

HOUSE OF LORDS

National Plan for Sport
and Recreation Committee

Report of Session 2021–22

A national plan for sport, health and wellbeing

**STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL
00:01 FRIDAY 10 DECEMBER 2021**

**You must not disclose this report or its contents until
the date and time above; any breach of the embargo
could constitute a contempt of the House of Lords.**

Ordered to be printed 24 November 2021 and published 10 December 2021

Published by the Authority of the House of Lords

Select Committee on a National Plan for Sport and Recreation

The Select Committee on a National Plan for Sport and Recreation was appointed on 15 October 2020 and re-appointed 13 May 2021, “to consider the effectiveness of current sport and recreation policies and initiatives, and the case for A National Plan for Sport and Recreation”.

Membership

The Members of the Select Committee on a National Plan for Sport and Recreation were:

[Lord Addington](#)

[Baroness Blower](#)

[Baroness Brady](#)

[Earl of Devon](#) (from 28 January 2021)

[Baroness Grey-Thompson](#)

[Lord Hayward](#)

[Lord Knight of Weymouth](#)

[Lord Krebs](#) (until 28 January 2021)

[Baroness Morris of Yardley](#)

[Lord Moynihan](#)

[Baroness Sater](#)

[Lord Snape](#)

[Lord Willis of Knaresborough](#) (Chair)

Declarations of interest

See Appendix 1.

A full list of Members’ interests can be found in the Register of Lords’ Interests:

<https://members.parliament.uk/members/lords/interests/register-of-lords-interests>

Publications

All publications of the Committee are available at:

<https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/482/national-plan-for-sport-and-recreation-committee/publications/>

Parliament Live

Live coverage of debates and public sessions of the Committee’s meetings are available at:

<https://parliamentlive.tv/Lords>

Further information

Further information about the House of Lords and its Committees, including guidance to witnesses, details of current inquiries and forthcoming meetings is available at:

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/lords>

Committee staff

The staff who worked on this inquiry were Michael Berry (Clerk), Katie Barraclough (Policy Analyst) and Hannah Murdoch (Committee Operations Officer).

Contact details

All correspondence should be addressed to the Select Committee on a National Plan for Sport and Recreation, Committee Office, House of Lords, London SW1A 0PW.

Telephone 020 7219 4384. Email hlsportandrec@parliament.uk.

Twitter

You can follow the Committee on Twitter: [@HLSportandRec](https://twitter.com/HLSportandRec).

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Summary	4
Chapter 1: Introduction and background	7
Introduction	7
Box 1: Terminology: recreation, physical activity, sport, active lifestyles and grassroots sport	8
Rates of activity and inactivity	8
Adult activity rates	9
Figure 1: Changes in activity levels of adult population	9
Figure 2: Activity rates of men and women	10
Figure 3: Activity rates of adults across ethnic groups	10
Figure 4: Activity levels of adults with and without a disability or long-term health condition	11
Figure 5: Activity levels of adults across socio-economic groups	12
Children activity rates	12
Figure 6: Activity levels of children and young people with and without a disability or long-term health condition	13
Figure 7: Levels of activity in children across ethnic groups	14
Impact of COVID-19	14
Scope of the inquiry and structure of the report	15
Chapter 2: A national plan for sport, health and wellbeing	17
Sport and recreation policy and delivery	17
The case for a national plan for sport, health and wellbeing	20
A new delivery and funding structure	23
Figure 8: The framework	26
Monitoring and evaluation	27
Active Lives surveys	28
Measuring and evaluating outcomes	29
Using data to improve access to sport and recreation	30
Chapter 3: Principles underpinning the national plan	32
Physical literacy	32
Box 2: International definitions of physical literacy	33
A welcoming and inclusive environment	34
Formal and informal participation	34
Underrepresented groups	35
Accessibility and availability of facilities and spaces	37
Tackling discrimination	39
Behaviour change and motivation	41
Public messaging campaigns	41
Tackling health inequalities	42
Social prescribing	43
Sport for development	44
Sport for development in criminal justice settings	46
Chapter 4: Instilling a life-long habit of sport and physical activity	48
Making sport and physical activity fun and enjoyable	48
PE and school sport	49

Valuing PE and school sport	50
Teacher training	51
Physical literacy in PE	53
Creating a welcoming and inclusive environment in PE and school sport	53
PE and Sport Premium	55
External provision	56
Accountability of PE and Sport Premium spending	58
Being active throughout the day	59
Linking schools, clubs and communities	60
Box 3: School Sports Partnerships	61
Opening school facilities	62
Chapter 5: Enabling active lifestyles	64
Developing a whole system, place-based approach	64
Planning and design	65
Active environments	65
Active travel	67
Technology	69
Accessing facilities	70
Digital divide	71
Chapter 6: Duty of care and safeguarding	73
Existing framework	73
Safeguarding children, adults, and elite athletes	74
The role of NGBs	75
Box 4: Examples of duty of care and safeguarding initiatives by NGBs	75
Creating a robust duty of care and safeguarding system from grassroots to elite sport	76
An independent sports ombudsman	77
Box 5: Seven ‘priority recommendations’ in Baroness Grey-Thompson’s independent review on Duty of Care in Sport	78
Mandatory reporting	81
Duty of care and safeguarding of adults, elite athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers	82
Duty of care and safeguarding adults	83
Duty of care and safeguarding of aspiring and elite athletes	84
Online abuse	85
Monitoring and oversight of duty of care and safeguarding standards	86
Chapter 7: The workforce	88
Figure 9: Locations of coaching in 2017 and 2019	89
Figure 10: Coaching hours in a typical week	89
Figure 11: Proportion of coaches at each level	90
Box 6: Sport England’s workforce, coaching and volunteering strategies	91
Careers in sport and recreation	91
Coaching and volunteering	92
National register of coaches	94
Improving diversity	96
Figure 12: Demographics of coaches	96

Diversity in senior leadership and boardroom roles	98
Box 7: 2016 Code for Sports Governance requirements for tier 3 organisations regarding diversity of board membership	98
Summary of conclusions and recommendations	101
Appendix 1: List of Members and declarations of interest	109
Appendix 2: List of witnesses	115
Appendix 3: Call for evidence	128
Appendix 4: Roundtable discussion with CEOs of NGBs and experts	130
Appendix 5: Acronyms and abbreviations	141

Evidence is published online at <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/482/national-plan-for-sport-and-recreation-committee/publications/> and available for inspection at the Parliamentary Archives (020 7219 3074).

Q in footnotes refers to a question in oral evidence.

SUMMARY

Sport and physical activity can change lives. They can improve physical and mental health and wellbeing and lead to better quality of life. For many, the challenge, social interaction and enjoyment of sport and physical activity brings significant personal reward. More broadly, participation in sport and recreation can foster greater social and community cohesion and benefits both the national and local economies.

We are concerned about the high levels of inactivity at the grassroots level, particularly among women, ethnic minorities, disabled people and those with long-term health conditions, the elderly, and people from less affluent backgrounds. This is a problem that has perpetuated over decades and successive governments. Numerous underwhelming attempts to boost activity rates and improve population-level physical and mental health and wellbeing have not been as successful as hoped. The scale and immediacy of the challenge to turn the tide on high rates of inactivity could not have been more clearly demonstrated since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our overarching recommendation is the need for a new ambitious national plan for sport, health and wellbeing and a new approach within Government to deliver and fund it. We heard evidence that cross-departmental coordination is not working, delivery is fragmented and access to funding is complicated and overly bureaucratic. Grassroots sports clubs and groups, local authorities and other delivery bodies do amazing work, but it will take a much more concerted, whole systems approach to make substantive inroads in boosting activity rates and improving people's health and wellbeing. That is why we need a national plan that will cover sport and recreation and other key areas of policy including, but not limited to, planning, transport, environment, and education. We further recommend that the Government introduce a statutory requirement on local authorities to provide and maintain adequate facilities for sport and physical activity, backed up with adequate financial support from the Treasury. We call for the establishment of a Physical Activity Observatory to act as a centre for independent research and analysis of data related to sport and recreation policy and practice.

Current Government structures are failing to deliver and radical changes are required. Better cross-departmental working, use and dissemination of resources, and effective, coordinated delivery of the national plan at national and local levels all need to be addressed. To that end, firstly we are recommending that the new Office for Health Improvement and Disparities be renamed the Office for Health Promotion and for it to be placed on a statutory footing to provide it surety of purpose and to give it the authority required to support a genuine cross-government approach to sport, health and wellbeing.

Secondly, we recommend the creation of a new Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing in the Department of Health and Social Care to work alongside the Office for Health Promotion in developing, overseeing and delivering the national plan. The Minister will sit within DHSC and will have responsibility for sport policy, which will be moved from DCMS to DHSC. A regular Strategic Forum consisting of key national and local stakeholders and delivery bodies will be chaired by the new Minister to help design the national plan and to establish a strong sense of buy-in on the part of those who will then go on to deliver its key components.

We set out some, but by no means all, of the key issues and policy themes which should be part of the national plan, starting with principles which should underpin it. These are physical literacy, providing a welcoming and inclusive environment, application of the science of behaviour change and motivation, a proactive approach to tackling health inequalities, and making a contribution to individual development and community cohesion through enhanced support for sport for development organisations and projects.

These principles lead to a range of recommendations including the need for the Government to conduct an audit and to develop a clear, fully costed national facilities strategy for pitches, leisure facilities, swimming pools, parks and other outdoor and indoor spaces. The facilities strategy will need to be developed together with local authorities and in close consultation with local communities, sports clubs and other local delivery bodies. We are also calling on the Government to tackle discrimination in sport and recreation, including by launching a nationwide campaign to ensure a safe environment and by doing more to hold social media companies to account for harmful content posted on social media platforms.

Attitudes towards sport and physical activity develop when we are children and often track into adulthood. Currently PE is not valued highly enough and teacher training time devoted to PE is inadequate. We want to see PE made a core subject with greater emphasis on physical literacy and making PE and school sport a fun, enjoyable and inclusive experience. We are also recommending better accountability and oversight of the PE and Sport Premium, including improving provision of Continuing Professional Development opportunities for teachers.

Many students will ‘drop out’ of sport when they leave full-time education. Whether they return to sport and physical activity can often depend on the attitudes developed earlier in life. Developing closer links between schools, local sports clubs and communities can make children and parents aware of what opportunities exist in their local community to stay active into adulthood. Opening school facilities for use by local clubs and groups is an obvious way to help create and strengthen the links between schools, local clubs and communities.

Adults also need to be supported and encouraged to be active. We looked at ways to enable people to participate in sport and recreation and to lead active lifestyles regardless of age, background and ability. This includes the need to develop a whole system, place-based approach, greater attention to how planning and design can support and encourage active travel and create active environments, and better use of technology to motivate and encourage people to be active and to make it easier to book and access facilities.

It is not possible to have a welcoming and inclusive environment without a serious and robust approach to duty of care and safeguarding. This applies to both grassroots and elite sport. We strongly recommend the implementation of the outstanding recommendations made in Baroness Grey-Thompson’s independent review on Duty of Care in Sport, prioritising the establishment of an independent sports ombudsman. Furthermore, we urge the Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing to introduce mandatory reporting in sport and recreation settings, and call for greater monitoring and robust enforcement of duty of care and safeguarding standards by Sport England and UK Sport.

This includes the imposition of financial sanctions against publicly funded bodies which fail to demonstrate that their safeguarding and duty of care policies are being effectively implemented.

Finally, we note the crucial role of the sport and recreation workforce, both paid and unpaid. The time, effort and contribution they make is a true asset to this sector and to the nation. We welcome the ongoing consideration of a national register of coaches and, notwithstanding the need to resolve complex issues to ensure the register is effective without being overly burdensome to the workforce, urge developing parties to commit to a date for its launch. On improving diversity across the workforce, coaching and volunteering, we recommend that more ambitious targets are set for diversity of the boards of bodies funded by Sport England and UK Sport and that failure to make progress should be met with financial sanctions.

A national plan for sport, health and wellbeing

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Introduction

1. It is difficult to overstate the positive impact that sport and physical activity has on health and wellbeing. Being more active can lift your mood, make you more resilient to serious illness and improve your quality of life. For many, the challenge, social interaction and enjoyment of sport and physical activity brings significant personal reward. Meanwhile, unhealthy and sedentary lifestyles increase the risk of developing several non-communicable diseases and places a significant burden on the NHS.¹ Engaging in sport, recreation and physical activity also benefits society. It promotes social and community cohesion, helps people to develop skills and confidence, can help tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and makes a substantial contribution to the economy.
2. When we talk about sport and physical activity it is important to make a distinction between elite and professional sport, and grassroots sport and physical activity. At the elite and professional level, the UK is world-leading. The Premier League is the most-watched football league in the world, with a cumulative audience of over 3 billion viewers each season and is the pinnacle of professional league sport.² On the global stage, the UK excels in a range of individual and team competitions and sporting events. Team GB and ParalympicsGB continued its run of success in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic games.
3. The focus of this report is on grassroots sport and physical activity. We are concerned with high rates of inactivity and the impact that this is having on the health and wellbeing of the population, particularly among women, ethnic minorities³, disabled people and those with long-term health conditions, the elderly and people from less affluent backgrounds. We acknowledge that physical activity can play a role in tackling obesity, but we see sport and physical activity as bringing a much wider range of benefits to people's quality of life. We are interested in how government and the sport and recreation sector can encourage and empower more people to be physically active regardless of their current health status, age, background and ability.
4. Successive governments over decades have tried to address stagnating activity levels with disappointing results. Between 2006 and 2016 and against the backdrop of multiple Government strategies and major initiatives, not least the legacy programme of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games to “inspire a generation”, the proportion of people engaging in sport at least

1 Public Health England, *Everybody active, every day* (October 2014), p 7: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374914/Framework_13.pdf [accessed 12 November 2021]

2 Premier League, ‘Premier League global audience on the rise’ (16 July 2019): <https://www.premierleague.com/news/1280062> [accessed 25 November 2021]

3 We use the term ‘ethnic minorities’ in this report to refer to all ethnic groups except the White British group. We have retained the term BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic) when quoting evidence from witnesses.

once a week rose by just 1.5 per cent, from 34.6 per cent to 36.1 per cent. Those engaging in sport three or more times a week rose by 1.9 per cent, from 15.6 per cent to 17.5 per cent. Over the same period the number of people volunteering, coaching or officiating in sports declined.⁴ The latest Active Lives survey for May 2020 to May 2021 shows that 39.1 per cent of adults are active for fewer than 150 minutes each week.⁵

5. Although the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has overarching responsibility for sport, many Government departments have responsibility for the delivery and provision of opportunities to engage in sport and recreation. As such, this report is not addressed to a single department but to the Government overall. Although grassroots sport, health and education are devolved matters, we hope that this report will be of interest to all nations of the UK.

Box 1: Terminology: recreation, physical activity, sport, active lifestyles and grassroots sport

The UK Chief Medical Officers define physical activity as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure. It takes many forms, occurs in many settings, and has many purposes including daily activity, active recreation and sport.⁶

For the purposes of this report, we use the terms **recreation** and **physical activity** interchangeably to refer to activities that keep people active but which are outside of organised competitive sports. We also take a broad view as to what constitutes ‘recreation’ and would consider any activity that involves physical movement to fall within our definition.

Sport refers to organised competitive games. However, we also recognise that not all sport is played through a formal structure. Witnesses talked about ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ participation in sport and we make use of this distinction in the report where appropriate.

Active lifestyles are lifestyles in which regular physical activity is undertaken in a number of ways in any given day, from recreational activities to walking to work.

Grassroots sport is amateur, non-professional participation in sport and recreation where participants are not compensated for their participation.

