

## **Supplementary written evidence submitted by Dr. Claire Jenkin**

### **Follow up written statement to oral evidence at DCMS Select Committee's inquiry into 'sport in our communities'.**

Dr. Claire Jenkin, Senior Lecturer in Sports Development. University of Hertfordshire

I wanted to submit a follow up written statement to a comment Julian Knight MP made about Australia (and the UK needing to become more physically active like them). I did not respond on the day because I did not have the data to hand.

As a nation and as policy makers, we need to move away from the bronzed, active historical Australia narrative and understand they have very similar issues of inactivity and obesity to the UK and other comparative nations. Australia's most recent, pre-COVID, rates of being active at least three times a week were at 64.7%. In England, our rates were 63.3% doing at least 150 hours of activity per week. Thus the activity/inactivity rates are very similar.

Furthermore, Australia are currently looking to the UK for best practice. Their current sports policy (released in 2018), Sport 2030, is reflective of the Sporting Futures policy and the Towards an Active Nation strategy. For example, it broadens their definition of sport to include physical activity. As part of their policy, they introduced a population level survey called AusPlay, which is based on the UK Active Lives Survey, to measure participation. The state of Victoria (through VicHealth) also bought a license of the Sport England 'This Girl Can' campaign in 2018 (and this is still in use).

The UK's sports participation data collection methods can definitely improve in many aspects when compared to Australia. For example, AusPlay shows participation through different lifestages and their raw data tables are much more accessible than Sport England's. However when comparing the UK to other nations, we need to do so by utilising accurate, contemporary information, rather than historical stereotypes.

As I lived and worked in sports development in Australia for nearly five years (until early 2018), I am happy to partake in further conversations on making comparisons and deriving potential learning from Australia.

Kind regards,  
Claire Jenkin