

10 June 2009

Sport England has published a radical new strategy to get more people playing and enjoying sport and to help those with talent get to the very top.

The new approach is designed to capitalise on the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity presented by the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and to use its power to inspire more people to take part in and succeed in sport.

The strategy commits Sport England to deliver on a series of demanding targets by 2012/13:

1. one million people doing more sport
2. A 25% reduction in the number of 16 year olds who drop out of five key sports
3. An improved talent development systems in at least 25 sports
4. A measurable increase in people's satisfaction with their experience of sport – the first time the organisation has set such a qualitative measure
5. A major contribution to the delivery of the five hour sports offer for children and young people.

Sport England will work closely with the national governing bodies of sport (NGBs) to deliver the new strategy, and will also create strong partnerships with local authorities. It will reduce bureaucracy by combining its multiple funding streams into a single pot of funding for NGBs, and will be consulting on a new, more streamlined method of funding wider community projects.

Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport Andy Burnham said:

"This major reform of Sport England marks a new era for sport in this country and will put us on the road to having a world leading community sport system. We want to encourage people of all levels and abilities to play sport for life, to reach their full potential and to remove any barriers in the way of the talented.

By investing heavily in coaching and the club structure we can maximise the chances for English sporting success and improve the quality of the sport experience for all. National governing bodies will be key to successful delivery and will play a crucial role in helping us to get one million people doing more sport by 2012. It'll be a tough challenge but I am confident that together we can do it."

Jennie Price, Chief Executive of Sport England, said:

"My aim was to produce a clear, sharply focussed strategy for Sport England that would win credibility with our stakeholders and set high standards for us as an organisation. Grass roots sport deserves a world leading system, and that is what we are setting out to deliver.

"I am confident that the Governing Bodies of sport, on which this strategy is critically dependent, will rise to the challenge of delivering on participation, talent support and increased satisfaction within their sports."

Richard Lewis, Executive Chairman Rugby Football League, said: "We wholly support Sport England's new direction for the future of sport. In particular, we welcome the clarity of roles with which Sport England and National Governing Bodies of sport will be working in the future.

"Entrusting NGBs with more responsibility is a positive step towards getting the right resources to the right people in sport. We recognise that with responsibility comes more accountability and I, for one, look forward to working closely with Sport England to create a world-class sports system."

Sport England will work with the Youth Sport Trust to deliver the Government's 5-hour sport offer and make sure that talented young people are identified early and nurtured, and with UK Sport to dovetail with and support the elite programmes they run for our most talented athletes.

Sue Campbell, Chair of the Youth Sport Trust and UK Sport, said: "The past few years have seen great strides in the simplification of the sporting landscape. There is a real determination across the Youth Sport Trust, Sport England and UK Sport to ensure our partnership delivers effective, seamless pathways for sporting opportunity from school to elite. Today's announcement is a further step forward in the process, as it shows how Sport England with its new strategy is now more focused than ever on ensuring that sporting journey is available to all.

London 2012 offers us a once in a lifetime opportunity to get it right, to create a structure that allows sportsmen and women to maximize their potential from the moment they first encounter a sport – whether that be in their local school, club or ultimately on the world stage. That is our goal, and that will be the focus of all of us in helping Sport England to deliver its new strategy."

Notes to Editors

Sport England is a non-departmental public body and National Lottery distributor. We are committed to creating a world leading community sports development system and increasing participation in sport. Sport England's annual budget (lottery and exchequer) is c£250m.

The target to get one million people doing more sport by 2012-13 includes reaching out to priority groups – women, black and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities or those from deprived backgrounds.

The strategy was developed with support from an external challenge group appointed by the Government. The group was made up of Richard Lewis (Executive Chairman Rugby Football League), Steve Grainger (Chief Executive of the Youth Sport Trust), Ged Roddy (Vice Chairman of Sport England) and Paul Heron (Deputy Director of Sport at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport).

Sport England undertook two rounds of external consultation earlier this year. We also used workshops to develop our plans for clubs, coaches and volunteers drawing on advice from National Governing Bodies and other partners. This has ensured broad support for our new direction and focus.

Sport England will operate at a strategic level working with and through national governing bodies drawing in other partners including local authorities. Sport England will have a strong national team, regional teams with a tighter focus and will work with county sport partnerships who will deliver specific services.