Rates of activity and inactivity

6. Since 2016 Sport England has measured activity rates through the Active Lives Adult Survey, which covers those aged 16 and over in England, and the Active Lives Children’s survey covering children in England aged 5–16. The Active Lives surveys for adults and children collect information on activity

4 Sport England, ‘Active People Interactive’: <https://activepeople.sportengland.org/> [accessed 12 November 2021]

5 The Active People’s Survey ran from 2006 and was replaced by the Active Lives Survey in 2016. Due to different metrics and methodologies used for each survey, it is not possible to compare these two data sets. Sport England, *Active Lives Adult Survey May 2020/21 Report* (October 2021), p 6: <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-10/Active%20Lives%20Adult%20Survey%20May%202020-21%20Report.pdf> [accessed 12 November 2021]

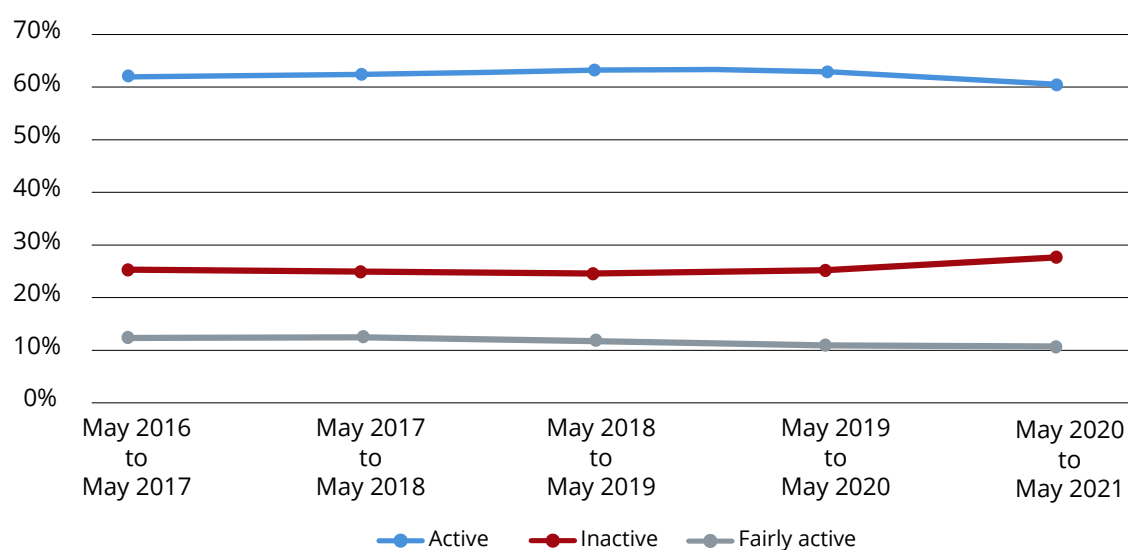
6 DHSC, Welsh Government, Department of Health Northern Ireland, and the Scottish Government, *UK Chief Medical Officers’ Physical Activity Guidelines* (7 September 2019), p 14: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/832868/uk-chief-medical-officers-physical-activity-guidelines.pdf [accessed 12 November 2021]

and inactivity rates and provides breakdowns by gender, socio-economic groups, age, disability and long-term health conditions, and ethnicity. It also collects information on attitudes to physical activity, volunteering, mental wellbeing, individual and community development, and loneliness. We discuss data collection and measuring impact in Chapter 2.

Adult activity rates

7. The survey rates a person who does at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity a week as “active”. A person who does an average of 30–149 minutes per week is considered “fairly active” and anyone who does less than 30 minutes a week is considered “inactive”.
8. The Active Lives surveys show that between May 2016–2017 and May 2020–2021, the percentage of the population who were inactive rose from 25.6 per cent (11.3 million) to 27.5 per cent (12.5 million). The percentage of those who were fairly active fell from 12.4 per cent (5.5 million) to 11.6 per cent (5.3 million) and those who were classified as active fell from 62.1 per cent (27.5 million) to 60.9 per cent (27.8 million).⁷ The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on activity rates resulting from national and tiered restrictions introduced since mid-March 2020. During the period of restrictions there was a 1.9 per cent (0.7 million) decrease in the number of adults classified as active and a two per cent increase (1.0 million) in the number of adults classified as inactive.⁸

Figure 1: Changes in activity levels of adult population



Source: Sport England, *Active Lives Adult Survey May 2020/21 Report* (October 2021), p 7: <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-10/Active%20Lives%20Adult%20Survey%20May%202020-21%20Report.pdf> [accessed 18 November 2021] and Sport England, ‘Active Lives Online’: <https://activelives.sportengland.org/Result?queryId=82> [accessed 18 November 2021]

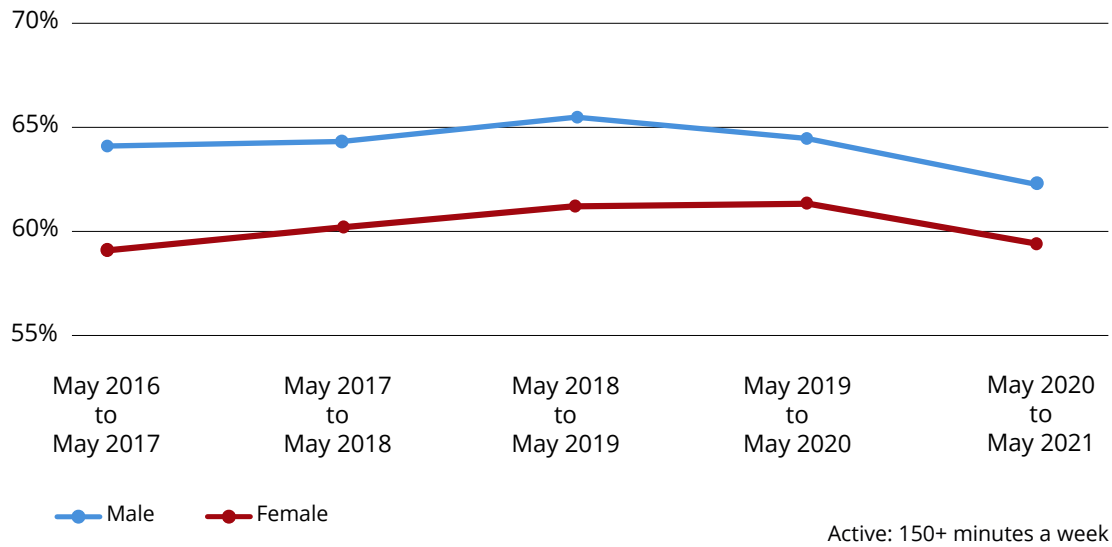
9. Men are more likely to be active than women: 62.3 per cent of men (13.8 million) were active in the year to May 2021, whereas 59.8 per cent of women (13.9 million) were active.⁹ This gap has remained since the Active Lives surveys began.

7 Sport England, *Active Lives Online*

8 Sport England, *Active Lives Adult Survey May 2020/21 Report*, p 7

9 *Ibid.*, p 10

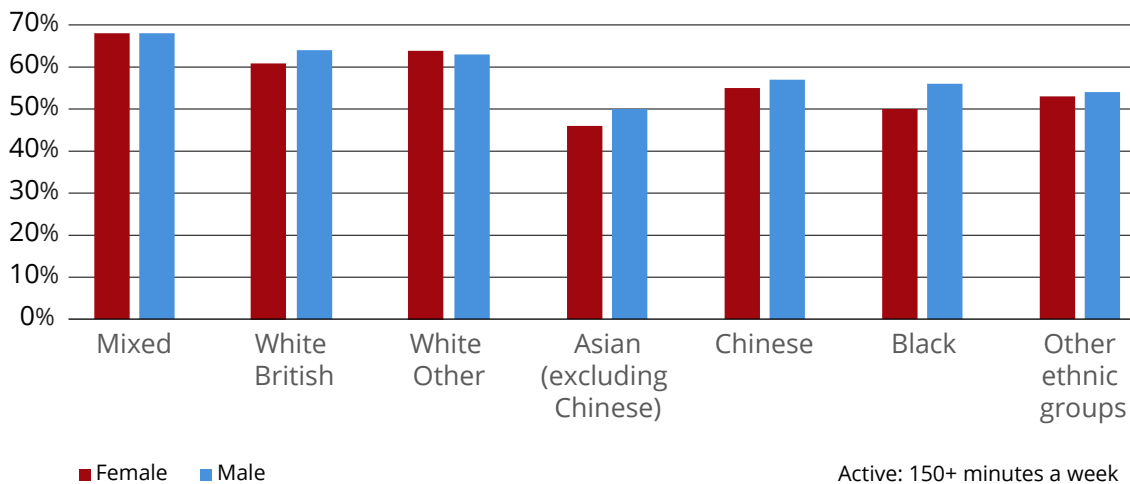
Figure 2: Activity rates of men and women



Source: Sport England, *Active Lives Adult Survey May 2020/21 Report* (October 2021), p 10: <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-10/Active%20Lives%20Adult%20Survey%20May%202020-21%20Report.pdf> [accessed 12 November 2021]

10. There is a clear activity gap between all ethnic groups. The gap is most pronounced for Asian (excluding Chinese) and Black African women. To make matters worse, the pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on ethnic minorities which has widened the gap.

Figure 3: Activity rates of adults across ethnic groups



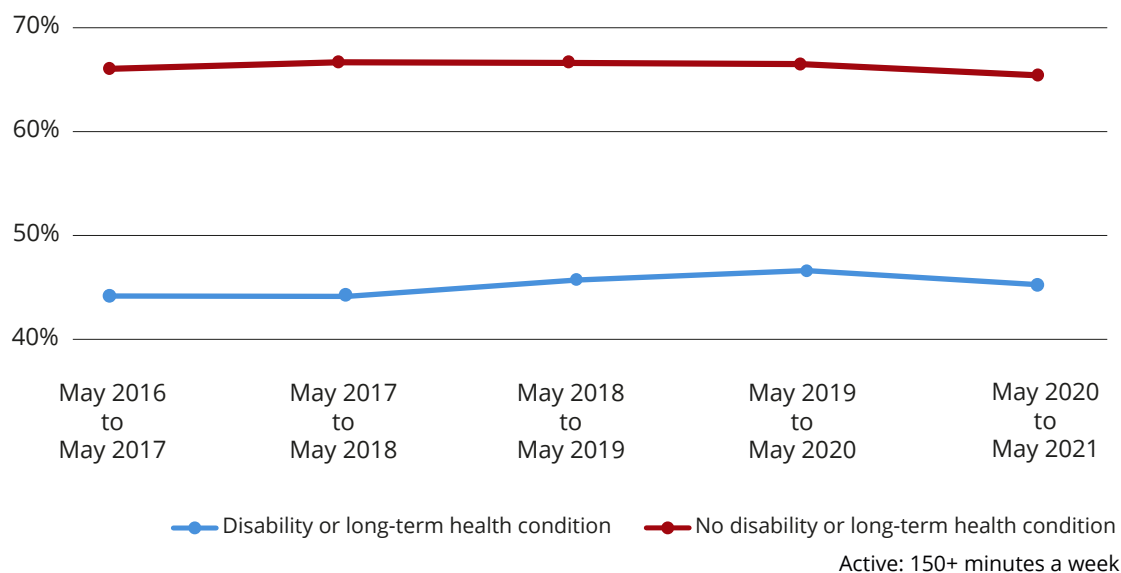
Source: Sport England, *Active Lives Adult Survey May 2020/21 Report* (October 2021), p 20: <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-10/Active%20Lives%20Adult%20Survey%20May%202020-21%20Report.pdf> [accessed 12 November 2021]

11. Activity rates decline with age, with the lowest activity levels found among those aged 75 and over. The number of those aged 75 and over who are active rose from 33.9 per cent (1.5 million) in the May 2016–2017 Active Lives survey to 37.8 per cent (1.8 million) in the May 2020–2021 survey.¹⁰

¹⁰ Sport England, *Active Lives Adult Survey May 2020/21 Report*, p 16 and Sport England, ‘Active Lives survey query builder’: <https://activelives.sportengland.org/Result?queryId=7027> [accessed 12 November 2021]

There is also a significant cross-over between age and disability. Around 44 per cent of those aged 65 or over reported having at least one disability in 2018–19.¹¹ Among older people the most common disability is mobility issues. Activity rates for older people, disabled people and those living with long-term health conditions fell during the pandemic and this may be linked to the number of people in these groups that were required to shield during the first lockdown.¹²

Figure 4: Activity levels of adults with and without a disability or long-term health condition

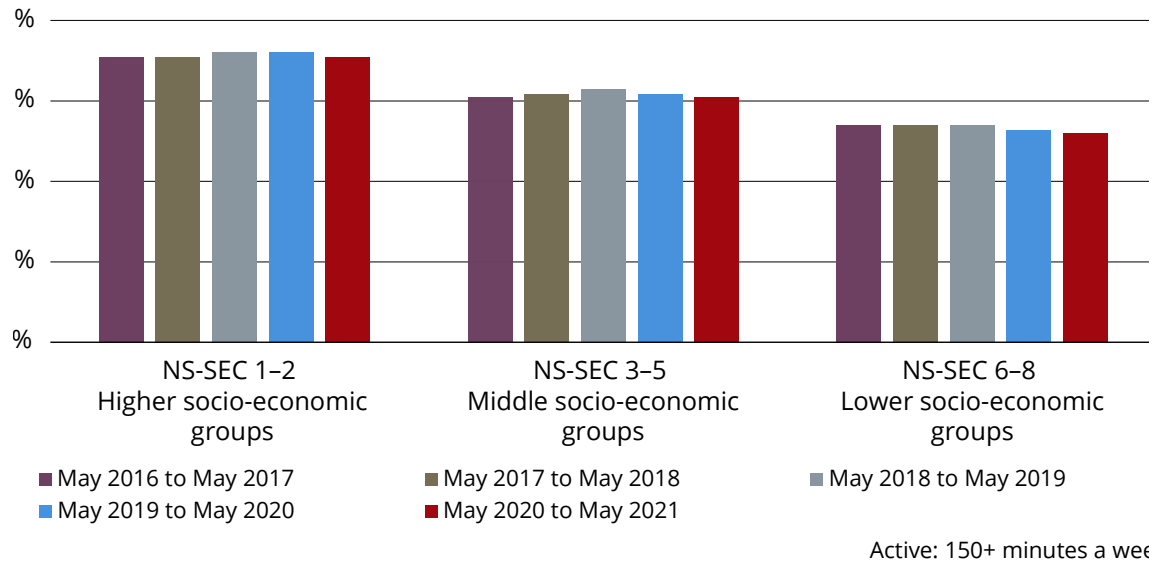


Source: Sport England, *Active Lives Adult Survey May 2020/21 Report* (October 2021), p 18: <https://sport-england-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-10/Active%20Lives%20Adult%20Survey%20May%202020-21%20Report.pdf> [accessed 12 November 2021]

12. People in higher socio-economic groups are more likely to be active than those in lower socio-economic groups. Activity levels among those from high and mid-affluent economic groups recorded drops between May 2020 to May 2021.¹³ Although there was no evident significant impact on physical activity rates for those in the least affluent groups over the pandemic, there has been a decline in physical rates since 2016.¹⁴

11 Department for Work and Pensions, *Family Resources Survey 2018/19* (26 March 2020), p 1: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/874507/family-resources-survey-2018-19.pdf [accessed 12 November 2021]
 12 Sport England, *Active Lives Adult Survey May 2020/21 Report*, pp 17–18
 13 In the Sport England Active Lives survey, “high affluent groups” refers to those in National Statistics Socio-economic (NS-SEC) groups 1–2, “mid affluent groups” refers to those in NS-SEC groups 3–5, and “least affluent” groups refers to those in NS-SEC groups 6–8.
 14 Sport England, *Active Lives Adult Survey May 2020/21 Report*, p 12

Figure 5: Activity levels of adults across socio-economic groups



Source: Sport England, *Active Lives Adult Survey May 2020/21 Report* (October 2021), p 12: <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-10/Active%20Lives%20Adult%20Survey%20May%202020-21%20Report.pdf> [accessed 12 November 2021]

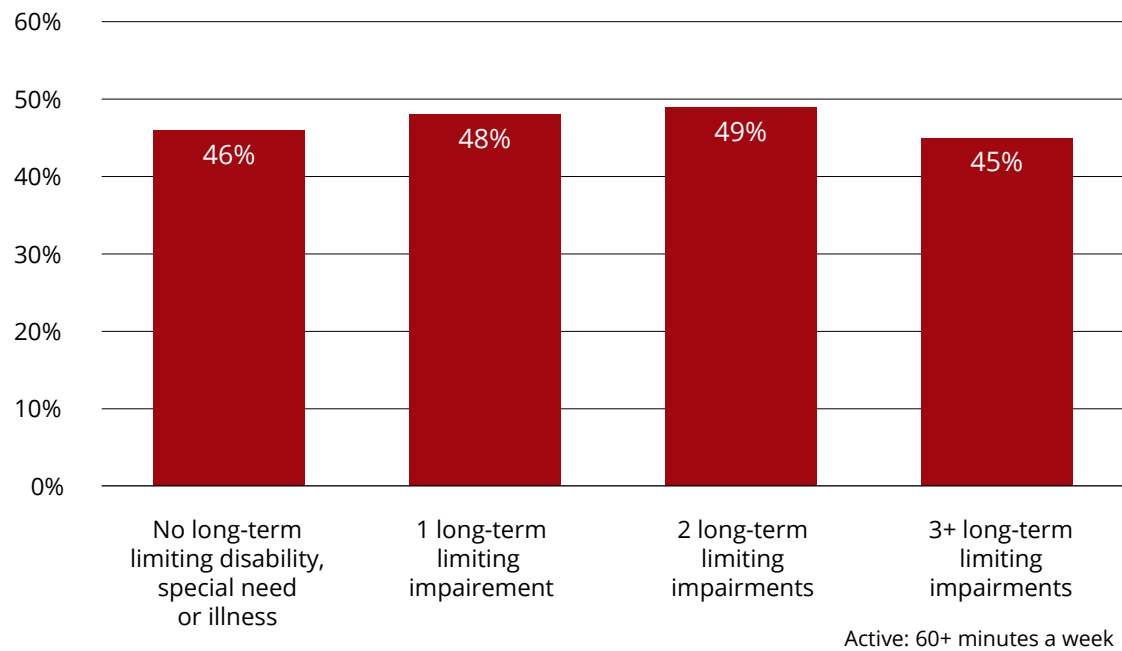
Children activity rates

13. Data collected for the most recent Active Lives Children and Young People’s Survey cover the academic year 2019–20.¹⁵ It collects information on activity rates by age group, gender, socio-economic group, ethnicity and disability and long-term health conditions. A child is “active” if they complete an average of at least 60 minutes a day of at least moderate intensity activity. Those who achieve an average of 30–59 minutes a day are “fairly active” and those completing less than an average of 30 minutes a day are considered “less active”.¹⁶
14. The Active Lives Children’s survey for the 2019–20 academic year survey shows that 44.9 per cent of children (3.2 million) are active, 23.8 per cent (1.7 million) are fairly active and 31.3 per cent (2.3 million) are less active. A lot of the trends seen in the Active Lives Adult Survey are found in the children’s survey. Boys are more likely to be active than girls, children from higher socio-economic groups are more likely to be active than those from lower socio-economic groups, and children from ethnic minority backgrounds are more likely to be less active than children of ‘White British’ or ‘White Other’ backgrounds. However, activity levels amongst children and young people with a disability or long-term health condition were at the same level as other children.

