourage new ways of involvement; for example offering short term volunteering opportunities where previously only long term roles existed. This will lead to more sustainable community groups, bringing lively fresh involvement from a wider range of the community.

## **Unmet infrastructure challenges**

### **1. Skills**

In order to deliver increased participation in sport it is important that the workforce is adequately trained and of sufficient size to meet the needs of communities. SkillsActive, (the Sector Skills Council for Active Leisure and Learning) is currently working with the public, private and Third Sectors to identify the current and forecast future skills gaps and shortages within sport. This will capture information at a national, regional, and sub regional level. As much of the Sport and Recreation workforce is voluntary, it is vital to understand the gaps and shortages in training and how training may be offered. The

Delivery System is in the process of using this information to provide a more local forecast of what workforce skills and gaps there are now and in the future. Based on this evidence, Delivery System partners will need resource to implement interventions to improve skills gaps and shortages, not all of which can be met through existing resources or potential lottery investment.

Key factors would be the ability to resource the training at a local level, but also how sport training requirements could use other Third Sector training and tailor as necessary. There is a lot of training required in sport that is not recognised on the qualifications framework and therefore does not attract funding. This is not unique to sport and we understand other Third Sector areas also suffer from this form of grant selection. Training and qualifications are essential to most sports volunteering roles, but the fact that many volunteers already possess a level 2 qualification mean that they fall outside the funding priorities of the Learning and Skills Council. Changes in these priorities to include volunteers would have a positive impact on the development of the sport workforce in the Third Sector.

Better engagement between sport, Capacitybuilders, Change Up hubs and consortia, would provide opportunities to improve the quality of sports volunteers and VCOs whilst achieving a better quality of infrastructure within the Third Sector. The hubs may wish to engage with to determine how the Change Up hubs may be able to improve the skills within the sport VCS.

## **2. Improved capacity and partnerships to bring sport within the Third Sector**

Delivery System partners are keen to work to improve the infrastructure at a community level to ensure that the VCS landscape is clearly signposted to encourage sport to work with a generic VCS infrastructure and understand the benefit of doing so. It is also important that the VCS infrastructure also understands sport. To this end investment has been made nationally in NAVCA and Volunteering England to broker better partnerships, but improved capacity to allow this to be delivered within the community is needed.

Sport England has initiated the Sport Strategic Partnership for volunteering. This partnership brings together key sport and Third Sector infrastructure agencies together to improve the partnership working and raise the profile of sport at a national level. We would welcome the involvement of Capacitybuilders within this partnership. Sport England in conjunction with the partnership have produced a document – ‘sportsnav’ to try and demystify sport for the Third Sector infrastructure.

The skills gaps and shortages for the Delivery System VCOs could be filled through access to training and skills courses via hub and consortia work. Sport representation at

Changeup consortia would be helpful to highlight effective ways of building quality support to sport VCOs and its volunteers. For example; Sport England already advocates the use of ClubMark to its Governing Bodies of sport and their respective member clubs as a sport specific quality mark. Building effective relationships at a local level to support clubs to achieve this status would be most welcome. In this way, priorities of consortia would represent the support required by Sport VCOs to deliver community services. Sport England regional offices would be suitably placed to advise on the best way to achieve this.

### 3. 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games presents a great opportunity to the VCS to energise all its members. It can act as a catalyst to deliver a sustainable legacy for volunteering and the VCS throughout the country. Whilst sport hopes to benefit from this opportunity to leave a legacy for itself, the benefits could be much further reaching to build sustainable capacity within the Third Sector to the benefit of local communities.

## Summary

Sport England has limited engagement with Capacitybuilders and the ChangeUp agenda, and the level of engagement has varied across the country too.

Funding has been awarded to the Volunteering Hub to deliver a sport volunteering impact assessment project in 2007 – 2008. The draft aim of the project is to enhance the evidence base on the impact of volunteering in sport on different stakeholder groups and the importance of effective volunteer management in achieving this. This project will work closely with Sport England and the Delivery System for Sport, to provide a pilot example of how local volunteering impact can be measured.

Sport England is prioritising sports need to engage with the Change up / Capacitybuilders to assist with achieving the vision and objectives set out within 'Destination 2014'. To enable the delivery of increased participation in sport it is vital that sport can achieve its full potential in:

Service Delivery – through sports organisations involvement in Local Area Agreements and meeting the needs of communities through the delivery of public services,

Social innovation – through involving more people in sport either as a participant or volunteer,

Policy Analysis – supporting the Delivery System to implement national policy through sport at a local county and regional level and,

Campaigning – enabling sports organisations to demonstrate their value to achieving local strategic priorities as well as being advocates of increasing participation in sport.

