

The Police Community Clubs of Great Britain [PCCGB] – Written evidence (NPS0043)

As the author I should state from the outset that this report is focused our work within the sport of amateur boxing. This sport is our vehicle of choice to facilitate interventions based on sport and citizenship. In order to provide an inside into our organisation, the following six paragraphs provide a broad-brush outline:

1. The author of this report is a retired police officer who in 1979, together with a number of Chief and other serving officers were members of the British Police Boxing Association [BPBA]. This is the sports section representing amateur boxing within the then named Police Athletic Association [PAA]. Since that date the author has remained the Secretary of the BPBA now under the newly named Police Sport UK [PSUK] 'Team Police'. This submission has been forwarded for the purposes of information to the Police Sport UK secretariat together with our current Patrons, The Right Honourable Lord Stevens of Kirkwhelpington QPM and Assistant Commissioner Martin Hewitt QPM, Chair of the National Police Chiefs Council. To avoid doubt, they have not been requested to contribute to this paper.
2. With the blessing of the PAA, the BPBA formed from within its committee, an organisation called The Police Community Clubs of Great Britain [PCCGB]. The PCCGB were and continue to be, a 'stand-alone organisation' formed from members of the police exclusive PSUK Team Police however, we have benefitted greatly from their continued support in what we do and achieve. Albeit our programmes have been adopted by numerous Police Service areas, it is important to note that we are not, as a matter of course, funded in any way by the police service, all funding is gained commercially and by way of secured grants.
3. Since its formation the PCCGB has focused on community engagement through sport. In tandem with these programmes they have formed a collective of PCCGB affiliated community boxing clubs which currently total thirty nine [39] with a waiting list of over fifty [50]. All these clubs remain directly affiliated to the NGB England Boxing.
4. Since 1992 the PCCGB is, like the Armed Services, an integral non-regional Association of the NGB England Boxing and governs Police Service Boxing across the UK. Recent milestones for the PCCGB are: **2001** PCCGB wrote the first competition rules for novice boxing championships staging the first National Novice Championship at Wembley, NW London: **2004** PCCGB wrote the first competition rules for female boxing championship staging the first National Female Boxing Championships at the Metropolitan Police College, Hendon. In recent years from within our numbers we have provided Board members to the NGB, members to various NGB Commissions, members to various international post on European and World Governing Bodies and officials at all levels including the Olympic Games.

5. The PCCGB bespoke Olympic Boxing & Citizenship engagement programmes have been delivered in schools and many other settings to over 150,000 children and young people from a myriad of diverse communities since 2000. Highlights include the 'Ozbox' programme delivered throughout the east Midlands by Derbyshire Constabulary, our Contender programmes throughout the country, and a substantial summer & autumn school holiday programme delivered to 3000+ by Police teams throughout the Metropolis. About to be launched, is another Contender pilot intended to subsequently go a pan-London being delivered by the Metropolitan Police Territorial Support Group.
6. Beyond the programmes above we have also engaged in numerous Mosques including seeing the formation of a boxing club within a Mosque in east London. Another notable achievement is the successful delivery of our own NGB endorsed Olympic Boxing Leader & Citizenship programmes to a cohort of forty [40] serving prisoners within YOI & HM Prison Doncaster as a pre-release initiative. Of the 40 participants, only two failed to complete the course which saw the remainder not reoffending or recalled to prison within twelve months of their release. All were introduced to NGB clubs where many remain to-date as coaches or volunteers.

Addressing your questions from a PCCGB [Olympic Boxing standpoint]:

7. [Q1:1] We understand that our sports' governing body England Boxing has no or little capacity to provide direct funding to individual clubs / engagement projects however, in the most part it is working hard to keep its network of clubs informed of what and where funding is available for application. This is achieved through its website and with the assistance of its regionally based Club Support Officers. Whilst we applaud any process which seeks to co-ordinate a more informed spread of funding across all sports and programmes, we offer no real solution here however, there is one over-riding recommendation we would see as being both innovative and progressive. In the knowledge that NGB's cannot be experts in all areas. Funding provided by Sport England that address's community cohesion, engagement and its development that is historically distributed to Sport NGB's, should be distributed either directly or through the NGB to identified reputable organisations who have a proven record in this area and importantly, has the infrastructure to best deliver across the funder's territory in this case England. We are hopeful that the recently announced ten year Strategy for Sport England may influence our work in engagement through sport.
8. [Q1:2] This lack of co-ordination in our experience leads to the higher profile clubs receiving more of the collective funding pot, regardless of their levels of community engagement with people of all ages and abilities. With more collaboration between the major funding bodies, this disproportionate placing of funds could be averted. A possible avenue could be to encourage funders with like-minded objective / outcome requirements to collaborate.