¹⁵ The survey notes that collection was interrupted by the closure of schools during the first lockdown.

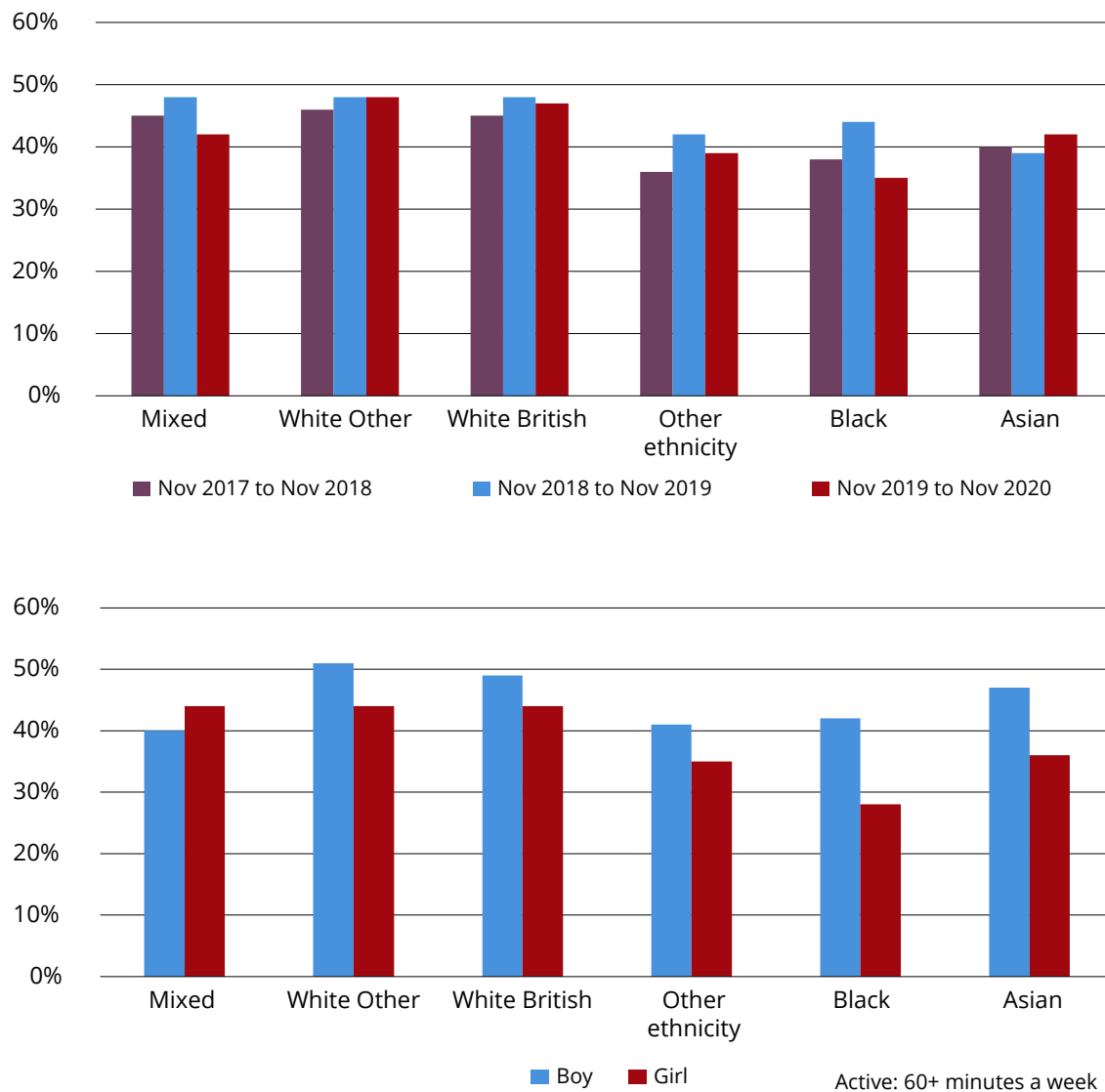
¹⁶ Sport England, *Active Lives Children and Young People Survey Academic year 2019/20* (January 2021), pp 4–5: <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-01/Active%20Lives%20Children%20Survey%20Academic%20Year%202019-20%20report.pdf> [accessed 12 November 2021]

Figure 6: Activity levels of children and young people with and without a disability or long-term health condition



Source: Sport England, *Active Lives Children and Young People Survey Academic year 2019/20* (January 2021), p 11: <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-01/Active%20Lives%20Children%20Survey%20Academic%20Year%202019-20%20report.pdf> [accessed 12 November 2021]

Figure 7: Levels of activity in children across ethnic groups



Source: Sport England, *Active Lives Children and Young People Survey Academic year 2019/20 (January 2021)*, p 12: <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-01/Active%20Lives%20Children%20Survey%20Academic%20Year%2019-20%20report.pdf> [accessed 12 November 2021]

Impact of COVID-19

15. It is hard to imagine anything that could have highlighted the scale and immediacy of the challenge to get more people active than a global pandemic. Between 13 March 2020 and 29 November 2021 there were over 144,000 recorded deaths in England in which the person had tested positive for COVID-19 in the preceding 28 days.¹⁷ There is an overlap between those groups hardest hit by the pandemic and those less likely to be active. For example, mortality rates from COVID-19 have been higher among those with pre-existing health conditions, the elderly, disabled people, people from lower socio-economic backgrounds and ethnic minorities. The impact of COVID-19 on these groups has exacerbated existing health inequalities.¹⁸

17 HM Government, 'Deaths in the United Kingdom': <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/details/deaths> [accessed 29 November 2021]

18 NHS, 'Action required to tackle health inequalities in latest phase of COVID-19 response and recovery': <https://www.england.nhs.uk/about/equality/equality-hub/action-required-to-tackle-health-inequalities-in-latest-phase-of-covid-19-response-and-recovery> [accessed 12 November 2021]

16. Organised sport was suspended and facilities, including gyms, pools and leisure centres, were closed as part of the Government’s COVID-19 restrictions. Activity rates, which had been on a modest upward trajectory, declined and levels of anxiety and inactivity increased. Major sporting events were cancelled to the disappointment of fans and to the financial cost of organisers and staff.
17. However, even during times of restrictions, many people found alternative ways to stay active. Parks and other green spaces remained open and activities such as walking, cycling and running all increased during the pandemic. There was also a surge in demand for online classes, exercise apps and other technology solutions to help people stay fit and motivated.¹⁹
18. Several witnesses made observations about the impact of the pandemic on sport and recreation. For example, Matt Hughes, Chief Sports Reporter at the *Daily Mail*, drew attention to the impact on people from lower socio-economic groups.²⁰ Anna Kessel, Women’s Sports Editor at *The Telegraph*, told us that, at the elite level, women’s sports and Paralympic athletes have suffered disproportionately.²¹ Matt Hughes and Anna Kessel both expressed concern that children’s physical activity had not been prioritised enough during the pandemic.²²
19. Utilita Energy, publishers of the 2020 *State of Play* and 2021 *Final Whistle* reports, expressed concern around the impact of the pandemic for grassroots football clubs including the financial impact on “already underfunded and ill-maintained” facilities.²³ Jordan Jarrett-Bryan, Sports Reporter for Channel 4 News, told us that the impact of COVID-19 had shone a spotlight on the poor suitability and sustainability of some financial and business models being used in sport.²⁴

Scope of the inquiry and structure of the report

20. This Committee was appointed in October 2020 “to examine the current state of sport and recreation policy in the UK and consider the creation of a National Plan for Sport and Recreation”.²⁵ Early on we moved from an emphasis on sport to health and wellbeing and active lifestyles, of which sport is just one component. This has led us to consider a wider range of themes related to physical activity and how we can embed activity in our daily lives. On the creation of a national plan, we have kept an open mind throughout this inquiry about whether one was required. Our conclusion, that a coherent national plan is necessary, has arisen from the evidence we have heard.
21. Although COVID-19 restrictions precluded us from travelling or having in-person sessions, we have strived to talk to as many people as possible. In addition to our virtual public evidence sessions, we held a series of virtual roundtable sessions. The first of these was with grassroots organisations

19 Sport England, *Active Lives Adult Survey November 2019/20 Report* (April 2021): <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-04/Active%20Lives%20Adult%20November%202019-20%20Report.pdf> [accessed 15 November 2021]

20 Q 41 (Matt Hughes)

21 Q 41 (Anna Kessel)

22 Q 42 (Matt Hughes and Anna Kessel)

23 Written evidence from Utilita Energy (NPS0143)

24 Q 41 (Jordan Jarrett-Bryan)

25 Liaison Committee, *New special inquiry committees 2020-21* (2nd Report, Session 2019-21, HL Paper 102)

working in local communities. The second session was with secondary school students from New College Leicester and St Aidan's Church of England High School, Harrogate. The third session was with primary and secondary school PE teachers. Our fourth session was with disabled young adults. We also held an online roundtable with CEOs of sports NGBs and sector experts.

22. The UK is not alone in grappling with the challenges of inactivity and poor health and we also sought to learn from international experience. We are grateful to Hon. Grant Robertson, Deputy Prime Minister of New Zealand, Minister for Sport and Recreation and Finance Minister, for giving evidence to us. We are also grateful to Mads Andreassen, Head of Activity Development at the Norwegian Sports Confederation, Dr Josef Fahlén, then Associate Professor at Umeå University, Sweden, and Dr Eivind Å Skille, Professor of Sport Sociology, Faculty of Social and Health Sciences, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway, for sharing their knowledge and experience of delivering sport and recreation in Sweden and Norway.
23. We heard from 76 witnesses in public evidence sessions and received 163 pieces of written evidence in addition to the roundtable sessions we held. We would like to thank everyone who contributed to this inquiry. We would also like to thank our specialist adviser, Dr Chris Mackintosh, who provided invaluable guidance and advice throughout the inquiry.
24. This report comprises seven chapters, including this introduction, and is structured as follows.
25. In Chapter 2 we set out the case for a national plan for sport, health and wellbeing. We consider delivery and funding structures in the sector and examine the collection of data and how we monitor and evaluate impact.
26. In Chapter 3 we consider key principles underpinning the national plan: physical literacy, welcoming and inclusive participation, tackling health inequalities, behaviour change, and sport for development.
27. In Chapter 4 we look at ways to make sport fun and enjoyable, the delivery of PE and the PE and Sport Premium, ways for children to be active throughout the school day and links between schools, clubs and communities.
28. In Chapter 5 we focus on enabling active lifestyles including creating active environments, promoting active travel and supporting the role of technology.
29. In Chapter 6 we focus on duty of care and safeguarding and the conditions necessary to create a safe and welcoming environment for people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities.
30. In the final chapter we consider the crucial role of the workforce, coaches and volunteers. We look at careers in the sport and recreation sector, the role of coaches and volunteers, the case for a national register of coaches and issues around improving diversity.

CHAPTER 2: A NATIONAL PLAN FOR SPORT, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

31. This chapter sets out the case for a national plan for sport, health and wellbeing. We begin by looking at the current policy and delivery landscape. We then consider arguments for a national plan and look at changes to the delivery and funding structures needed to successfully implement the vision of the national plan. We also look at how we monitor and evaluate impact, and how to use data more effectively.

Sport and recreation policy and delivery

32. The sport and recreation landscape has many moving parts. Government sets high-level policy but it does not prescribe which organisations, sports or activities should be supported or funded. Although Government policy seeks to make physical activity easy and accessible, being active is a matter of individual responsibility. NGBs, professional and amateur local sports clubs, private businesses, charities, and voluntary, community and social enterprises deliver sport and recreation on the ground. Sport England and UK Sport, as National Lottery distributors, are mandated to make funding decisions and identify areas for investment and support. This includes distributing funding to NGBs and other sports bodies and organisations. Regulation of individual sports lies with NGBs.
33. DCMS leads on sport policy in England but it is not the only department dealing with physical activity. The Department for Education (DfE) covers sport and physical activity in schools, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) covers physical activity as it relates to health outcomes and the Department for Transport (DfT) is responsible for active travel including walking and cycling routes. Other departments also have remits which impact on physical activity. For example, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) plays a key role in managing access to the countryside, fresh air and clean water, and the Treasury controls the purse-strings. DCMS convenes meetings with other Ministers to discuss sport and recreation policy where there is crossover but there is no overarching structure in place to coordinate cross-departmental working.
34. Sport England began as the Sports Council, established by Royal Charter in 1972. An amended Royal Charter in 1996 established the English Sports Council and the organisation was rebranded as Sport England in 1999. It is one of five Sports Councils in the UK along with Sport Scotland, Sport Wales, Sport Northern Ireland and UK Sport. Sport England is responsible for growing and developing grassroots sport and getting more people active across England. It was given responsibility for promoting recreation along with sport as part of the Government's *Sporting Future* strategy. UK Sport is responsible for investing in Olympic and Paralympic Sports and is the lead agency for major UK sporting events.
35. Public Health England (PHE) was established as an Executive Agency of the (then) Department of Health in 2013. PHE was responsible for overseeing the local delivery of public health services and for dealing with population-wide health issues. The Government announced the break-up of PHE in August 2020 and a new Office for Health Promotion was proposed. The Office has

since been renamed the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities and was established in October 2021.²⁶

36. Local authorities are the biggest investor in sport and recreation, providing pitches, facilities and leisure centres.²⁷ They are responsible for a third of all swimming pools, 31 per cent of grass pitches, 13 per cent of sports halls and almost a fifth of all health and fitness facilities.²⁸ They spend money on sport and recreation directly, for example on development and maintenance of leisure facilities and parks, or indirectly through different budget streams such as health and wellbeing, and youth services.
37. Devolution deals and the introduction of metro mayors have given expanded powers to combined authorities over policy areas that impact physical activity and active lifestyles including transport and housing and, in the case of Greater Manchester, responsibility over health and welfare budgets. Local and combined authorities also have responsibilities including safeguarding, rights of way and the provision of parks and other green and blue spaces.²⁹ Central government and local authorities also engage in joint spending, primarily on investment in capital facilities.
38. However, despite the important role of local and combined authorities in the delivery of sport and recreation and in investing in infrastructure, local government expenditure on parks, recreation and leisure centres has fallen from £1.6 billion to £1 billion since 2010 and there is no statutory provision for local authorities to provide facilities or sporting activity in England.³⁰
39. Delivery of sport primarily takes place through grassroots clubs. Clubs can be amateur local sports clubs affiliated to a relevant NGB or other community clubs run by charities, voluntary and social enterprises which may or may not have a relationship with an NGB. Clubs are essential for organising grassroots sport and physical activity, whether it is administering a local or regional competitive league or more informal activity groups. Amateur sports clubs and other community groups often generate their own income through membership fees, fundraising endeavours or by applying for sponsorship and grants. Property-owning clubs may have other means of making money including hiring their facilities to other groups or through bar profits from the club house. A defining characteristic of local grassroots club is their reliance on volunteers to manage and run the club.
40. Other important players in the policy and delivery landscape are Leisure Trusts and Active Partnerships. Leisure Trusts, often set up by local authorities, manage approximately 43 per cent of public leisure provision in England.³¹ Active Partnerships (formerly known as County Sports Partnerships) are networks of local delivery agencies and local representatives of NGBs that work together to increase participation in sport and physical activity and play

26 DHSC, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities and the Rt. Hon. Sajid Javid MP, 'New body to tackle health disparities will launch 1 October, co-headed by new Deputy Chief Medical Officer' (3 September 2021): <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-body-to-tackle-health-disparities-will-launch-1-october-co-headed-by-new-dcmo--2> [accessed 15 November 2021]

27 Dr Chris Mackintosh, *Foundations of Sport for Development*, 1st edition (Routledge, 2021), p 101

28 Written evidence from the LGA (NPS0050)

29 Blue spaces mean waters where recreational activities, such as canoeing or kayaking, can take place.

30 Q 27 (Ian Brooke)

31 'Councils must back leisure and cultural trusts', *Local Government Chronicle* (21 November 2018): <https://www.lgcplus.com/services/community-cohesion/councils-must-back-leisure-and-cultural-trusts-21-11-2018/> [accessed 15 November 2021]

a role in coordinating activities.³² There are 43 Active Partnerships across England.

