

AoC Sport – Written evidence (NPS0117)

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?

Local authorities and Active Partnerships can do more to ensure collaboration between appropriate partners. Both can do more to work with the further education sector to deliver against national priorities. Colleges are often ignored in favour of schools or universities when it comes to opportunities for funding or involvement in projects. Colleges however are at the heart of communities and have a great deal to offer:

- They have above national average representation of people from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- 23% of students have learning difficulties or a disability.
- High levels of students from LSEG backgrounds (16% claimed FSM compared to 8% of 16-18 in schools)

The above represents why there should be a focus in working with colleges to engage these groups which are typically less active.

There are also significant opportunities to utilise the potential workforce and facilities within FE. There are 100,000 students in colleges studying a sports course, all of whom need opportunities to practice and volunteer. Many colleges also have high quality sport facilities which are often underutilised. We feel that the recent investment into unlocking school facilities for sport should have been focused on the colleges because they can provide, facilities, volunteers and qualified staff and would have been better placed than schools to deliver on the project.

Collaboration between organisations both professional and voluntary is crucial to avoid duplication and wasted resources. Too often NGBs and other organisations waste resource in targeting the same participant often just moving from one sport to another. The funding model which challenges organisations to increase participation does not always lead to an overall increase, much of the time it is just someone moving from sport to another rather than engaging someone previously inactive. There should be greater collaboration between NGBs to reduce duplication and unnecessary competition, which is driven by the funding model, when spend money to attract someone already active in another sport when it should be focussed on those who would benefit the most.

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.

Within the FE sector there are many examples of good practice in engaging young people to develop an active lifestyle. We have seen great success in contextualising physical activity in a way that young people don't really realise they are doing it. We know that for a vast majority of young people they know they should be active and why but chose not to be. Within FE many students are on a vocational pathway and understand what job they would like to do in the future. Colleges have linked activity to future job aspirations in 'fit for work' programmes, for example Early Years students undertaking Sport Leaders qualification as it will help them when they are in the work setting. We have also seen production arts students start climbing programmes to ensure they are comfortable working at heights and on rigging often required in theatres.

Within education there is still a lack of a joined-up approach between lead organisations, for example programmes do not flow from YTS to AoC Sport to BUCS through the various education stages.

3. *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?

The priorities are appropriate but there is not a consistent way of measuring impact, so it is difficult to compare the outcomes of different projects to determine the best approach. There should be a consistent model for measuring the impact of all intervention rather than a series of different tools and methods which are trying to show the same thing.

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

No see above

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

Yes, to deal with the issues raised in question one. A competitive open market model is good, but this must be managed otherwise it is a race to the bottom and resource will be wasted. A consistent national approach to monitoring and evaluation would also improve quality, highlight best practice and help flag what doesn't work. A national approach to consultation would also be welcomed, many organisations are asking the same groups very similar questions.

29 January 2021