

Dame Meg Hillier MP
Chair of Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons
Westminster
London
SW1A 0AA

14 November 2022

Dear Ms. Hillier,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the Public Accounts Committee on 31 October and discuss the National Audit Office's recent value-for-money study into grassroots sport participation. We were sorry you were not able to attend but grateful to Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown for deputising as Chair of the session.

We offered to write to the Committee to share specific examples of successful co-located services, and the guidance we have provided to employers to help encourage people to take part in different forms of sport and physical activity. I am pleased now to be able to share details below.

For context, Sport England started investing in co-located services in 2013, primarily through our £40 million Strategic Facilities Fund. We were clear that the co-location of sport and physical activity facilities alongside health, community and wider leisure services would add significant value for local communities.

Our Active Design guidance – first published in 2015 – set out the co-location of community facilities as one of the ten principles we encouraged planners to implement to support more active and healthier communities. The current version of the guidance is available online via <https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/active-design>, but we are currently working with the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities and Active Travel England to develop a third iteration. We expect this to be published in Spring of 2023.

One great example of co-located services is the Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub in Warrington. In July 2018, Sport England awarded £1.5 million of National Lottery funding to support the development of an integrated facility with co-located services that include GP healthcare and other primary care with a wide range of sport and leisure provision.

The Great Sankey site was one of three investments we made into co-located services in the Warrington area. The other two – both also fantastic examples here – were the Orford Jubilee Park and the Bewsey and Dallam Community Hub.

Sport England invested £3 million into the development of the Orford site – one of the first examples of its kind, opening in 2012 in the weeks leading up to the London Olympic and Paralympic Games. Alongside the sport and leisure facilities, the site comprises of a library, GP surgeries and Primary Care Trust services.

Bewsey and Dallam is a newer site – only being completed in summer 2021. The hub co-locates sport and leisure facilities with library provision, and community spaces used to support integrated health and wellbeing services. Sport England invested £500,000 into the facility, and again the development of the site has been led by Warrington Borough Council, LiveWire CIC and local resident champions.

Should the Committee be interested in further information on any of these sites, we would be happy to share more details.

The Active Employee Toolkit we referred to during the session can also be found online via: <https://www.sportengland.org/funds-and-campaigns/active-employee-toolkit>.

Originally launched during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Toolkit was designed to help employers to support their employees to get and stay active amidst the coronavirus restrictions. It provides a range of advice and guidance to help encourage people to build more movement and physical activity into their working day.

I hope the above information is helpful at this stage, but if you or the Committee would like to discuss this any further with Sport England, please do contact my colleague Ben Jessup in our External Affairs team on ben.jessup@sportengland.org.

Yours sincerely,



Tim Hollingsworth OBE

Chief Executive