41. DCMS published its cross-departmental strategy, *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation* in 2015, aimed at tackling flatlining levels of sport participation and high levels of inactivity.³³ Several strategies sit under the *Sporting Future* umbrella. These include Sport England's *Towards an Active Nation* strategy³⁴, published in 2016 and related strategies covering the sport and recreation workforce, coaching and volunteering and its new ten-year strategy, *Uniting the Movement*, published in January 2021.³⁵ The DfE, DHSC and DCMS *School Sport and Activity Action Plan*³⁶, which was also developed in response to the *Sporting Future* strategy, and DfT's *Gear Change* strategy³⁷ on active transport are discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively.
42. The *Sporting Future* strategy identified five priority outcomes—physical health, mental health, individual development, social and community development, and economic development. These outcomes are linked to a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure and monitor progress and to guide decision making on where and how to spend resources.³⁸
43. The *Sporting Future* strategy also examined the role of central Government and devolved authorities and looks at ways to engage more people from different backgrounds, abilities and ages, as participants, volunteers, workforce and spectators. It expanded the remit of Sport England to include responsibility for sport outside school for children from the age of 5 (previously Sport England's remit was from the age of 14) and to physical activity beyond sport. The *Sporting Future* strategy also covers elite and international sporting success and financial sustainability of the sport sector.
44. The Government published an annual update on the strategy in 2017 and 2018 and tabled a Written Ministerial Statement for its third annual report in 2019. No updates have been published since. DCMS told us that it is refreshing the *Sporting Future* strategy with a view to countering the impact of the pandemic.³⁹

32 Department for Culture, Media and Sport, *Triennial Review of UK Sport and Sport England: Report* (16 September 2015): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/461075/160915_Report_of_triennial_review_of_UK_Sport_and_Sport_England_for_publication_REVISED_ANNEX_LINKS.pdf [accessed 15 November 2021]

33 Cabinet Office, *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation* (December 2015): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486622/Sporting_Future_ACCESSIBLE.pdf [accessed 18 November 2021]

34 Sport England, *Sport England: Towards an Active Nation Strategy 2016–2021* (May 2016): <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/sport-england-towards-an-active-nation.pdf> [accessed 24 November 2021]

35 Sport England, *Uniting the Movement: A 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity* (January 2021): <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-01/Sport%20England%20-%20Uniting%20the%20Movement%20-%20Large%20print.pdf> [accessed 15 November 2021]

36 Department for Education, Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, and Department of Health and Social Care, *School Sport and Activity Action Plan* (15 July 2019): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/848082/School_sport_and_activity_action_plan.pdf [accessed 15 November 2021]

37 Department for Transport, *Gear Change: A bold vision for cycling and walking* (July 2020): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904146/gear-change-a-bold-vision-for-cycling-and-walking.pdf [accessed 18 November 2021]

38 Cabinet Office, *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation*, pp 17 and 76–80

39 Supplementary written evidence from DCMS (NPS0030)

45. As part of its *Towards and Active Nation* strategy, Sport England announced 12 local delivery pilots⁴⁰ in 2017 across the country to test new ways of using “local identities and structures to deliver sustainable increases in activity levels”.⁴¹ It allocated £100 million to the pilots over four years starting from January 2018. Under the scheme, each area is tasked with looking at the challenges within specific areas and communities and bringing together a broad range of stakeholders to tackle inactivity and reach underrepresented groups.⁴² By way of examples of how the local delivery pilots are working, Sport England told us about work in Exeter supporting the creation of new housing and infrastructure to lower congestion and shift travel patterns, and in Calderdale which is building physical activity into client care plans for older adults.⁴³
46. Sport England’s new 10-year strategy *Uniting the Movement* builds on the theme of improving diversity and inclusion which was introduced in its *Toward an Active Nation* strategy. The 10-year plan sets out three overarching objectives:
- Advocating for movement, sport and physical activity;
 - Working together on five big issues—recover and reinvent, connecting communities, positive experiences for children and young people, connecting with health and wellbeing, and active environments; and
 - Creating catalysts for change—effective investment models, realising the power of people and leadership, applying innovation and digital, high-quality data, insight and learning, and good governance.⁴⁴

The case for a national plan for sport, health and wellbeing

47. We heard that Government strategies that are relevant to improving rates of physical activity exist in a siloed and disjointed system. Cross-departmental work is not happening on the scale that is required, the strategic links between Government and local authorities are inadequate, and infrastructure, delivery and quality of provision is unevenly distributed.
48. There was broad agreement in favour of a national plan. Witnesses saw the plan as an opportunity to improve cross-departmental working and to set out the Government’s COVID-19 recovery plans. Others drew attention to its potential scope. Witnesses who were less convinced on the need for a national plan raised concerns that it would duplicate existing work and questioned whether the plan would add value.
49. Ukactive, an industry association, said a national, long-term plan was “essential” for supporting the COVID-19 recovery, alleviating health

40 The pilot areas are Birmingham and Solihull, Bradford, Calderdale, Doncaster, Essex, Exeter, Cranbrook, Greater Manchester, Hackney, Pennine Lancashire, Southall, South Tees and Withernsea.

41 Sport England, ‘Local delivery’: <https://sportengland.org/campaigns-and-our-work/local-delivery> [accessed 15 November 2021]

42 Cabinet Office, *Sporting Future: Second Annual Report* (January 2018), p 10: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/677557/2018_Second_annual_report_to_parliament_on_Sporting_Future.pdf [accessed 15 November 2021]

43 Written evidence from Sport England ([NPS0100](#))

44 Sport England, *Uniting the Movement: A 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity* (January 2021): <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-01/Sport%20England%20-%20Uniting%20the%20Movement%20-%20Large%20print.pdf> [accessed 30 November 2021]

inequalities, combatting obesity and improving people’s quality of life.⁴⁵ The English Football League (EFL) Trust, the charitable arm of the EFL, called COVID-19 a “wake up call” that “has only accentuated” the need for a national plan.⁴⁶ BASES saw an opportunity for a national plan to support the post-COVID-19 recovery and to improve coordination, collaboration and consistency.⁴⁷

50. The MRC Epidemiology Unit, University of Cambridge, suggested that it should be a “national plan for active lives” rather than for “sport and recreation”, to encompass wider environmental and structural elements in the plan.⁴⁸ The National Lottery Community Fund proposed that “a national plan for community wellbeing” which looks at the role of sport and recreation in supporting and strengthening local communities would be more appropriate.⁴⁹ The Richmond Group of Charities, a collection of national charities focussing on England’s health and care system, suggested calling it a national plan for sport, recreation and physical activity to make it more inclusive and relatable to the wider population.⁵⁰
51. British Cycling told us that a national plan needs to go “far beyond” sport and recreation to encompass planning, transport, education, business and other policy areas which have an impact on public health.⁵¹ Playing Out, a charity promoting safe streets activities for children, felt that the plan should take a broad view and consider, for example, planning, transport, housing, community, local government and environmental policies.⁵² Richard Baldwin MBE, a tax adviser specialising in the sport sector, suggested that a national plan “should encourage financial self-sufficiency in sport based on a more favourable tax regime”.⁵³
52. We heard how a national plan could facilitate better coordination across the sector. Active Partnerships suggested that a national plan could “provide guidance, direction and a shared purpose” to coordinate working.⁵⁴ Heather Douglas, Head of Policy and Impact at UK Coaching, called for the plan to help foster collaboration over competition among stakeholders.⁵⁵
53. The Youth Sport Trust called for a long-term, cross-government plan to “tackle the crisis of inactivity and poor wellbeing in young people.”⁵⁶ Girlguiding wanted the national plan to consider the experiences of girls and young women.⁵⁷ Baroness Campbell of Loughborough, Director of Women’s Football at the Football Association (FA), told us that a national strategy should place high importance on school physical education and school sport.⁵⁸
54. Regarding elite sport, Dr Seema Patel, Senior Lecturer in Law at Nottingham Trent University, saw a role for a national plan to provide the regulatory

45 Supplementary written evidence from ukactive ([NPS0124](#))

46 Written evidence from the English Football League Trust ([NPS0097](#))

47 Written evidence from the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES) ([NPS0035](#))

48 Written evidence from the MRC Epidemiology Unit, University of Cambridge ([NPS0051](#))

49 Written evidence from the National Lottery Community Fund ([NPS0086](#))

50 Written evidence from the Richmond Group of Charities ([NPS0141](#))

51 Written evidence from the British Cycling Federation ([NPS0083](#))

52 Written evidence from Playing Out ([NPS0052](#))

53 Written evidence from Richard Baldwin ([NPS0010](#))

54 Supplementary written evidence from Active Partnerships ([NPS0098](#))

55 [Q 166](#) (Heather Douglas)

56 Written evidence from the Youth Sport Trust ([NPS0115](#))

57 Written evidence from Girlguiding ([NPS0074](#))

58 [Q 144](#) (Baroness Campbell of Loughborough)

framework for protecting athletes' rights.⁵⁹ The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Sport, Modern Slavery and Human Rights told us that a national plan should “ensure equal treatment within a safe sporting environment and equal access to sporting opportunities” including equal pay.⁶⁰

55. We heard how a national plan could support stakeholders in establishing best practice and improve monitoring and evaluation. Sporting Communities, a Community Interest Company called for the national plan to include a detailed map of provision to ensure that investment can be targeted and prioritised accordingly.⁶¹ Goalball UK suggested that a new strategy could be used to monitor investment through close interaction with non-Government bodies and utilising a central database on sports and recreation participation.⁶² Kirsty Cumming, CEO of Community Leisure UK, called for a national plan to outline joint principles and targets which could then be monitored.⁶³
56. However, some witnesses were equivocal on whether it would improve cross-departmental working or add value. For example, Swim England and UK Learning Disability questioned how a national plan would fit with existing strategies.⁶⁴ StreetGames, a charity that delivers community sport projects, and England Athletics and UK Athletics also expressed concern that a national plan risked duplicating existing strategies.⁶⁵ British Cycling and Dr Iain Lindsey, Benjamin Rigby, Professor Brett Smith, Dr Emily Oliver and Dr Caroline Dodd-Reynolds argued that the focus should be on adapting the policymaking process surrounding sport and recreation rather than creating a new plan.⁶⁶
57. Sport England agreed that a national plan would be a duplication of what is already in place but conceded that there was room for greater cross-government planning “to bring complementary, existing strategies together” which span sport and physical activity, preventative health, national wellbeing, education, community and infrastructure design, planning and the protection of green spaces.⁶⁷ The Government was clear that it did not see any need for a national plan, saying that it would “duplicate existing published strategies”.⁶⁸
58. **We are calling for the development of a long-term, cross-government national plan for sport, health and wellbeing. The national plan would form an over-arching framework document which would set out the Government’s vision, aims and objectives over a multi-year period and would bring together disparate strategies covering physical activity, health promotion, planning, housing, education, transport**

59 Written evidence from Dr Seema Patel ([NPS0041](#))

60 Written evidence from the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Sport, Modern Slavery, and Human Rights ([NPS0076](#))

61 Written evidence from the Sporting Communities Community Interest Company ([NPS0012](#))

62 Written evidence from Goalball UK ([NPS0075](#))

63 [Q 20](#) (Kirsty Cumming)

64 Written evidence from Swim England ([NPS0060](#)) and UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability ([NPS0122](#))

65 Written evidence from StreetGames ([NPS0091](#)) and England Athletics and UK Athletics ([NPS0102](#))

66 Written evidence from British Cycling Federation ([NPS0083](#)) and Dr Iain Lindsey, Mr Benjamin Rigby, Professor Brett Smith, Dr Emily Oliver and Dr Caroline Dodd-Reynolds ([NPS0111](#))

67 Written evidence from Sport England ([NPS0100](#))

68 Written evidence from HM Government ([NPS0134](#))

and more. This will mean that some existing strategies such as *Sporting Future* will need to be incorporated into the national plan and refreshed to reflect the new way of working, but not abandoned.

A new delivery and funding structure

59. The *Sporting Future* strategy and Sport England’s *Uniting the Movement* strategy were both seen by witnesses as being positive steps forward. However, we also heard that the current delivery and funding systems are fragmented and that much more needs to be done to improve cross-departmental coordination and to streamline overly complicated and bureaucratic processes for accessing funding.
60. Robert Sullivan OBE, CEO of the Football Foundation, told us that *Sporting Future* “has set a very clear framework” and has targeted those social and demographic groups that are currently underrepresented.⁶⁹ The Rugby Football Union (RFU) praised the strategy for establishing a longer-term set of goals and measures which provided the sporting sector with consistency.⁷⁰ However, Active Partnerships described *Sporting Future*’s implementation as “inconsistent”.⁷¹
61. The Sport for Development Coalition said that Sport England’s *Uniting the Movement* strategy is “a model” of commitment to tackling inequalities.⁷² The Sport and Recreation Alliance described *Uniting the Movement* as an “important milestone”.⁷³
62. We also heard that, despite these strategies, the sector remains fragmented and confusing for those trying to access funding and deliver sport and recreation services on the ground. Dr Lindsey et al, members of the Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences at Durham University, called the sport and recreation policy landscape “very fragmented”.⁷⁴ The Local Government Association (LGA) described Government funding for public leisure initiatives as “frequently fragmented and accompanied by bureaucratic and burdensome bidding processes”.⁷⁵ Paul Owen OBE, Sporting Ambassador for Sport in Mind, and Sally Munday OBE, CEO of UK Sport, thought the landscape of the sector was “complicated” or “complex” rather than fragmented.⁷⁶
63. Frustrations around funding went beyond the lack of coordination between government departments. Richard Baldwin told us that the tendency of public sector funders such as Sport England to by-pass NGBs and deal directly with local clubs was creating a postcode lottery for grassroots sport funding.⁷⁷ The Police Community Clubs of Great Britain and the British Mountaineering Council felt that NGBs should be a key channel through which funding is distributed.⁷⁸

69 [Q 63](#) (Robert Sullivan)

70 Written evidence from the RFU ([NPS0146](#))

71 Supplementary written evidence from Active Partnerships ([NPS0098](#))

72 Written evidence from the Sport for Development Coalition ([NPS0144](#))

73 Supplementary written evidence from the Sport and Recreation Alliance ([NPS0138](#))

74 Written evidence from Dr Iain Lindsey, Mr Benjamin Rigby, Professor Brett Smith, Dr Emily Oliver and Dr Caroline Dodd-Reynolds ([NPS0111](#))

75 Written evidence from the LGA ([NPS0050](#)), see also written evidence from Malcolm Wallace ([NPS0114](#))

76 [Q 57](#) (Paul Owen) and [Q 200](#) (Sally Munday)

77 Written evidence from Richard Baldwin ([NPS0010](#))

78 Written evidence from the Police Community Clubs of Great Britain ([NPS0043](#)) and The British Mountaineering Council ([NPS0103](#))

64. However, Sporting Communities said that Government needs to be less risk averse in its funding decisions and proposed that funding go directly to the voluntary sector through a series of volunteer-led regional consortiums made up of smaller and mid-sized voluntary organisations.⁷⁹ Active Communities Network, which brings together groups operating in communities, called for funding to find its way to trusted community groups.⁸⁰ The UK Sport Association for People with Learning Disability called for funding structures to “better reflect the needs of underrepresented groups”.⁸¹
65. Lisa Wainwright MBE, CEO of the Sport and Recreation Alliance, told us that “if you are in the system, you know how the system works” and that this knowledge can give organisations an advantage when it comes to accessing funding.⁸²
66. Rebecca Donnelly MBE, CEO of Fight 4 Change, told us that the short-term nature of funding means that some projects can only be delivered for a short period of time and are then stopped, which she said can cause more harm than good when you are trying to build up relationships with people and communities.⁸³ Professor Rosie Meek, Professor of Criminological Psychology at Royal Holloway, University of London, made the same point about projects delivered in criminal justice settings, telling us that short-term funding and time-scales do not allow for any meaningful impact and can be detrimental.⁸⁴ Mind called for longer-term investment to avoid the “start stop nature of physical activity projects”.⁸⁵
67. Lee Mason, former CEO of Active Partnerships, highlighted Sport England’s Tackling Inequalities Fund, which distributed funds via trusted local organisations and bodies to speed up delivery, as a positive example of reaching out to communities. He told us that the Fund is “a fundamentally different way of working”.⁸⁶ In October 2021, Sport England announced that the Tackling Inequalities Fund was to become the Together Fund, with £20 million of National Lottery funding being made available to tackle inequalities in physical activity levels.⁸⁷
68. We heard how funding could be better used to widen access to sport and leisure facilities for individuals and organisations. Yashmin Harun of the Muslimah Sports Association noted the high price of hiring venues and pitches and suggested concession rates for charities and community groups.⁸⁸ The Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association advocated for a grant to local authorities on a match funding basis to provide concessions in leisure centres and for outdoor activities.⁸⁹

