

Kate Porter – Written evidence (NPS0034)

Response to Request for Information on Physical Activity

1. How can local delivery, including funding structures, of sport and recreation be improved to ensure that people of all ages and abilities are able to lead an active lifestyle? For example, how successfully do local authorities and other bodies such as Active Partnerships, Leisure Trusts, local sports clubs and charities work together, and how might coordination be improved?

It is certainly hard for us to reach the lower income groups, BAME families, and disability schools/groups without links with local agencies and certainly in the last 15 years I have seen the opportunity for Active Partnerships and Leisure Trusts to work with us as an organisation and for us to run events that might help us reach those groups much diminish. The number of staff in the local sports development dept is now so low that it is impossible to get any help or support and they seem to have focussed on more marginal sport than hockey.

2. How can children and young people be encouraged to participate in sport and recreation both at school and outside school, and lead an active lifestyle? If possible, share examples of success stories and good practice, and challenges faced.

Our club has doubled its participation at junior level. We have growing female social participation at U14 and U16 age groups. We can now run 3 teams at both age groups 5 years ago we were running 1. Having dedicated coaching for each group with a coach that can deliver a session based on the needs of the participants has made a real difference. This along with matches against teams that are of a very similar level to them has really encouraged the girls to participate. We have strong links with local secondary schools so that the players see the coaches at school and club and they are not daunted by joining a new club with "strangers". We have a primary school delivery programme where a coach goes into the local schools and delivers sessions in PE lessons. There is a primary school competition in the summer and children are encouraged to try our Saturday morning sessions for up to 6 weeks before joining.

3. How can adults of all ages and backgrounds, particularly those from under-represented groups, including women and girls, ethnic minorities, disabled people, older people, and those from less affluent backgrounds, be encouraged to lead more active lifestyles? If possible, share examples of success stories and good practice, and challenges faced.

I find this difficult to answer because I have always been an active female. It certainly takes confidence and determination to do this and so making things less daunting and easily accessible, friendly etc will definitely help.

4. *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation*, the Government's 2015 sports strategy, outlines five outcome priorities: physical health, mental health, individual development, social and community development and economic development. Are these the right priorities and how successful has the government been in measuring and delivering these outcomes to date?

No idea how successful they have been. We have never been asked to respond but I guess most figures come from our NGB. Yes, I agree on the outcome priorities. Being active can cut health costs financially and I think we are only just seeing how our poor health has cost so dearly in this pandemic. I don't think it's any coincidence that we have the worst death rate in Europe.

5. Is government capturing an accurate picture of how people participate in sport and recreation activities in its data collection? How could this be improved?

Again I am not sure how the NGB has responded to this.

6. How can racism, homophobia, transphobia, misogyny and ableism in sport be tackled?

This should be led by NGBs as well as government. We recently have had pressure from our club members to make our NGB do something more proactive which they have done but they are a bit out of touch I think. Hockey as a sport as a whole has less racism than most I think but I don't know. We are incredibly poor in terms of disability sport. From a female point of view there is little or no homophobia, I can't speak for the male side of the game. I have come across misogyny in the past and it is getting better.

7. What can be done to improve and implement effective duty of care and safeguarding standards for sports and recreation activities at all levels?

On the whole these are pretty good in hockey and have improved in recent years. Coach and volunteer education via NGBs is the key. Plus a legal/financial requirement because that always puts pressure on clubs to

do the right thing.

8. What are the opportunities and challenges facing elite sports in the UK and what can be done to make national sports governing bodies more accountable? For example, accountability for representing and protecting their membership, promoting their sport and maximising participation.

Not sure I understand this question, you mention elite and then talk about membership and maximising participation. Challenges for elite hockey is always funding and the ability to have a full time programme that is fulfilling and not just a few big competitions to prepare for. We would benefit from a more financially rewarding domestic game so that players could be full time athletes but not necessarily from as part of the GB side which really is the only way currently to be a full time hockey player. If the international game or domestic premier league were more visible participation would definitely improve.

9. What successful policy interventions have other countries used to encourage people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to participate in sport and recreation, and lead more active lifestyles?

Can't answer this question.

10. Should there be a national plan for sport and recreation? Why/why not?

Yes. I believe this gives the NGBs a framework to work to and can be a way of making them accountable. Without a framework or plan there will be no direction and no focus.

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