9. [Q2:1] Albeit we receive a steady flow of requests to provide our Olympic Boxing and Citizenship programmes from schools, we feel particularly lucky / privileged in that the vast majority of schools throughout the country have a police presence whether permanently, infrequently or in the form of a Police Community liaison Officer. It is through these officers that we seek further introduction to educational establishments. As outlined in Para 5 above, we have engaged widely and directly into schools and colleges with at least 50,000 children & young people in that sector. These programmes are always at times to coincide with scheduled, curricular, extra-curricular sessions, weekend or holiday periods. As with all our sport related programmes, we signpost all participants towards local registered NGB clubs and other PCCGB programmes. It may be of interest for you to get a further glimpse of our work at our website: <https://www.policemunityclubs.org>
- 10.[Q3:1] In regard to the Police Community Club network, our primary aim is to engage with and form meaningful relationships with hard to reach communities. For that reason, you will find our clubs in many inner city areas including London, Bradford, Bristol, Manchester, Leeds and Liverpool etc. Many have been established by serving or retired officers, others were already established but welcomed our involvement in their clubs to the extent that they make no secret of the fact that they are a 'Police Community Club'.
11. [Q3:2] PCCGB initial experience with engagement began in North West London where the author was serving at Wembley Police Station. Together with two other front line officers and the Borough Commander [an ACC] we agreed to form a community sports club for the area. We tried a number of sports including 5 a-side football, basketball even midnight roller blading. All proved interesting but in no way gave us real promise of huge take-up or longevity. Undeterred, we then decided we should try amateur boxing. We needed a gymnasium but where would we find one? We tried various schools, sports clubs etc but none proved fruitful. The Commander bravely offered us a gymnasium at his area headquarters complex in Kingsbury. Opening the gym that we decided would be 'The Trojan Police Boxing Club' was a huge step into the unknown, we thought that boxing could be a non-starter and together with it being a 'police' property, with a 'Trojan Police' sign over the door was it maybe a step to far! We need not have worried – within four weeks we were overwhelmed by the numbers and demography of its members. This forced a move to a burnt out school gymnasium in Harlesden, North London this was then the most prolific knife crime area within greater London. With funding from the then Foundation for Sport & Art we totally refurbished the property and so was established our first Police Community Boxing Club the concept of which, has expanded beyond our expectations to be replicated across the country.
- 12.[Q4] We have no fully informed view regarding this area.
- 13.[Q5.1] It is correct to say that within amateur boxing there are many and various forms of boxing related programmes taken into the community and schools, some very good but unfortunately, some not fit

for purpose and in the most part unregulated. The acceptable deliveries are and have been for a number of years, a source of participation numbers not sought and therefore not taken into account for statistical purposes.

- 14.[Q5.2] The same is found with our own activities [see para 5 above]. Albeit all PCCGB boxing activities are subject to NGB scrutiny and registration [PCCGB Boxing Leader] or are an Endorsed programme [PCCGB Contender Programme] only the successful students who complete the Boxing Leader contributes to their statistics through direct registration with the NGB which are NOT included in the figures shown at para 5.
- 15.[Q5.3] There are two further barriers to securing statistical information around participants in Boxing firstly, WHITE COLLAR boxing activities. This effectively steals a huge number of current or prospective boxers from/for amateur boxing clubs. Mostly an unregulated and uninsured activity, this potentially deprives the NGB of a huge number of athletes and coaches. Whilst this is beyond the jurisdiction of the NGB, it is flagged up here to highlight the detrimental impact this has on possible NGB numbers.
- 16.[Q5.4] The final barrier to securing participant number is the formation of the Amateur Boxing Alliance, a breakaway faction of the previous NGB The Amateur Boxing Association of England Limited. Numbers and activities within this organisation are not fully known however it is not insignificant. Again, this is beyond the jurisdiction of the NGB but adds to the drain on possible increases of participating figures.
- 17.[Q5.5] From this you can see that there are a number of reasons for failing to capture accurate numbers some of which are understandable beyond the jurisdiction.
- 18.[Q6.1] Without expanding this extremely complex question, more education, more robust disciplinary action and more diverse recruitment to all areas of sport.
- 19.[Q7.1] It is our opinion that Safeguarding is taken seriously by the NGB [England Boxing] and appears to be in safe hands, well directed by the NSPCC in Sport Unit and supported by the Board of Directors. I understand that there are other sports which require attention in this area.
- 20.[Q7.2] With regard to the Duty of Care in our sport, we do have some concerns regarding in competition care around head injuries. This we understand is being monitored by the NGB. The Police Clubs have no statistical material around this vulnerable area.
- 21.[Q8.1] Like other sports NGB's, with regard to elite sport within amateur boxing, the elite [GB Boxing / UK Sport funded] organisation is a separate entity to the NGB England Boxing. While this may well be a necessity, in that UK Sport is the purse holder for the elite [GB] athlete

programme, this does create a barrier to free communication / understanding between grass-root clubs which is not present between these clubs and England Boxing. Due to this and the fact that once selected for the GB Boxing [Elite programme] the athlete is effectively removed from the club with little ongoing credit to the club who brought the athlete to elite level, this does generate a degree of disconnect and miss-trust whether that be justified or not. This is clearly a challenge not necessarily to the GB [elite] programme but one for the NGB to address.

- 22.[Q8.2] Whilst we acknowledge that the NGB have hugely improved the status and efficiency of the sport since the formation of England Boxing from the previous NGB [The Amateur Boxing Association of England] there is an opportunity for the NGB to promote and maximise participation. Albeit Amateur Boxing is one of the smaller participant sports under the Sport England Banner, it does shout out for more media coverage which in itself, would further maximise participation. Whilst we would be pleased to expand our own ideas further in this area, albeit the NGB has a Communications Commission, it would benefit greatly by the identification of either a substantive sponsor or the addition of an experienced TV media advisor.
- 23.[Q9.1] We can only reference our own experience in this area. Some three years ago the Police Clubs were invited to address the European Boxing Association leaders in Assisi, Italy. The author in company with the then CEO of England Boxing provided a presentation on Police Clubs' Sport and Citizenship programmes. From that expressed interest, we provided templates and authority for them to use the products in their respective countries. In 2018, we were also invited to address the world governing body [AIBA] at the following World Congress however, this was cancelled due to the de-regulation of Amateur Boxing by the IOC. This sequence is referred to in order to highlight the fact that NGB's of Amateur Boxing across the world are looking to fulfil a need for such interventions.
- 24.[Q10] Whilst we do not feel entirely qualified to address this huge subject area and in fear of stating the obvious, we see there to be huge advantages in greater collaboration between all NGB of sport throughout the UK sharing knowledge, experiences, lessons, expertise and achievements.

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