79 Written evidence from Sporting Communities, Community Interest Company ([NPS0012](#))

80 Written evidence from Active Communities Network ([NPS0113](#))

81 Written evidence from UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability ([NPS0122](#))

82 [Q 14](#) (Lisa Wainwright)

83 [QQ 101 and 104](#) (Rebecca Donnelly)

84 [Q 92](#) (Professor Rosie Meek)

85 Supplementary written evidence from Mind ([NPS0109](#))

86 [Q 24](#) (Lee Mason)

87 Sport England, ‘Continued support to tackle inequalities with £20m Together Fund’ (6 October 2021): <https://www.sportengland.org/news/continued-support-tackle-inequalities-20m-together-fund> [accessed 30 November 2021]

88 Notes of roundtables with community sport organisations: <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/8062/documents/82931/default/>

89 Supplementary written evidence from the Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association ([NPS0016](#))

69. The LGA called for a strategic partnership between DCMS and local government to “tackle fragmentation”.⁹⁰ The Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association drew attention to the Local Government Physical Activity Partnership and suggested that it be made a statutory consultee for Government strategies and policies involving physical activity.⁹¹
70. Swim England expressed support for making leisure provision a statutory requirement for local authorities.⁹² Women in Sport called on the Government to develop a long-term solution to pools and leisure facilities including giving local authorities a statutory responsibility for provision and the necessary funding.⁹³ However, the LGA countered that making leisure provision a statutory service would not resolve the funding challenges faced by local councils or necessarily lead to more money being dedicated to leisure.⁹⁴
71. Hon. Grant Robertson, Deputy Prime Minister of New Zealand, Minister for Sport and Recreation and Finance Minister, told us about New Zealand’s efforts to promote cross-departmental working through the Government’s “wellbeing budget”, which uses a set of indicators beyond Gross Domestic Product, to derive the Government’s annual budget and against which to measure success.⁹⁵
72. Mark Davies, former Director for Population Health at DHSC, told us that Government departments work collectively on all aspects of physical activity including co-funding services and gave the examples of the DHSC’s contribution to the PE and Sport Premium (discussed in Chapter 4) and school games organisers.⁹⁶ The Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society at DCMS, Nigel Huddleston MP, told us that he is “more than happy” to engage and work more closely with local authorities.⁹⁷
73. Some witnesses noted the challenges of having sport based within DCMS. Andy Reed OBE, Co-Founder and Director of the Sports Think Tank, called DCMS “a very small department in a big government”.⁹⁸ Huw Edwards, CEO of ukactive, told us that “there are limitations” on what DCMS can deliver within its remit.⁹⁹ Nigel Huddleston MP noted that other countries provide examples of different structures including Australia where the Sports Minister reports to the Department of Health. He told us that he is “not too bothered” where the Minister for Sport sits “as long as we [Government] are well-coordinated”.¹⁰⁰
74. We heard several ideas on what structure might best promote a more coordinated and coherent approach to funding and delivery of sport. Sarah Mitchell, CEO of Cycling UK, called for a “central owner” for existing strategies who can oversee the work across multiple departments.¹⁰¹ British Cycling suggested that leadership needs to come from the Cabinet Office

90 Written evidence from the LGA ([NPS0050](#))

91 Supplementary written evidence from the Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association ([NPS0016](#))

92 Written evidence from Swim England ([NPS0060](#))

93 Written evidence from Women in Sport ([NPS0093](#))

94 Written evidence from the LGA ([NPS0050](#))

95 [Q 106](#) (Hon. Grant Robertson)

96 [Q 2](#) (Mark Davies)

97 [Q 221](#) (Nigel Huddleston MP)

98 [Q 19](#) (Andy Reed)

99 [Q 12](#) (Huw Edwards)

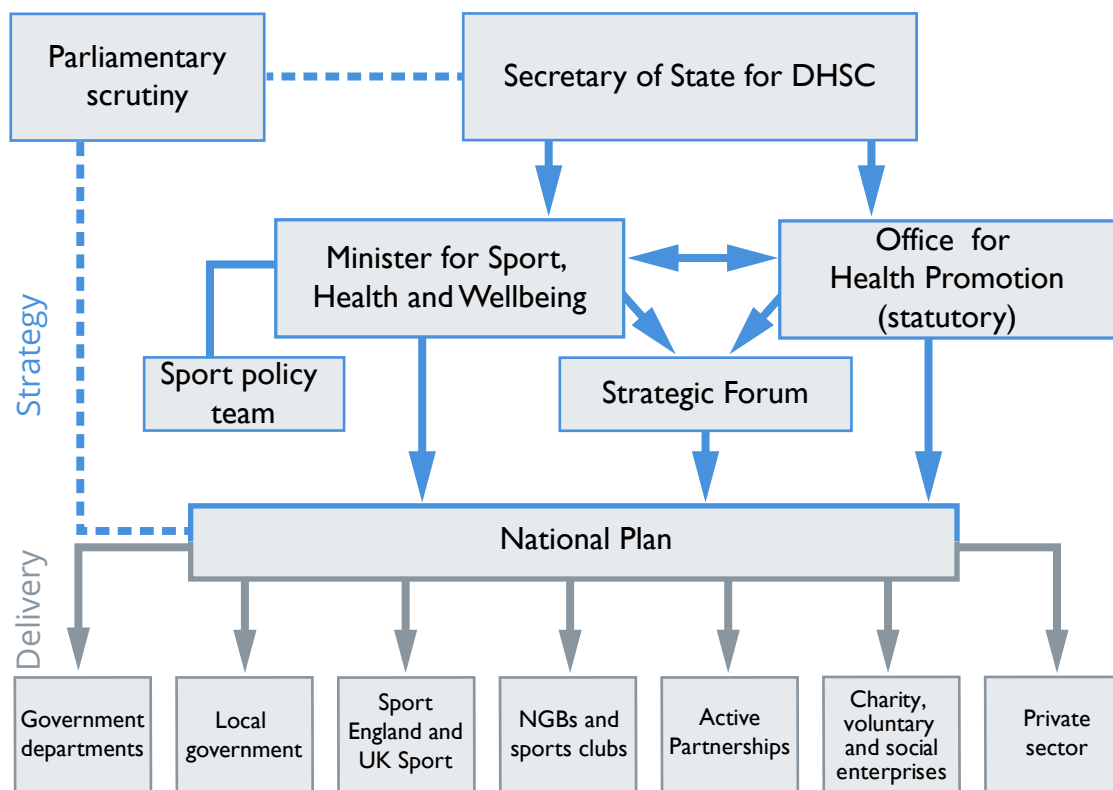
100 [Q 225](#) (Nigel Huddleston MP)

101 [Q 78](#) (Sarah Mitchell)

and the Prime Minister.¹⁰² British Canoeing made the case for a Secretary of State for Sport within Cabinet.¹⁰³ Andy Reed suggested that leadership would ideally come from the Treasury.¹⁰⁴ Baroness Campbell of Loughborough proposed a national commissioner role to bring the various policy strategies together.¹⁰⁵

75. Based on the evidence we heard and the long-standing nature of the challenges around cross-departmental coordination and delivery, we are calling for radical and ambitious change. The framework map in Figure 8 illustrates our vision for creating a new structure across Government to deliver the national plan. It is explained in further detail in the conclusions and recommendations below.

Figure 8: The framework



76. **Delivery of sport and recreation is uncoordinated and fragmented from the top down, and delivery and funding structures are not fit for purpose. There needs to be a new architecture to embed genuine cross-departmental working and to reset delivery and funding.**
77. **The establishment of the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities represents a timely opportunity to make ambitious changes within Government to match the ambitions of the national plan. As a first step, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities should be renamed the Office for Health Promotion and it must be placed on a statutory footing to give it the surety of purpose**

102 Written evidence from British Cycling Federation ([NPS0083](#))
103 Written evidence from British Canoeing ([NPS0090](#))
104 [Q 19](#) (Andy Reed)
105 [Q 149](#) (Baroness Campbell of Loughborough)

and authority to truly deliver cross-departmental working, and ensure that all departments are prioritising physical activity, health and wellbeing.

- 78. We also propose the establishment of a new ministerial post for Sport, Health and Wellbeing. This role will sit within DHSC and will have responsibility for sport policy, which will be moved from DCMS to DHSC. The role will have joint responsibility with the Office for Health Promotion to develop and oversee implementation of the national plan.**
- 79. The Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing will chair a regular Strategic Forum of central and local government and other key stakeholders to discuss the formation and implementation of the national plan. The national plan must have buy-in and support from local government, metro mayors and Active Partnerships, and it must incorporate the views of the broad range of stakeholders involved in delivering sport and recreation on the ground including grassroots organisations and NGBs.**
- 80. To establish consistent Parliamentary scrutiny of progress of the national plan, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care must coordinate and submit an annual report to Parliament setting out the Government's performance against the national plan and table a motion in both Houses to debate the annual report.**
- 81. Funding needs to coalesce around the national plan. The Government should look to New Zealand's wellbeing budget model for inspiration on how to coordinate departmental agendas and budgets around delivering a shared programme of work. The Treasury should review the tax environment for the sector, including for sports clubs, to create a more favourable tax regime that encourages self-sufficiency and reduces dependency on public funding. The Government must also introduce a statutory requirement on local authorities to provide and maintain adequate facilities for sport and physical activity. This will need to be backed up with adequate financial support from the Treasury.**
- 82. To deliver the national plan to the grassroots effectively, Sport England should improve its funding and support for organisations delivering to underrepresented groups by implementing bespoke funding timelines for targeted interventions to allow programmes to become embedded and sustainable. Sport England should also provide ringfenced financial support for local authorities and metro mayors to implement concessions for access to facilities.**

Monitoring and evaluation

- 83. In this section we look at the quality of the data collected in the Active Lives surveys, how Government is measuring and evaluating progress of the five priority outcomes set out in the *Sporting Future* strategy, and ways to improve access to facilities through standardisation and collation of data from multiple sources.**

Active Lives surveys

84. As noted in Chapter 1, Sport England monitors activity rates through its Active Lives surveys for adults and children. The Active Lives surveys monitor the population's activity levels, attitudes towards sport and physical activity, and social outcomes. The adult's survey has a sample size of over 175,000 people each year. Randomly selected households are invited to respond although there is a minimum number of 500 households from each local authority to ensure geographic coverage. According to Sport England:
- “the scale of the survey, and the geographical and demographic data it captures, ensures that the survey supports our understanding of key variations in engagement with sport and activity at a local authority level and across a range of characteristics”.¹⁰⁶
85. The Active Lives Children and Young People surveys question around 100,000 children across years 1–11 from randomly selected schools. The schools are asked to arrange for up to three mixed ability classes in up to three randomly chosen year groups to complete the survey. Parents provide information for pupils in years 1–2.¹⁰⁷
86. Jamie Foale, CEO of Playfinder, an online platform that allows people to book local sports and leisure facilities, told us that the voluntary nature and sampling approach of the Active Lives surveys is likely to exclude higher education students and young people and “like asking people how much they drink”, it is unlikely to get the most reliable information from respondents.¹⁰⁸ The Yorkshire Sport Foundation told us that sample sizes are too small for robust local analysis.¹⁰⁹
87. Dr Kyle Ferguson, Reader in Sports Coaching and Management at Ulster University, said that more qualitative data collection would enable better analysis and evaluation of sport programmes.¹¹⁰ British Canoeing supported greater use of qualitative data to better understand the “motivations, barriers, influences and behaviour of participation”.¹¹¹ Stonewall and Mermaids told us that improvements could be made in the data collection of how LGBT+ people participate in sport and recreation activities.¹¹²
88. The Centre for Movement and Occupational Rehabilitation Sciences, Oxford Brookes University, wanted to see regular monitoring of children and young people's levels of cardiorespiratory fitness and physical activity.¹¹³ The FA told us that monitoring playground activity would lead to a better understanding of the emerging sedentary trends among children.¹¹⁴ Active Partnerships suggested the Active Lives Children and Young People's survey would benefit from getting all schools to take part.¹¹⁵

106 Written evidence from Sport England ([NPS0100](#))

107 *Ibid.*

108 Written evidence from Jamie Foale ([NPS0015](#))

109 Supplementary written evidence from Yorkshire Sport Foundation ([NPS0027](#))

110 Written evidence from Dr Kyle Ferguson ([NPS0025](#))

111 Written evidence from British Canoeing ([NPS0090](#))

112 Written evidence from Stonewall and Mermaids ([NPS0123](#))

113 Written evidence from the Centre for Movement and Occupational Rehabilitation Sciences (MORES) Oxford Brookes University ([NPS0106](#))

114 Written evidence from the FA ([NPS0135](#))

115 Supplementary written evidence from Active Partnerships ([NPS0098](#))

89. The Welsh Institute of Physical Activity, Health and Sport recommended the use of “research-grade devices” to monitor physical activity and sedentary behaviour to back up the findings of the surveys.¹¹⁶ Dr Liz Durden-Myers, Past Chair of the International Physical Literacy Association and Senior Lecturer in Physical Education, Bath Spa University and University of Gloucestershire, also supported use of complementing survey data with other forms of objective monitoring.¹¹⁷
90. PHE noted that applying “objective measurement” would involve additional costs.¹¹⁸ Sport England told us that it has plans “to explore how wearable devices might be used in future measurement to further improve and/or validate the quality and relevance of the data collected.”¹¹⁹
91. There were witnesses who felt that the Active Lives surveys were effective. England Athletics and UK Athletics described the surveys as an “established and robust method” of measuring physical activity at the national level.¹²⁰ Lisa Wainwright said she was “confident that the Active Lives data that we receive is a true and accurate reflection of the increases and decreases in participation”.¹²¹

Measuring and evaluating outcomes

92. The Government monitors and evaluates progress of the *Sporting Future* strategy against the five priority outcomes along with its KPIs.¹²²
93. The Sport for Development Coalition said that “the ambition of the [*Sporting Future*] strategy to ‘redefine’ what success means, with a focus on five key social outcomes, was impactful”.¹²³ Mind described the inclusion of mental health as “a landmark moment for sports policy” which has led to significant improvements across the sector.¹²⁴ The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) told us that Sport England and UK Sport have coordinated “some good work on measuring outcomes”.¹²⁵
94. However, the National Futsal League saw the potential for the five priority outcomes to come into conflict and gave the example of social versus economic development.¹²⁶ The Sport for Development Coalition said that the breadth of the outcomes makes it difficult to define and measure success.¹²⁷ Active Partnerships said there was a lack of clarity over whether the focus should be on delivering the five priority outcomes or on physical activity levels.¹²⁸ The LTA and Yorkshire Sport Foundation noted the difficulty of measuring social impact.¹²⁹ Paul Owen drew attention to challenges around measuring changes in people’s mental health, attitudes and state of mind.¹³⁰

116 Written evidence from the Welsh Institute of Physical Activity, Health and Sport ([NPS0101](#))

117 Written evidence from Dr Liz Durden-Myers ([NPS0028](#))

118 Written evidence from Public Health England ([NPS0125](#))

119 Written evidence from Sport England ([NPS0100](#))

120 Written evidence from England Athletics and UK Athletics ([NPS0102](#))

121 [Q 19](#) (Lisa Wainwright)

122 Cabinet Office, *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation*, pp 17 and pp 76–80

123 Written evidence from the Sport for Development Coalition ([NPS0144](#))

124 Supplementary written evidence from Mind ([NPS0109](#))

125 Written evidence from the LTA ([NPS0142](#))

126 Written evidence from the National Futsal League ([NPS0003](#))

127 Written evidence from the Sport for Development Coalition ([NPS0144](#))

128 Supplementary written evidence from Active Partnerships ([NPS0098](#))

129 Written evidence from the LTA ([NPS0142](#)) and supplementary written evidence from Yorkshire Sport Foundation ([NPS0027](#))

130 [Q 55](#) (Paul Owen)

95. The Sport and Recreation Alliance noted that there are 25 KPIs underpinning the five priority outcomes but that they have not been updated recently.¹³¹ Mark Lawrie, CEO of StreetGames, suggested “a set of agreed standards rather than KPIs” so organisations would know if they deliver sport in a certain way that they are having an impact on defined outcomes.¹³²
96. Professor Aiden Doherty, Professor Heidi Johansen-Berg, Mr Alberto Lazari, Dr Karen Mansfield, Mr Thomas Wassenaar and Dr Catherine Wheatley, a team of researchers at the University of Oxford, said there was scope for “careful and appropriate linkage and sharing of existing data between researchers, local authorities and the Department of Health and Social Care” to improve understanding of patterns of physical activity.¹³³ The LGA told us that there “are opportunities to better cross-reference, or even integrate, with other government surveys and data collections.”¹³⁴ The British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES) recommended establishing a Physical Activity Observatory to provide “a single point of contact for wide-ranging authoritative information on data, evidence and practice”.¹³⁵

