



Department for Culture, Media & Sport

Stephanie Peacock MP
Minister for Sport, Media, Civil Society and Youth
Department for Culture, Media and Sport
1st Floor
100 Parliament Street
London SW1A 2BQ

E: enquiries@dcms.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/dcms

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Lord Gardiner of Kimble
Senior Deputy Speaker
Chair of the Liaison Committee
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

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Dear Lord Gardiner of Kimble,

Thank you for writing on behalf of the former Select Committee on a National Plan for Sport and Recreation. I am pleased to be able to update on the matters raised in the last Parliament by the Committee, and to set out the progress we have made on the strategic approach to sport. As a Government we are committed to the importance of sport and physical activity in delivering our bold ambition as set out through the Plan for Change. Following on from the Spending Review we are committed to setting out a bold and ambitious plan for sport and supporting the nation to be more physically active.

Sport Strategy

The 2023 'Get Active' Strategy was published by the previous Government. This Government is clear that sport has a fundamental role to play in delivering its Plan for Change whether that is through getting the nation more active, driving growth through our world leading sport sector or tackling issues, such as youth violence by offering positive routes of engagement. We are committed to working in partnership with the sport sector to maximise the role it has to play across our society.

Increasing participation

Getting more people physically active is central to our ambition to tackling the challenges facing the nation specifically through focusing on preventative health as part of our ambition to build an NHS Fit for the Future. Sport England's Active Lives data measures sport and physical activity across England, and reports on inactivity inequalities each year. The latest data shows that although participation has increased overall since the start of the survey, this is by no means true for everyone, and the gap in activity between the most and least deprived areas of the country continues to widen.



As the Committee rightly noted, active travel has a key role to play in getting people active. The Department for Transport has provided funding of £300 million for active travel in 2024/5 and 2025/6 for local authorities to provide high-quality and easily accessible active travel schemes across England. Investment in active travel supports the Government's economic growth, health and net zero missions by helping to revitalise high streets, improving air quality and supporting people to live longer, healthier lives. In addition, Active Travel England (ATE) was established in 2022 to work with local authorities to help them make walking, wheeling and cycling a safe and attractive choice for everyday trips. This includes designing activity into new neighbourhoods; as a statutory consultee on all new large developments ATE has reviewed more than 1,500 planning consultations, covering 200,000 homes and giving 500,000 people more healthy, affordable transport choices from their front doors.

Facilities & grassroots sport

I am delighted to have recently announced £100 million more in funding through the Multi-Sport Grassroots Facilities Programme, providing transformational funding for grassroots sport clubs across the UK to build new and upgrade existing pitches, changing rooms and clubhouses. We're continuing to evaluate the impact of grassroots facilities investment by collecting data on outcomes such as participation at both funded and unfunded facilities. We are also working with Multi-Sport Grassroots Facilities programme delivery partners to improve the availability of administrative data, such as by encouraging the implementation of digital booking systems

This Government is committed to place based working and ensuring communities are at the heart of decision making. We continue to work with Sport England to implement their Place Partnership programme following their announcement in February 2025. Sport England's Place Partnership programme focuses resources and efforts on communities that need the greatest levels of support and experience the greatest levels of inequality. Place-based working takes a ground-up approach, putting communities at the heart of everything. Sport England brings together local leaders, policy and decision-makers and organisations to understand the barriers and issues people face to getting active, therefore co-creating local solutions. Sport England invests up to £250 million of National Lottery and Exchequer funding into more than 90 Place Partnerships across England. They will announce the latest 27 Place Partnerships later in 2025. Each place is in the top 10% of the country for inactivity, social need, deprivation and health inequality at a national level.

Education

The Government is committed to ensuring that children and young people can be physically active and to increase the chances for children to take part in competitive sport. The School Games Organisers are essential in ensuring that all children have the opportunity to take part in local and accessible sport and physical activity. In the 2023/24 academic year, the country-wide network of 450 SGOs provided 2.3 million opportunities for school children to engage in local and inclusive sporting competitions across 40 different sports and activities. This Government has confirmed funding for the School Games Organisers until the end of the 25/26 financial year.

The national curriculum includes PE as a compulsory subject at all four key stages. PE and school sport plays a key role as a vital part of a broad and balanced curriculum. There is already a clear expectation on schools to provide PE and sport to all pupils in every school year as part of a broad and balanced curriculum, supplemented with a range of extra-curricular sports. The Government is committed to protecting high-quality PE time, ensuring all pupils have the best start on their journey towards leading active, healthy lifestyles.

