

All Comments received by 30 September 2009 about the Communications Strategy for SSE Document

"I was full of enthusiasm which didn't last beyond the introduction."

"Neither Snowboarding or Telemark skiing has any support from SSE that I have noticed over the years. Even Freestyle and Nordic feel neglected."

"When did Snowsport England support a skier-cross event apart from the one run in Bormio? All in the UK have been run by independent enterprises or clubs."

"I assume they mean that there is no activity in the North East England not the North West."

"My initial reaction after reading through the document was that this is the type of twaddle that communications consultancies are paid huge amounts of money to produce and are an insult to anybody within the industry/sport involved."

"Beneath the map, it says that snow sports are growing in popularity – I thought that the recent industry reports indicated a drop of 13% in numbers. (Crystal Report)"

"Increasing participation – I do not see how some of these bullet points will affect participation. Targeting will have to be very precise since some facilities cannot take anymore and the disadvantaged have very little money and unless the sport becomes cheaper they will not be able to afford to continue after the free taster sessions" (Could this be deemed as cruelty?)"

"The numbers of skiers entering the national races is getting less so how can it be that the sport is growing in popularity. I think this is wishful thinking."

"With new funding, opportunities have never been greater. Numbers may be growing but that's surely because of the investment of the parents/individuals."

"I found it incredibly ironic that this -mail was followed by the poster trying to raise money to support Ed. Where is this money and what is it being used for? I'm thoroughly confused as to how a communication flow is going to change or improve anything."

"How are we going to increase participation from inner city areas & BME communities without the facilities, particularly in areas where there is no space to build anything?"

"How is a media campaign and a website going to solve the lack of facilities?"

"What is alternative media?"

"I was really appalled at the document, we write these all the time and it came across as an initial document at the start of a feasibility study. It certainly isn't something that reflects months of work and serious financial investment."

"I think it would be wonderful to have a comprehensive infrastructure of facilities across England but how are we going to stop the existing slopes from closing to make way for other sports and housing."

"What do we do with all the individuals who have been attracted by these campaigns? Where do we put them? If other clubs have the same restrictions we have with regard to slope times, access, coaches, etc. how will we magically accommodate them?"

"Disabled skiers equipment is very specific and I think that it would be better to support the clubs for the disabled and enable them to purchase the specialist equipment they need."

"It is obvious that this has not been thought through. Many of the suggestions are already in place and have happened and will continue to happen with or without additional funding and new SDOs."

"I do not think that this is may be the best use of the money."

"How do SSE work to develop a comprehensive infrastructure of facilities without understanding the problems so obvious to most of us?"

"I was offended that a development officer might help our club raise standards to offer more opportunities to the community or to help develop our programmes and this document has only served to make me question any benefit of belonging to SSE."

"Most of the clubs involved operate at a very high standard already without any help whatsoever.

Our members should be applauded for achieving a high calibre of results with very little support. Whatever they achieve, they do on their own with support from parents, clubs and regions."

"How would a library make any difference? What about access to high level coaches? Any access we get we pay for and we arrange from our own funds. We are also actively trying to encourage our older members to become coaches without any encouragement from SSE."

"Holding the Level 2 Performance Coach course the same weekend as the British Champs only shows how the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing; asking racers to make a decision as to which they are going to attend (because although talented, most of them can't be in more than one place at a time) is ridiculous and limits the calibre of coaches coming into the sport."

"How would a pool of essential equipment work?"

What if a club needs something on a Saturday and another club far away needs it on a Sunday? Has any thought been given to the distance between clubs, even in the regions with the highest concentration? If most clubs do not have the essential equipment, surely it would make more sense to provide funding to the individual clubs so they could replace and maintain essential their own equipment?"

"Developing communication through e-mail, databases and mailing lists as an objective is shocking as given the amount of times we contact SSE and the information we regularly provide, this should all be in place anyway. Otherwise, what's the point?"

"Where does all the information get stored?"

"SSE have been informed several times that the second S in L&SERSA stands for 'Snowsports' not 'Ski' – Why do they continue to use the old name?"

"With regard to the action plan, an incentive to encourage faster responses from the regions would be to send out sensible documentation."

"How would an online forum help regions, do they not realise we speak to each other – socially, at regional events, club events and national events? What do they think we do at races?"

"Does no one realise that Facebook etc. is already used as a tool and the members are all in touch anyway? More stuff on databases that already exists."

"Surely part of a Communications Strategy should be to ensure that there is total accountability and openness about where the funding is going to be targeted? A spread sheet or some other such tool detailing the cost of 2 development officers, the cost of using consultants, administration costs, whether all snowsports (Nordic, freestyle, skier cross, telemark skiing, snowboarding, cross-country etc) are being included in future plans, should

be very much at the forefront of any COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY!!”

“A big concern is that it seems that we are trying to "run before we can walk." There are two big areas that need to be addressed before any " increase in participation levels, ensuring satisfaction of participants, and increasing numbers of athletes achieving at elite level " can take place - FACILITIES and VOLUNTEERS/COACHES. Without a lot of improvement in these two areas, there will be very little movement towards achieving the targets as set out by Sport England as a condition of this and any future funding.”