Using data to improve access to sport and recreation

97. Data are collected to improve access to sport and recreation opportunities, including by making it possible for people to find out what is happening in their area and to book facilities online. The first annual report on the *Sporting Future* strategy set out Sport England’s two-year programme to develop common data standards, help data sharing, improve data literacy and encourage more effective and customer-focused use of data across the sports sector.¹³⁶ The second annual report set out work on using data to improve access to facilities including the Open Data Institute’s Open Active programme which publishes open data about where, when and what activities are taking place to make it easier for people to find and book activities online.¹³⁷
98. Jamie Foale told us that there are over 140,000 different sports facilities in the country managed by over 30,000 operators. He highlighted the findings of a Football Foundation survey which revealed that 46 per cent of funded venues were using pen and paper or Microsoft Excel to manage bookings and research by the Sport and Recreation Alliance showing that only 35 per cent of sports clubs have online bookings.¹³⁸ He noted that as more people move away from affiliated team sports it may be more difficult to track participation in individual physical activities and suggested that technology could play a role in tracking recreational usage of facilities through online bookings.¹³⁹

131 Supplementary written evidence from the Sport and Recreation Alliance (NPS0138)

132 Q 99 (Mark Lawrie)

133 Written evidence from Professor Aiden Doherty, Professor Heidi Johansen-Berg, Mr Alberto Lazari, Dr Karen Mansfield, Mr Thomas Wassenaar and Dr Catherine Wheatley (NPS0096)

134 Written evidence from the LGA (NPS0050)

135 Written evidence from the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES) (NPS0035)

136 Cabinet Office, *Sporting Future: First Annual Report* (9 February 2017), p 14: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/590578/Sporting_Future_-_first_annual_report_final.pdf [accessed 15 November 2021]

137 Cabinet Office, *Sporting Future: Second Annual Report* (January 2018), p 10: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/677557/2018_Second_annual_report_to_parliament_on_Sporting_Future.pdf [accessed 15 November 2021]

138 Written evidence from Jamie Foale (NPS0015)

139 Q 172 (Jamie Foale)

99. The FA noted that data collected by organisations are not easily comparable and that Open Data practices offer the best potential for bringing everything together in a usable format. It suggested Government could play an important leading role by creating a standard list of data points and categories that must be used by all sports when recording participation.¹⁴⁰ The LGA told us that councils collect all sorts of data about the use of their services but there is limited scope to integrate this at a larger level due to differences in methodologies.¹⁴¹
100. Several witnesses called for a standardised and central database relating to physical activity. Jamie Foale called for a publicly accessible central repository of data from operators of sports venues and recommended that operators be encouraged, or possibly mandated, to contribute their non-sensitive data to the repository.¹⁴² Conservatives for Women, comprising of Conservative Party members and supporters, advocated for the development of a register of sporting facilities, clubs and programmes.¹⁴³ Surbiton Hockey Club said an online centralised resource would be useful to local communities, local authorities, local NHS Trusts and GP surgeries.¹⁴⁴
101. **We do not have full confidence in data currently collected and do not believe there is a suitable evidence base for effective monitoring and evaluation. While we recommend keeping the five priority outcomes from *Sporting Future* for the national plan, we agree with BASES on the need for a Physical Activity Observatory to act as a single point for independent analysis of data, evidence and practice related to physical activity for the sector. The Observatory would be responsible for developing objective and robust measures in collaboration with public and private sector partners, and collecting and analysing non-sensitive data from the public and private sectors.**
102. **The new Physical Activity Observatory should seek to collect data consistently and regularly from publicly funded organisations. To do this, it should develop a standard approach for collecting non-personalised data that will provide a clearer picture of how and when people exercise and support efforts to improve access to facilities. Sport England should make funding to organisations contingent on them providing information for the Open Data initiative.**

140 Written evidence from the FA ([NPS0135](#))

141 Written evidence from the LGA ([NPS0050](#))

142 Written evidence from Jamie Foale ([NPS0015](#))

143 Written evidence from Conservatives for Women ([NPS0068](#))

144 Written evidence from Surbiton Hockey Club ([NPS0119](#))

CHAPTER 3: PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE NATIONAL PLAN

103. This chapter seeks to identify key principles which should run through the national plan. These are the need to develop physical literacy, particularly from a young age; the need for sport and recreation to be delivered in a welcoming and inclusive environment; application of the sciences of behaviour change and motivation; for delivery of sport and recreation to be proactive in tackling health inequalities; and to contribute to individual development and community cohesion. These themes recur throughout this report and were frequently cited by witnesses as being necessary to create the underlying conditions for supporting active lifestyles.

Physical literacy

104. Physical literacy provides a vital framework to support the development of skills, confidence and enjoyment of physical activity. Sport England defines physical literacy as “the combination of our enjoyment, confidence, competence, understanding and knowledge of how to be active”.¹⁴⁵ It is closely linked to PE in schools because having positive experiences and learning basic coordination and competence during childhood is most likely to lead to a love of movement. However, it is a principle that can enhance people’s confidence and enjoyment of physical activity across all ages. We discuss physical literacy in relation to children and young people further in Chapter 4.
105. Nigel Harrison, CEO of the Yorkshire Sport Foundation, told us that physical literacy is about “getting down to basics” through teaching skills like balance, coordination and how to throw and catch a ball.¹⁴⁶ Dr Durden-Myers, Past Chair of the International Physical Literacy Association and Senior Lecturer in Physical Education, Bath Spa University and University of Gloucestershire, told us that physical literacy should be “the core message around our early encounters with physical activity and promoting physical activity for life”.¹⁴⁷
106. We heard how other countries are incorporating physical literacy in their national policies to boost activity rates. For example, Dr Durden-Myers told us that Australia uses the language of physical literacy to promote lifelong learning and deliver “physical, psychological, social and cognitive health and wellbeing benefits”, and that New Zealand has used it to create an approach leading to physical activity designed by the participant.¹⁴⁸ Dr Fahlén, then Associate Professor at Umeå University, Sweden, emphasised the distinction made in Norway and Sweden between PE, which teaches “the joy of learning how to move” and wider school sport.¹⁴⁹

145 Written evidence from Sport England ([NPS0100](#))

146 [Q 23](#) (Nigel Harrison)

147 [Q 124](#) (Dr Liz Durden-Myers)

148 Written evidence from Dr Liz Durden-Myers ([NPS0028](#))

149 [Q 85](#) (Dr Josef Fahlén)

Box 2: International definitions of physical literacy

Sport New Zealand

Sport New Zealand describes physical literacy as: “A combination of their [people’s] motivation, confidence and competence to be active, along with their knowledge and understanding of how being active contributes to their life ... It affects how, why and if they participate in physical activity throughout their life.”¹⁵⁰ Physical literacy is one of Sport New Zealand’s three core approaches.¹⁵¹

Sport Australia

Sport Australia’s Physical Literacy Framework establishes a common language to help Australians develop their physical literacy at every stage of life. Sport Australia states that physical literacy gives you: physical skills and fitness, the attitudes and emotions that motivate you to be active, the knowledge and understanding of how, why and when you move, and the social skills to be active with others.¹⁵²

Sport Wales

In 2014, Sport Wales introduced the Physical Literacy Programme for Schools (PLPS) which seeks to embed physical literacy. In 2015, it created a physical literacy framework to support the development of the new curriculum and produced the Physical Literacy Journey which defines physical literacy as: “Physical Skills + Confidence + Motivation + Knowledge + Understanding = Physical Literacy”. It adds that “with these elements a person is more likely to be physically literate—be happy, healthy and confident—and have the tools to enjoy being active.”¹⁵³

An evaluation of the PLPS programme and the Physical Literacy Framework reported improvements in young people’s physical, social and emotional development, as well as young people’s engagement, attendance and behaviour.¹⁵⁴

Source: Written evidence from Dr Liz Durden-Myers ([NPS0028](#)) and supplementary written evidence from Dr Liz Durden-Myers ([NPS0150](#))

107. Mo Jafar, Head of PE at the Royal Liberty School, Romford, told us that there is a lot of research and plenty of UK-based expertise to enable Government and schools to make better use of physical literacy.¹⁵⁵
108. **Improving physical literacy must be a key principle at the heart of a national plan. Although the focus on teaching physical literacy must be directed toward children and young people through PE and school sport, it will also be crucial to ensure that opportunities to**

150 Sport New Zealand, ‘Physical literacy approach’: <https://sportnz.org.nz/resources/physical-literacy-approach/> [accessed 15 November 2021]

151 Sport New Zealand, *The Three Approaches - A guide to creating better quality experiences for participants*: <https://sportnz.org.nz/media/1259/spnz-ag1039-spnz-three-approaches-aw3.pdf> [accessed 15 November 2021]

152 Sport Australia, ‘Physical literacy’: https://www.sportaus.gov.au/physical_literacy [accessed 15 November 2021]

153 Sport Wales, ‘Physical Literacy’: <https://www.sport.wales/content-vault/physical-literacy/> [accessed 15 November 2021].

154 The Centre for Sport, Physical Education and Activity Research, Canterbury Christ Church University, ‘Physical Literacy Programme for Schools’: <https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/science-engineering-and-social-sciences/spear/research-projects/physical-literacy-for-schools.aspx> [accessed 15 November 2021]

155 Notes of roundtables with PE teachers: <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/8064/documents/82933/default/>

development confidence and a love of movement are available to people of all ages and backgrounds.

A welcoming and inclusive environment

109. Providing a welcoming and inclusive environment is about ensuring that everyone feels comfortable and able to take part in an activity that suits them. This involves recognising the different ways people choose to stay active, supporting and empowering those from underrepresented groups, providing affordable, accessible and safe facilities, and ensuring that sports and recreation is free from all forms of abuse and discrimination.

Formal and informal participation

110. Part of a welcoming and inclusive environment is ensuring that everyone has access to space and facilities to be active. Formal participation is sport that is played through membership of a club and in a league structure, overseen by a sports governing body. Informal participation is engagement in a sport or activity that falls outside the formal structure. It can include going for a run or a walk on your own or with others, dancing and gardening, and includes participation in commitment-free events such as parkrun.
111. Huw Edwards, CEO of ukactive, noted the example of leisure facilities being used as integrated community hubs—spaces which host various community services, including facilities for both formal and informal sport and recreation activities.¹⁵⁶ Kirsty Cumming, CEO of Community Leisure UK, told us that leisure centres are ideally placed to support both formal and informal activities and can offer activities beyond traditional sport.¹⁵⁷
112. Mads Andreassen, Head of Activity Development at the Norwegian Sports Confederation, told us that it makes sense for facilities to be open to informal and self-organised sport and for the government to support that alongside provision of formal sport.¹⁵⁸ Dr Fahlén noted that it is becoming the norm in Sweden that facilities will make themselves open to informal and self-organised sports.¹⁵⁹
113. Parkrun is a notable example of a successful informal offer. Chrissie Wellington OBE, Global Head of Health and Wellbeing at parkrun, explained how it works:
- “[The parkrun model] has been designed to remove as many barriers to participation as possible, whether they be financial, practical, social, cultural or psychological. For example, taking part is free. There is no need for special clothing or equipment. People can walk, run, jog, volunteer, come along and watch, and have a coffee afterwards. We do not exclude certain groups ... Above all, the events are welcoming, friendly and social, which is key to encouraging sustained involvement.”¹⁶⁰
114. Lisa Wainwright, CEO of the Sport and Recreation Alliance, told us that “informal participation and traditional organised sport are complementary”, noting that people who start exercising informally may choose to join a

156 [Q 18](#) (Huw Edwards)

157 [Q 21](#) (Kirsty Cumming)

158 [Q 83](#) (Mads Andreassen)

159 [Q 83](#) (Dr Josef Fahlén)

160 [Q 64](#) (Chrissie Wellington)

local sports club or group later on.¹⁶¹ However, Andy Reed, Co-Founder and Director of the Sports Think Tank, cautioned that although offering informal opportunities is a good idea, many small sports clubs do not have the capacity or volunteers to deliver a wide range of programmes.¹⁶²

Underrepresented groups

115. As outlined in Chapter 1, there are too many groups in society who are not meeting minimum recommended levels of activity. Creating a welcoming and inclusive environment requires the identification and removal of barriers that may be deterring or preventing certain groups from participating in sport and recreation.
116. When thinking about barriers to sport and recreation, Arun Kang, CEO of Sporting Equals, urged us to take account of how intersectionality and multiple discrimination result in people facing numerous barriers to participation.¹⁶³ Sanjay Bhandari, Chair of Kick It Out, observed that “it is very difficult to disentangle the impact of any one characteristic” and together they can have a “multiplier effect” leading to accumulated levels of discrimination.¹⁶⁴
117. We heard that, too often, there is a lack of communication and engagement with underrepresented groups. Sanjay Bhandari told us that people were not being talked to or listened to properly.¹⁶⁵ Yusra Uney, Engagement Lead at GoodGym, highlighted the need to get the language and communication right to attract people from underrepresented groups.¹⁶⁶
118. Chrissie Wellington spoke about how parkrun employs “the principle of proportionate universalism” which means being open to all but also targeting those most in need.¹⁶⁷ The Sport for Development Coalition told us that proportionate universalism should be a “core principle” for national policy and planning for sport and recreation.¹⁶⁸ Lisa Wainwright and Mark Lawrie, CEO of StreetGames, welcomed that the principle of proportionate universalism was included in Sport England’s *Uniting the Movement* strategy.¹⁶⁹
119. Several witnesses noted the role of coaches and the workforce in creating a welcoming and inclusive environment. The Veterans Athletic Club, and Youth Charter, a sport for development project, recommended that coaches should be trained to acknowledge unconscious biases to avoid coaching in ways that may exclude underrepresented groups.¹⁷⁰ UK Coaching recommended that all coaches and educators need to be provided with opportunities to share best practice and to engage proactively with community groups.¹⁷¹ Julian Starkey, Chair of the Bracknell Athletic Club, stated that training should be available for coaches and officials “to ask better questions” when working

161 [Q 15](#) (Lisa Wainwright)

162 [Q 18](#) (Andy Reed)

163 [Q 137](#) (Arun Kang)

164 [Q 137](#) (Sanjay Bhandari)

165 [Q 136](#) (Sanjay Bhandari)

166 [Q 67](#) (Yusra Uney)

167 [Q 67](#) (Chrissie Wellington)

168 Written evidence from the Sport for Development Coalition ([NPS0144](#))

169 [Q 14](#) (Lisa Wainwright) and [Q 104](#) (Mark Lawrie)

170 Written evidence from Veterans Athletic Club ([NPS0132](#)) and Youth Charter ([NPS0079](#))

171 Written evidence from UK Coaching ([NPS0054](#))

with underrepresented groups to help accommodate and deliver inclusive offers.¹⁷²

120. Witnesses told us that people feel more welcome and motivated if they can see coaches and participants who are like them. Gordon Banks, Chief Community Officer at Saracens Sport Foundation, emphasised the impact that professional players can have as positive role models when they engage with their local community.¹⁷³ Dr Kristy Howells, Reader in the School of Psychology and Life Sciences at Canterbury Christ Church University, noted that LGBT+, disabled and ethnic minority athletes can help inspire people from diverse backgrounds.¹⁷⁴ Laura Cordingley, CEO of Chance to Shine, gave the example of having female coaches from south Asian backgrounds as part of their team which has meant that “parents were much more willing to support their girls’ involvement”.¹⁷⁵
121. We also heard views on the scale of the challenge to engage those currently underrepresented in sport and recreation. The APPG on Sport, Modern Slavery and Human Rights cited research by Women in Sport and the Youth Sport Trust which found that only 56 per cent of girls enjoyed taking part in school sport compared to 71 per cent of boys.¹⁷⁶ Ali Oliver MBE, CEO of the Youth Sport Trust, said that despite many years of effort, the “stubborn gap” between girls’ and boys’ participation rates have hardly narrowed.¹⁷⁷
122. Andy Reed told us that disabled people are among the least active of all the underrepresented groups and were also among the hardest hit by the pandemic.¹⁷⁸ Barry Horne, CEO of Activity Alliance, told us that physical and logistical barriers for disabled people are “significant” but that “by far the biggest barriers” for disabled people are psychological.¹⁷⁹
123. Reece Finnegan, a tennis player at Metro Blind Sports and a participant in our engagement event with disabled young adults, expressed frustration at clubs and facilities who exclude disabled people over misplaced concerns about liability for injury or accidents.¹⁸⁰ Martin McElhatton, CEO of WheelPower, highlighted financial barriers such as expensive specialist equipment.¹⁸¹ Azeem Amir, who plays blind football for England and Great Britain and also participated in our engagement event, suggested that one way to make sport more inclusive for disabled people would be to provide everyone the opportunity to take part in disability sports, such as blind football, regardless of whether participants had a disability.¹⁸²
124. Martin McElhatton and Barry Horne also told us that some disabled people worry that they may lose their benefits if they become more active, telling us