In July 2024, the Government commissioned Professor Becky Francis CBE to convene and chair a panel of experts to conduct the Curriculum and Assessment Review. The expert-led review of the curriculum will ensure that all children can engage with a broad range of subjects, including PE and sport. The review will publish its recommendations in Autumn 2025.

Safeguarding

The safety, wellbeing and welfare of everyone taking part in sport is absolutely paramount. Everyone should be able to participate in sport in safe and secure environments, and where allegations about inappropriate or harmful behaviour are made, these should be taken seriously. National Governing Bodies are responsible for the regulation of their sports and for ensuring that appropriate measures are in place to protect participants from harm. The Government will continue to discuss athlete safety with relevant stakeholders and the sports sector to ensure that everyone can take part in sport as safely as possible.

The 2023 Call for Evidence on Sport Integrity was conducted under the previous Government. The Government continues to engage with the sector on this and other areas relating to duty of care with sport sector stakeholders.

All National Governing Bodies for Sports (NGBs) that received UK Sport funding for the Paris 2024 and Milan Cortina 2026 cycles have signed up to the Sport Integrity reporting service pilot. These NGBs receive high-quality investigative reports and their athletes and staff have access to independent reporting for incidents of misconduct. Sport Integrity has been awarded further funding for the LA 2028 Olympic and Paralympic cycle with the addition of pro-bono legal services for NGBs and other additional features.

The Department for Education is reviewing and updating the out-of-school settings safeguarding code of practice for providers, and accompanying guidance for parents and carers, to be published in due course.

Sport for development

The Taskforce on Physical Activity and Sport in the Criminal Justice System no longer exists in its original terms of reference. A 'phoenix' type group has been established (January 2025) as the Sport and Crime Policy and Strategy group convened by the Sport for Development Coalition. The key aim of this group is to "act as the national policy and strategic convening space, identifying issues and opportunities at the point of intersection between sport and crime."

Get Well, Stay Well formed a collaborative national partnership agreement and united organisations in their approach as a framework in support of health promotion and use of physical activity and sport across the welfare and justice systems. Importantly, it helped contribute to the Government's Beating Crime Plan, which outlined how sports-based interventions can offer effective and impactful support to those who may be at risk of being drawn into criminality.

A key legacy from the Taskforce work was the Youth Justice Sport Fund, which was established to utilise sport as a powerful tool to engage at-risk young people, diverting them from crime and antisocial behaviour. The evaluation report has proved the programme a success, providing evidence that shows the programme effectively engaged at risk young people and helped to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

Funding and taxation

The Government keeps all taxes under review, and taxation is a matter for HM Treasury. The Government monitors the financial situation of sport closely, including associated costs such as taxes, and continues to work with the sports sector to support the ongoing sustainability of elite-level sport. This work is considered in the round of the Government's Spending Review.

Sector engagement

The Government will continue to engage regularly with a broad range of key stakeholders in the sport and physical activity sector as we work to deliver our Plan for Change. DCMS publishes transparency data on GOV.UK, including details of ministers' meetings with external organisations.

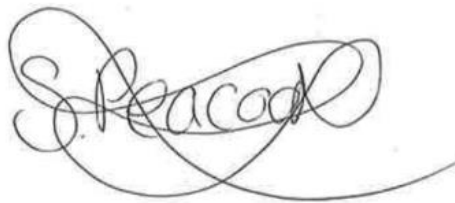
Ministerial roles & administration

The Government has no intention to establish a new Ministerial post and is focused on effective collaborative working across Departments to deliver our Plan for Change.

The Code for Sports Governance sets out the standards all sporting organisations must meet in return for public funding from either UK Sport or Sport England. It has helped to drive progress around good governance, diversity and inclusion, and welfare and safety across the sport and physical activity sector.

As the Committee is no longer in operation, I am copying this letter to Lord Willis of Knaresborough (as the Chair of the former National Plan for Sport and Recreation Committee). I am also copying it to Baroness Twycross (as DCMS Lords Minister).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Peacock', with a large, looping flourish extending from the end.

Stephanie Peacock MP
Minister for Sport, Media, Civil Society and Youth