

## **A report on the regional launch on 13 October**

Olympic and Paralympic medallists Kelly Sotherton, Marlon Devonish, Leslie Law and Sinclair Thomas helped to launch Sign up for Sport – the Regional Plan for Sport in the West Midlands, on 13 October.

Guests were treated to a half hour question and answer session with the athletes, including a step-by-step account from Marlon Devonish on the 4 x 100m gold medal-winning race.

The athletes joined more than 100 representatives from sport, health, education, local authorities, police and media from throughout the region for the colourful, informative, inspiring and fast-moving three-hour event at the International Convention Centre in Birmingham. Sport England's Champion Family, the Robinson family, who are from the West Midlands region, also played their part - telling guests about the importance of sport and physical activity to their family life.

Key media from across the region covered the event, including BBC Midlands Today TV who took a live link to their lunchtime news show.

### **Opening the event**

Derrick Anderson CBE, chair of the Regional Sports Board, Trudi Elliott, chief executive of the Regional Assembly and Dr Rashmi Shukla, regional director of public health were the keynote speakers.

Derrick Anderson said how delighted he was that for the first time a plan for sport in the West Midlands had received endorsement from the Government Office for the West Midlands, the Regional Assembly, the Regional Public Health Group, Advantage West Midlands, West Midlands Life and Sport England.

Trudi Elliott explained how the outcomes and targets within the Regional Plan for Sport are entirely consistent with Game Plan, the Government's strategy for sport and physical activity. She said that the Regional Sports Board hopes that these will be reflected in local strategies and plans and that everyone involved can work together even more productively, to improve lives and strengthen communities in the West Midlands through sport.

The plan aims to encourage 50,000 people each year to become more physically active or involved in sport. Dr Rashmi Shukla, the Regional Director of Public Health, presented some startling facts and figures:

- The population in the West Midlands is the most inactive in England
- 1 in 4 women and 1 in 5 men in the West Midlands are obese
- On present trends, obesity will soon pass smoking as the greatest cause of premature loss of life

In closing the conference, Derrick emphasised that the time for talking has now finished. He invited all organisations to sign up for sport and to work together to meet these targets.

### **You can download a copy of the plan here:**

[Sign up for Sport: A regional plan for sport in the West Midlands](#) (PDF) 2.9Mb

### **You can see pictures from the day here:**

[13 October photograph album](#) (PDF) 135KB

### **You can download a copy of the presentations here:**

[Presentations from the 13 October](#) (PDF) 120Kb