172 Written evidence from Julian Starkey (NPS0067)

173 Q 184 (Gordon Banks)

174 Written evidence from Dr Kristy Howells (NPS0072)

175 Q 126 (Laura Cordingley)

176 Written evidence from the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Sport, Modern Slavery and Human Rights (NPS0076)

177 Q 120 (Ali Oliver)

178 Q 13 (Andy Reed)

179 Q 131 (Barry Horne)

180 Notes of engagement event with young adults with disabilities: <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/8065/documents/82934/default/>

181 Q 131 (Martin McElhatton)

182 [Notes of engagement event with young adults with disabilities](#)

there is “genuine fear” that being physically active may affect their income, particularly among those “who live very close to the line.”¹⁸³

125. The LGA emphasised the importance of public facilities in engaging underrepresented groups. It told us that a disproportionate number of disabled people, ethnic minorities and lower income residents depend on local authority-run facilities.¹⁸⁴ Community Leisure UK predicted that the economic fallout from the pandemic may lead to increased demand for access to free or subsidised community facilities.¹⁸⁵
126. AoC Sport said that a lack of focus on colleges is a missed opportunity. It noted that colleges have above national average representation of ethnic minorities, 23 per cent of students have learning disabilities and that high levels of students are from lower socio-economic backgrounds.¹⁸⁶
127. Sport England acknowledged that “stubborn inequalities have existed between different demographic groups’ activity levels for too long”. It added that the impact of COVID-19 is both a reminder and an opportunity to “ensure that the sport and physical activity sector rebuilds in a more inclusive way”.¹⁸⁷ Ben Dean, Director for Sport and Gambling at DCMS, told us that the Government “fully recognise” that parts of the population are not achieving the desired rates of activity.¹⁸⁸

Accessibility and availability of facilities and spaces

128. To create a welcoming and inclusive environment, facilities and spaces need to be accessible, affordable, safe and offer good quality equipment and services. Facilities are the physical infrastructure for sport and recreation and include, for example, leisure centres, gyms, pitches, sports clubs, stadia and facilities located in schools. Spaces include local parks, national parks and trails and other outdoor green and blue spaces as well as public access to farmland and private land. As previously noted, local authorities are the biggest public sector investor in sport and recreation and schools are the largest owners and operators of sports facilities.¹⁸⁹
129. The *Sporting Future* strategy advocates development of multi-sport facilities where it is possible to offer a wide range of sports and recreation activities rather than single-use facilities. It also notes the importance of playing fields. Sport England’s *Strategic Facilities Investment Prospectus 2017–2021*, published in 2018, sets out that its £40 million strategic facilities fund for large-scale investment projects will prioritise facilities that are integrated and, where possible, co-located with other community services and able to cater for multiple sports year-round.¹⁹⁰

183 [Q 131](#) (Martin McElhatton, Barry Horne)

184 Written evidence from the LGA ([NPS0050](#))

185 Supplementary written evidence from Community Leisure UK ([NPS0112](#))

186 Written evidence from AoC Sport ([NPS0117](#))

187 Written evidence from Sport England ([NPS0100](#))

188 [Q 8](#) (Ben Dean)

189 Dr Chris Mackintosh, *Foundations of Sport for Development*, 1st edition (Routledge, 2021), p 101

190 Cabinet Office, *Sporting Future: First Annual Report* (February 2017), p 26: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/590578/Sporting_Future_-_first_annual_report_final.pdf [accessed 15 November 2021] and Sport England, *Strategic Facilities Fund Prospectus 2017–2021* (December 2018): <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/strategic-facilities-fund-prospectus.pdf> [accessed 17 November 2021]

130. Lee Mason, former CEO of Active Partnerships, told us that communities, particularly in disadvantaged areas, need locally accessible facilities rather than big, major facilities.¹⁹¹ Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE, Chair of the Culture, Tourism and Sport Board at the LGA, expressed concern many leisure facilities and swimming pools are coming to the end of their useful life and that, without investment over the next 5 to 10 years, many will close.¹⁹² Nigel Harrison told us that accessibility is just as important as distribution and that this includes addressing issues like street lighting and safety concerns.¹⁹³
131. The Country Land and Business Association told us that sport and recreation is “fundamental” to the rural economy and that many private landowners provide access to land and facilities to communities and groups for sport and recreation purposes. It welcomed the proposed Environmental Land Management scheme which will provide financial assistance for access but noted that the planning system presents a significant barrier to improving access and that funding is required to cover much needed maintenance, improve signage and information, better parking and toilet facilities and organised bus routes.¹⁹⁴
132. There was frustration from witnesses around the cost and difficulty of accessing some facilities. Anne-Marie Waugh, Founder of RollaDome All Skate, told us that groups often have to “fight for times and slots”.¹⁹⁵ Eastcote Hockey Club and Ealing Hockey Club both expressed frustration that they were unable to grow their clubs due to lack of facilities.¹⁹⁶ Peter Mason, Chair of the Sir Tom Finney Soccer Centre and Football Club, called for a national strategy looking at facilities including parks and pitches and how the public can access them.¹⁹⁷
133. The British Masters Athletic Federation expressed concern that local delivery systems do not pay enough attention to older age groups and suggested that local authorities establish local sports councils working with clubs and other delivery bodies to improve services for all ages.¹⁹⁸ The Centre for Ageing Better suggested that a more “age-positive” approach should be backed with government funding.¹⁹⁹
134. The FA told us that “the number one concern” around local delivery for football players is poor local football pitches.²⁰⁰ Robert Sullivan, CEO of the Football Foundation, said that the distribution of grass football pitches is uneven across the country in terms of quality and quantity.²⁰¹ The Football Foundation told us about its Local Football Facility Plans developed with and for every local authority, but noted that more investment was needed to meet demand for local football facilities.²⁰²

191 [Q 22](#) (Lee Mason)

192 [Q 30](#) (Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson)

193 [Q 22](#) (Nigel Harrison)

194 Written evidence from the Country Land & Business Association ([NPS0151](#))

195 [Notes of roundtables with community sport organisations](#)

196 Written evidence from Ealing Hockey Club ([NPS0047](#)) and Eastcote Hockey Club ([NPS0108](#))

197 [Notes of roundtables with community sport organisations](#)

198 Written evidence from British Masters Athletic Federation ([NPS0062](#))

199 Written evidence from the Centre for Ageing Better ([NPS0049](#))

200 Written evidence from the FA ([NPS0135](#))

201 [Q 65](#) (Robert Sullivan)

202 Supplementary written evidence from the Football Foundation ([NPS0136](#))

135. Nigel Huddleston MP, Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society at DCMS, told us that the Government is “sincerely committed” to providing additional facilities with a focus on football pitches but also for mixed sport facilities.²⁰³ Ben Dean of DCMS told us that DCMS and Sport England want to make sure that people have access to the facilities they need and are given more options.²⁰⁴
136. **Inactivity rates among some groups remain stubbornly high and progress to tackle this problem has been disappointing. The Government must utilise the new funding and delivery mechanisms developed through the national plan to tackle these stubborn inequalities. This must include assuring and ensuring that disabled people will not be penalised for being active by the benefits system.**
137. **The Government must also conduct an audit and develop a clear, fully costed national facilities strategy for pitches, leisure facilities, swimming pools, parks and outdoor spaces. This strategy should be created jointly with local authorities. The strategy need not duplicate the Football Foundation’s facilities plan for football and artificial football pitches. Instead, it will complete the picture of what each local authority needs to ensure that a full range of high-quality facilities and spaces are available and easily accessible to everyone.**
138. **Local communities, leisure trusts, local clubs, schools, colleges and other higher education institutions with sport and leisure facilities, charities, and social and voluntary enterprises delivering sport and recreation will need to be consulted on the audit and plans resulting from the facilities strategy that pertain to their local area. This includes design and planning of future facilities to ensure that they are accessible to local communities and provide a welcoming and inclusive environment.**

Tackling discrimination

139. Sports and recreation can never provide a welcoming and inclusive environment if people are subject to abuse and discrimination. If any reminder of this were necessary, we need only look at the recent racism scandal engulfing the Yorkshire County Cricket Club. Abuse comes in many forms including racism, homophobia, transphobia, misogyny, ableism, and ageism.
140. Ben Dean of DCMS stated that tackling racism, homophobia and transphobia in sport is something that needs to be addressed through “collaboration across a lot of different partners”.²⁰⁵ Sanjay Bhandari of Kick It Out told us “we have to get the morals right” noting that currently a person can be banned for fewer games for racist comments at a football match than for a betting infraction.²⁰⁶ Janett Walker from Black Girls Hike told us that education is at the core of rooting out racism and other forms of abuse, either on social media or on the pitch.²⁰⁷

203 [Q 245](#) (Nigel Huddleston MP)

204 [Q 4](#) (Ben Dean)

205 [Q 9](#) (Ben Dean)

206 [Q 140](#) (Sanjay Bhandari)

207 [Q 140](#) (Janett Walker)

141. Girlguiding called for a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment including within schools and events hosting youth sport.²⁰⁸ Dr Howells recommended abolishing gender-based sport in schools which she said reinforces perceptions of gender difference and physical inferiority of girls.²⁰⁹
142. Pride in Tennis noted barriers for LGBT+ people including an unwelcoming environment, internal barriers created by unconscious bias and stereotyping, negative previous experiences and a lack of role models. It made a series of recommendations to improve the experience of LGBT+ participants including supporting clubs who offer LGBT+ inclusive sports sessions and promoting “positive role models, news stories and flagship events such as the Gay Games”.²¹⁰
143. Gendered Intelligence, a charity working to increase understanding of gender diversity and improve the lives of trans people, told us that trans people are keen to participate in sport but face a range of barriers including a lack of welcoming environments, and facilities and structures that only suit binary men and women participation.²¹¹ Stonewall and Mermaids, two LGBT+ charities, highlighted that the lack of availability of suitable changing facilities “can cause profound distress for LGBT+ people of all ages and backgrounds.”²¹² However, Conservatives for Women told us that single-sex spaces provide a safe space for women and girls and contested that in some cases this was threatened when the category of ‘sex’ is replaced with ‘gender identity’.²¹³
144. Activity Alliance told us that presumptions and misconceptions about disabled people lead to reduced opportunities and have created long-lasting barriers for disabled people resulting in higher rates of inactivity. It called for disabled people not only to be seen in sport as elite athletes.²¹⁴

Social media

145. Some sports, notably football and other high-profile sports, have struggled to deal with racism, bullying, and other forms of abuse online against players, commentators and supporters.
146. Jordan Jarrett-Bryan, Sports Reporter for Channel 4 News, suggested that the Government needs to hold social media platforms accountable for the content on their sites and gave the view that people who need to protect themselves from abuse should stay off social media platforms until social media companies are able to effectively police content posted.²¹⁵ Gary Cliffe, Ambassador for the Offside Trust, said that social media companies need to be held to account and need to alert the police of potentially criminal abuse.²¹⁶ Stephanie Hilborne, CEO of Women in Sport, said there needs to be accountability for those using social media and better regulation of social media companies.²¹⁷

208 Written evidence from Girlguiding ([NPS0074](#))

209 Written evidence from Dr Kristy Howells ([NPS0072](#))

210 Written evidence from Pride in Tennis ([NPS0104](#))

211 Written evidence from Gendered Intelligence ([NPS0120](#))

212 Written evidence from Stonewall and Mermaids ([NPS0123](#))

213 Written evidence from Conservatives for Women ([NPS0068](#))

214 Written evidence from Activity Alliance ([NPS0073](#))

215 [Q 46](#) (Jordan Jarrett-Bryan)

216 [Q 155](#) (Gary Cliffe)

217 [Q 146](#) (Stephanie Hilborne)

147. The FA and the LTA both stated their support for the forthcoming Online Harms Bill to make provision for social media companies to be held accountable for what is posted on their platforms.²¹⁸ The FA noted that it has recommended that the Government “pilot a special unit to look at hate crime in football—with a particular focus on social media.”²¹⁹
148. **Discrimination comes in many forms and it is always unacceptable. As part of the national plan the Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing will need to take steps, together with Sport England and UK Sport funded bodies and other key stakeholders, to ensure there is a safe environment for participants in sport and recreation and to raise awareness of the channels through which complaints can be made and how participants can seek support.**
149. **To tackle abuse on social media platforms, the Government must hold social media companies to account for harmful content online. The forthcoming Online Safety Bill should ensure that social media platforms are regulated to prevent such harm with robust enforcement and significant sanctions.**

Behaviour change and motivation

150. We heard that behavioural change theory and nudging techniques can make a significant contribution to promoting physical activity. Sport England’s *Sporting Future* strategy states: “Behavioural insights and an understanding of how to help people to make better decisions themselves will be at the heart of the new approach to delivering sport and physical activity”.²²⁰ This includes raising awareness and public health messaging to encourage people to take up physical activity.²²¹
151. Influencing behaviours can make a big difference during those stages of our lives when many of us tend to fall away from sport and recreation. These drop-off points often occur when we leave full-time education, move home, start a new job or have children.²²² Dr Kathryn Atherton, Adviser at the Behavioural Insights Team, explained “any point when there is a disruption of your habitual behaviours is an opportunity for behaviours to be lost.” She suggested that more could be done by teachers, health officials, and local authorities to help people identify and plan ways to stay active as they settle into a new job, a new home, and other new life circumstances.²²³ Professor Dame Theresa Marteau, Director of the Behaviour and Health Research Unit at the University of Cambridge, stated that drop-off points strengthen the case for instilling lifelong habits of physical activity habits at a young age.²²⁴

218 Written evidence from the FA ([NPS0135](#)) and the LTA ([NPS0142](#))

219 Written evidence from the FA ([NPS0135](#))

220 Cabinet Office, *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation*, p 20

221 *Ibid.*, p 31

222 [Q 52](#) (Professor Kim Edwards)

223 [Q 52](#) (Dr Kathryn Atherton)

224 [Q 52](#) (Professor Dame Theresa Marteau)

Public messaging campaigns

152. Targeted campaigns such as *This Girl Can* and *We are Undefeatable* were praised by several witnesses for their potential to inspire underrepresented groups and demonstrate that anyone can take part in sport and recreation.²²⁵
153. Ben Dean of DCMS highlighted the *This Girl Can* and *We Are Undefeatable* campaigns as good examples of targeted interventions.²²⁶ Lisa Wainwright told us that *This Girl Can* was an “incredibly successful campaign”.²²⁷ Anna Kessel, Women’s Sports Editor at *The Telegraph*, said that the campaign presented positive messaging and “busted a lot of taboos”.²²⁸ Sport England said that 3.9 million women reported taking some action as a result of the *This Girl Can* campaign.²²⁹
154. However, Dr Atherton told us that the number of women being active in response to the campaign was based on survey results asking people if they knew of the campaign and had been more active as a result. She told us that this “is not an objective way of measuring behaviour change”.²³⁰ Mads Andreassen told us that he did not believe public health campaigns deliver long-term impact.²³¹
155. Professor Kim Edwards, Professor of Sport, Exercise and Nutrition Education, University of Nottingham, said that there is a lack of evidence for how effective public messaging interventions are for underrepresented demographic groups and recommended that target groups be included to co-design public messaging campaigns.²³² Professor Dame Marteau said that public health campaigns should be part of a mix of interventions that can promote physical activity and recommended framing messages “positively, emphasising immediate benefits that are social and affect mood”.²³³
156. **We support the positive role that public health campaigns like *This Girl Can* and *We are Undefeatable* play. We recommend that Sport England seeks robust evidence to better understand their impact and to learn lessons on how public health messaging can be made more effective, especially for underrepresented groups. This is the type of task that could be led by the Physical Activity Observatory.**

Tackling health inequalities

157. Encouraging sport, recreation and an active lifestyle is about promoting physical and mental health and wellbeing and improving quality of life for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.
158. Mark Davies, former Director for Population Health at DHSC, explained several ways that the Government is using sport to address health inequalities. He highlighted the Government’s *Better Health* campaign which is encouraging people to be physically active. He also noted that NHS

225 For example, see written evidence from Versus Arthritis ([NPS0042](#)), the LGA ([NPS0050](#)), Dr Lindsay Findlay-King, Dr Geoff Nichols and Dr Fiona Reid ([NPS0078](#)), Royal Yachting Association ([NPS0127](#)) and the Richmond Group of Charities ([NPS0141](#)).