“These two issues go hand in hand -

- 1.You might have a huge volunteer/coach force, but without the facilities where these volunteers/coaches can deliver their skills, very little is going to be achieved.
- 2.There might be fantastic facilities where participants can enjoy snowsports, but without volunteers/coaches to pass on their knowledge, again very little is going to be achieved.”

“Why continue to ‘develop programmes especially with indoor facilities’? If you live on the south coast they are miles away. Our local slopes is too small, underfunded and has no support from the local council. Why can’t the SSE & SE get the local councils to take an interest? We are losing people not increasing participation.”

“I notice that SSGB is mentioned. Why would our clubs want to work with an organization that has very little integrity and relies on other snowsports bodies to bail it out of trouble? Having seen the thousands of pounds that some parents have poured into that black hole I would have thought it was time to disband it since it seems ‘Not Fit for Purpose’.”

“The only tangible elements from the document seem to be to develop a newsletter (I'm not convinced on these anyway), develop a DVD and an information pack and develop posters to promote snow sports. L&SERSA has been developing these over the years. Posters are sent to all slopes and clubs in the region and the website is used by many regions as a source of information. Will SSE fund these now so we can get them operating better and sooner? I doubt it”

“Actions include establishing brief for designers and tendering for design and development. Given the huge number of problems we are up against as a sport, funding, facilities, equipment, coaches, encouragement of our athletes, support of our volunteers, etc. I can't get my head around the fact that the solution is to design a s*****g poster.”

“When are the members (clubs) going to be asked where would they like to see the money spent?”

“I'm really sorry to be so negative and I appreciate I am becoming very old and cynical but there have been a series of documents coming from SSE which seem to be written by consultants who have absolutely no idea of what is already happening, haven't a clue what it will take to improve things and aren't listening to what they are being told.”

“I'm left with a feeling that the regions/clubs/parents are going to end up funding all of this.”

“We will reach SSE objectives through natural progression while the suits pat themselves on the back for a job well done and the communications advisors can table motions, open discussions and debates, draw up more plans, interrogate briefs further and achieve absolutely nothing in the process but they might come up with a straw man after some blue sky thinking!! “

“I hope you aren't offended as I wouldn't want to upset any of you (club committee / regional committee) or undermine the huge amount of effort you put into the sport already. I'll go and have a nice cup of tea now. “

“During the introduction it refers to us as London and South East Regional Ski Association – we have been London and South East Regional Snowsports Association for some time and this has been communicated to them on a number of occasions!!!!!!!”

“On the second page under the map it says, “Snowsports are growing in popularity”. I would like to see the evidence of this as our own race series and I believe the Club Nationals have all shown a decline over the last few years! It goes on to say “opportunities to development further have never been greater” – I echo others’ feelings on this – try telling that to Ed Drake!

Next it says effective communication is a must – I agree – sadly I see no evidence of how they are going to achieve this.”

“On page 3 after the list of the interventions which were identified as part of the whole sport plan (with no thought given to how these are going to be achieved)”

“They have a title “Clubs and Coaching” How will the Development Officers help clubs raise their standards when they have already said that they can’t possible work on a one to one basis with the clubs?”

“How can they offer more opportunities to the communities if there are no slopes or if the clubs can’t access more slope time?”

“It says about developing club membership structure and relationships with new and existing facilities but they give no strategies for this? Also do we have any new facilities planned? – this would be something I would be interested in hearing about.”

“The next page goes on to mention a library? Sorry but I just don’t get how this is going to make a difference. Perhaps they should concentrate their efforts on having an effective website like some of the regions! “

“How can the opportunities be provided for clubs to access higher level coaches when the coaches just aren’t there! We contacted them (SSE) when we hit problems and they simply said there weren’t any. Perhaps they should recognise LSERSA’s bursary schemes and offer to help fund these! Do they recognise how LSERSA is being proactive in this area?”

“They talk about promoting the sport but what they fail to acknowledge is that we are unable to satisfy the interest we currently have – i.e. insufficient slopes, insufficient slope access for clubs, insufficient coaches!”

“As for a central pool of equipment how would it work? Perhaps they should provide funding for each area so that the regions could offer this service to its membership. Also is there evidence to say that this is currently a problem?”

“I have ignored the “Performance Pathways and Talent Identification” bit because I couldn’t make head nor tail of it – not great seeing as the document is about communication. I will only say that my gut feeling is that it might sound great but that there is still make no attempt at saying how it might be achieved.”

“As for the five key areas of communication surely all these are in place and certainly in our own region are working effectively. However when the SSE has been asked for a list of club emails, the list they sent was out of date and had incorrect email addresses.”

“As for trying to “ensure the rapid flow of information from regions to SSE” I would retort that the information flows from us and then appears to hit a dam – they need to look at how they handle this information. I am assuming that the section on electronic networking is aimed at SSE, as it would appear that regions tend to use this effectively already! The same goes for databases! Surely this is something they should already have?”

“As for the “information sharing” and the development of a newsletter – our own experience is showing that this is easier said than done and to be honest most people in the sport have enough newsletters already. A DVD might have its place but if this is the extent of their proposals it does not bode well.”

“As most of the timescales indicate there is really nothing substantial in their plans!”