226 [Q 8](#) (Ben Dean)

227 [Q 16](#) (Lisa Wainwright)

228 [Q 43](#) (Anna Kessel)

229 Written evidence from Sport England ([NPS0100](#))

230 [Q 49](#) (Dr Kathryn Atherton)

231 [Q 88](#) (Mads Andreassen)

232 [Q 49](#) (Professor Kim Edwards)

233 [Q 49](#) (Professor Dame Theresa Marteau)

England is using social prescribing, and the Government is taking steps to help healthcare professionals understand the guidelines of physical activity issued by the UK Chief Medical Officers and increasing the number of weight management services available.²³⁴

159. We also heard how professional clubs and their foundations operate in their local communities to deliver projects. For example, Martin Fearon, CEO of the Accrington Stanley Community Trust, told us that they focus on four key themes for community projects—sport participation, education, health and wellbeing and inclusion—and that they deliver projects to “thousands of children” each week often in areas of high deprivation.²³⁵

Social prescribing

160. Social prescribing, also known as community referral, enables health professionals to refer people to non-clinical services to help improve physical and/or mental health and wellbeing. People may be prescribed, for example, to volunteer, to join art activities, to take up gardening, or to take more exercise or join a sports club or group. There are different models for social prescribing being employed across England. Most involve a link worker, also known as a community connector or health adviser, who works with people to access local sources of support.²³⁶
161. Sport England’s *Uniting the Movement* strategy commits to strengthening the connection between sport and physical activity and the health system and calls for physical activity advice to be included “in the every day conversations of front-line NHS staff”.²³⁷
162. Mark Davies told us that social prescribing is “part of the armoury” for tackling health inequalities.²³⁸ Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson told us that for social prescribing “the role that local government can play very successfully is signposting to community groups that are able to support people, and in being able to do direct things”.²³⁹ Huw Edwards said that social prescribing can help target those groups where inactivity challenges are more “entrenched”.²⁴⁰
163. Paul Owen, Sporting Ambassador of Sport in Mind, said that GPs are still finding it easier to prescribe a drug than physical activity and a cultural change is needed to shift that balance.²⁴¹ Chris Wilkins, Co-founder of Sporting Memories, expressed “real concern” that the quality of social prescribing varies considerably across the country, that some health professionals are signposting to organisations they know little about, and that there is often no evaluation of whether the prescription led to a positive health outcome.²⁴²
164. Hayley Jarvis, Head of Physical Activity for Mind, cautioned that social prescribing has “huge potential” but it is not designed for everyone and that

234 Q 8 (Mark Davies)

235 Q 178 (Martin Fearon)

236 The King’s Fund, ‘What is social prescribing?’: <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/social-prescribing> [accessed 15 November 2021]

237 Sport England, *Uniting the Movement: A 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity*, p 29

238 Q 8 (Mark Davies)

239 Q 28 (Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson)

240 Q 15 (Huw Edwards)

241 Q 59 (Paul Owen)

242 Q 59 (Chris Wilkins)

“we need to be open about its limitations, and who it is and is not for”. She also noted that social prescribing suffers from a lack of funding and resources.²⁴³

165. **Local authorities, working with its health and wellbeing boards, local NHS trusts and clinical commissioning groups, must ensure that coordination and quality of social prescribing is improved. This must include monitoring and evaluating interventions to ensure that social prescribing is reaching those in need and achieving positive health and wellbeing outcomes. Local clinical commissioning groups should consider the development of a local register of organisations suitable for social prescribing to provide assurance to medical practitioners.**

Sport for development

166. We have heard that sport and physical activity can teach life skills and create opportunities to change people’s lives through sport for development programmes.
167. Ollie Dudfield, Executive Director of the Sport for Development Coalition, defined sport for development as “the intentional use of sport and physical activity to contribute to specific wider development outcomes” including supporting communities, tackling inequalities and prevention of criminal and antisocial behaviour.²⁴⁴ Mark Lawrie, CEO of StreetGames, explained that “sport for development organisations exist along a continuum” with some organisations using sport as a hook, offering a short programme of sport to achieve, for example, an employment outcome, whilst others are closer to community sports clubs and are focused on long-term participation in sport and the social outcomes that result.²⁴⁵ However, he noted that there is a “lack of understanding of what it does” and what it can achieve.²⁴⁶
168. The *Sporting Future* strategy does not use the term ‘sport for development’ but it does emphasise the need for sports projects and programmes to deliver “social outcomes”.²⁴⁷ Sport England’s *Uniting the Movement* strategy similarly does not refer to sport for development by name, although its vision is to “transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity”.²⁴⁸ Sport England estimated that the social and community development value of sport and physical activity is £20 billion to the UK but that it is “nowhere near its full potential”.²⁴⁹
169. Witnesses called for greater cross-departmental working and coordination to recognise the value of sport for development. For example, Ollie Dudfield called for “the development of clear plans” to maximise the contribution

243 [Q 59](#) (Hayley Jarvis)

244 [Q 97](#) (Ollie Dudfield)

245 [Q 97](#) (Mark Lawrie)

246 [Q 101](#) (Mark Lawrie)

247 Cabinet Office, *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation*, pp 8 and 62

248 Sport England, *Uniting the Movement: A 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity*, p 1

249 Sport England, *Uniting the Movement: A 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity*, p 13. See also Sheffield Hallam University Sport Industry Research Centre, *Summary: social and economic value of community sport and physical activity in England* (September 2020), p 4: <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2020-09/Social%20and%20economic%20value%20of%20sport%20and%20physical%20activity%20-%20summary.pdf> [accessed 15 November 2021].

of sport and physical activity to individual and community development.²⁵⁰ The Sport for Development Coalition told us that achieving Sport England’s vision “will require more extensive cross-government, multi-sector and societal engagement”.²⁵¹

170. We heard from a range of witnesses and organisations who use sport to achieve wider social outcomes. Henry Hazlewood from the Lord’s Taverners explained how embedding Police Community Support Officers into their cricket sessions had built trust between young people from Asian backgrounds and the police.²⁵² StreetGames told us about their 1,000 Doorstep Sport Clubs, which are informal sports clubs hosted by community projects that use a variety of sports and physical activity to reach young people in deprived areas and has helped to improve employability, wellbeing and reduced youth reoffending.²⁵³ We also heard about the LTA SERVES programme which works with locally led community groups to take tennis to disadvantaged communities.²⁵⁴
171. We heard how professional football clubs and their foundations, as well as those of other sports, play a crucial role in the sport for development sector. Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson told us about a past project run by Pompey in the Community, a charitable trust affiliated to Portsmouth FC, in in which a child or young person absent from school received “a text message from one of the players at the football club saying, ‘Why aren’t you at school?’”. He noted that this was an effective way of engaging with young people and getting them back into school.²⁵⁵
172. As another example of the work being done by professional clubs and their foundations, Steve Johnson, Disability Manager at Everton in the Community, told us their work started off trying to give disabled people in the community the same sports opportunities as non-disabled people and has now expanded to support people in everyday life through providing work placements, job opportunities and paid employment and volunteer opportunities.²⁵⁶
173. Because the outcomes of sport for development projects, both in community and criminal justice settings, cover sport and recreation and community and individual development, projects may be eligible to receive funding from a variety of sources.²⁵⁷ StreetGames told us that one of the “long-standing challenges” of delivering sport for development is that such work can defy easy placement within a specific government department which can make it difficult for sport for development projects to find funding.²⁵⁸ Mark Lawrie said that sport for development organisations often lead a “hand-to-mouth existence”.²⁵⁹ Peter Mason from the Sir Tom Finney Preston Soccer Centre and Football Club told us that many organisations working with communities

250 [Q 104](#) (Ollie Dudfield)

251 Written evidence from the Sport for Development Coalition ([NPS0144](#))

252 [Notes of roundtables with community sport organisations](#)

253 Written evidence from StreetGames ([NPS0091](#)). See also StreetGames, *Insight into Action: The lessons from the DoorStep Sport Club Programme 2013–2017*: <https://network.streetgames.org/sites/default/files/DSC-Lessons-A4-Full-Report-web-version.pdf> [accessed 15 November 2021].

254 Written evidence from the LTA ([NPS0142](#))

255 [Q 30](#) (Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson)

256 [Q 178](#) (Steve Johnson)

257 [Q 90](#) (Justin Coleman and Professor Rosie Meek), supplementary written evidence from StreetGames ([NPS0147](#)) and written evidence from the English Football League Trust ([NPS0097](#))

258 Supplementary written evidence from StreetGames ([NPS0147](#))

259 [Q 101](#) (Mark Lawrie)

are “below grassroots” and consequently funding never reaches them.²⁶⁰ Justin Coleman, Chief Operations Officer of Alliance of Sport in Criminal Justice, said that the funding for the sport for development sector “needs to be looked at properly.”²⁶¹

174. On monitoring and evaluation and the impact of sport for development projects, the Sport for Development Coalition told us that there is a “broad recognition ... of the important contribution sport and recreation can make to wider social and economic outcomes”.²⁶² However, Dr Ferguson noted that “the absence of a population level evaluation model for sport for development restricts the sectoral ability to demonstrate value”.²⁶³ We discuss measuring and evaluating impact of sport and recreation further in Chapter 2.

Sport for development in criminal justice settings

175. Professor Meek, Professor of Criminological Psychology at Royal Holloway, University of London, recommended that “we need to think creatively about the multitude of ways” sport and physical activity can be used in criminal justice settings “as a way of instilling life and communication skills” or encouraging people to engage in positive relationships.²⁶⁴
176. In August 2018, Professor Meek’s independent review of sport in youth and adult prisons, *A Sporting Chance*, was published. The review found that the “utilisation of sport across prisons and youth custody is inconsistent and under-developed” and “incarcerated men, women and children are typically less likely than those in the community to participate in sufficient physical activity.”²⁶⁵
177. The review recognised the positive impact of both in-house programmes and partnerships that are already being run in prisons. Chrissie Wellington told us:
- “3,500 people have completed one of the 24 [parkrun] events in prisons and young offender institutions, supported by around 1,100 volunteers. This was made possible because of a collaborative effort, a shared ethos, a shared vision, a respect for each other’s way of working, open and honest dialogue, and a willingness to take a risk and do something a little differently.”²⁶⁶
178. Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) told us they are developing a HMPPS Sports Strategy with the aim of increasing participation in sport and wellbeing activity across the entire prison and probation population. In doing so, they will work “in collaboration with partner organisations to support the diverse needs and help to overcome barriers to access and engagement of physical and wellbeing services.”²⁶⁷

260 [Notes of roundtables with community sport organisations](#)

261 [Q 90](#) (Justin Coleman)

262 Written evidence from the Sport for Development Coalition ([NPS0144](#))

263 Written evidence from Dr Kyle Ferguson ([NPS0025](#))

264 [Q 90](#) (Professor Rosie Meek)

265 Professor Rosie Meek for the Ministry of Justice, *A Sporting Chance: An Independent Review of Sport in Youth and Adult Prisons* (August 2018), pp 4 and 19: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/733184/a-sporting-chance-an-independent-review-sport-in-justice.pdf [accessed 15 November 2021]

266 [Q 66](#) (Chrissie Wellington)

267 Written evidence from Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) ([NPS0155](#))

179. The Alliance of Sport in Criminal Justice has been working with their partners to consider how to “connect that [sport for development] to lifelong provision across the estate and then into the community, to which they [offenders] will go back.” Justice Coleman explained that the Alliance would “not put something on in the establishment that is really expensive” as this raises the expectations of young offenders who are released and then cannot access that sport or activity.²⁶⁸
180. Justin Coleman explained that measuring impact across the criminal justice estate is difficult due to the lack of an agreed framework through which programmes can be evaluated. He also emphasised the need to encourage robust academic research when measuring the impact of sport for development programmes.²⁶⁹ The Alliance of Sport in Criminal Justice has worked with the University of Birmingham to build an impact framework for their Levelling the Playing Field Project which spans sport in the community and the youth justice system.²⁷⁰
181. Professor Meek explained that the Justice Data Lab²⁷¹ established in 2013 is a “world-leading example” of how the Government can help researchers, practitioners and the voluntary sector explore and demonstrate the impact of their interventions in prisons.²⁷² The Justice Data Lab service uses reoffending data to provide programmes with an analysis of their impact on reoffending.
182. **Sport for development can turn people’s lives around. In formulating the national plan, the Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing must work with the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice to review the role of sport for development in communities and criminal justice settings. It should consider how sport and physical activity opportunities can best be resourced and deployed to improve outcomes for those who stand to benefit most from sport for development programmes in our communities and those serving custodial sentences, and how these outcomes can best be measured.**

268 [Q 93](#) (Justin Coleman)

269 [Q 92](#) (Justin Coleman)

270 The Alliance of Sport in Criminal Justice, ‘Levelling the Playing Field’: <https://www.levellingtheplyingfield.org/images/2020/11/30/project-infographic4.jpg> [accessed 15 November 2021]

271 Ministry of Justice, ‘Accessing the Justice Data Lab service’: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/justice-data-lab> [accessed 15 November 2021]

272 Supplementary written evidence from Professor Rosie Meek ([NPS0152](#))

CHAPTER 4: INSTILLING A LIFE-LONG HABIT OF SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

183. This chapter begins by looking at ways to make sport and physical activity more fun and enjoyable. We then turn our attention to delivery of PE and school sport including use of the PE and Sport Premium. We also look at initiatives to help children and young people to be active throughout the day and ways to improve links between schools, clubs and communities.

Making sport and physical activity fun and enjoyable

184. Attitudes towards physical activity that we develop as children often track into adulthood. Providing a positive, inclusive and fun environment for children and young people will equip them with the skills, motivation, and confidence to become active adults. When we talk about making sport fun and enjoyable, we are referring to delivery through PE and school sport as well as external provision outside school.

185. Laura Cordingley, CEO of Chance to Shine, a national cricket charity, highlighted four principles for fostering enjoyable and inclusive sport environments for young people:

- Providing a relaxed environment for children where they have some ownership over the programme;
- Making it inclusive so that all young people feel safe and part of the activity;
- Concentrating on personal best, including relatable role models; and
- Consistency in terms of the sporting environment.²⁷³

186. Oliver Scadgell, Participation Director for the LTA, told us that being able to demonstrate progress is important for children.²⁷⁴ StreetGames told us that to maximise engagement with young people they focus on “The Five Rights”—the right time, place, price, style and people.²⁷⁵

187. We heard about the need to provide a wide range of activities for children to try. Ali Oliver, CEO of the Youth Sport Trust, told us that “the best chance we have of helping young people fall in love with moving” is to harness a broad range of activities.²⁷⁶ Mark Hardie, former CEO of Access Sport, a sport charity which provides opportunities to underrepresented demographics in sport and recreation, told us that Access Sport had attracted young disabled people, those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and ethnic minorities through non-traditional activities including BMX cycling, American football, baseball, and dance.²⁷⁷ Students from St Aiden’s School, Harrogate and New College Leicester told us that they would like the opportunity to try other sports during PE and would like more say in what those sports are.²⁷⁸

273 Q 126 (Laura Cordingley)

274 Q 126 (Oliver Scadgell)

275 Written evidence from StreetGames (NPS0091)

276 Q 120 (Ali Oliver)

277 QQ 125–126 (Mark Hardie)

278 Notes of engagement event with school students <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/8063/documents/82932/default/>

188. Mads Andreassen, Head of Activity Development at the Norwegian Sports Confederation, told us that in Norway they have a Children’s Rights in Sport statement which incorporates the principles of safety, mastery, influence, the freedom to choose whichever sport you want, ensuring that competitions are open for everybody, and that family income is not a barrier to participation.²⁷⁹ Norway also limits exposure to competition before age 13 to give more attention to developing skills and having fun.²⁸⁰ The British Mountaineering Council argued that schools should offer a broader range of activities including individual activities and activities that are not competitive.²⁸¹
189. We heard mixed views about the extent to which children enjoy competition. For example, Logan, a student from New College Leicester told us that competition can take the fun out of sport for those who “just want to play casually”, while Alec from St Aidan’s Church of England High School suggested that competitive sport allows students “to be at their best and try their hardest”.²⁸² The former Minister for School Standards, Department for Education, the Rt. Hon. Nick Gibb MP, stated that “there are some children who prefer to be physically active, which does not involve competitive sport, and we need to make sure that we cater for those children as well.”²⁸³
190. **Sport and physical activity, both inside school and outside school settings, need to be fun and engaging. Where possible, schools should allow children the choice of what sort of activities they would like to take part in including the option to take part in non-competitive activities.**

PE and school sport

191. PE and sport in school constitute the principal experience of physical activity for most children and young people. Schools introduce a variety of sports and play a vital role in establishing habits around physical activity. Conversely, negative experiences in PE and school sport have the potential to disengage young people. In this section we look at the low value placed on PE and school sport; teacher training; the need to embed physical literacy in PE; and how to create an inclusive environment.
192. PE is a foundation subject and is compulsory under the National Curriculum at all key stages, although there is not an established minimum for the number of hours PE should be taught. Schools maintained by the local authority must follow the National Curriculum. Academies and free schools do not have to, but they are required to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes the physical development of pupils.²⁸⁴
193. The aims of the National Curriculum for PE are to ensure that pupils:
- Develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities;
 - Are physically active for sustained periods of time;

279 [Q 84](#) (Mads Andreassen)

280 *Ibid.*

281 Written evidence from the British Mountaineering Council ([NPS0103](#))

282 [Notes of engagement event with school students](#)

283 [Q 237](#) (Nick Gibb MP)

284 House of Commons Library, *Physical education, physical activity and sport in schools*, Briefing Paper, [SN 6836](#), 17 December 2019, p 3 and Department for Education, ‘National curriculum in England: framework for key stages 1 to 4’: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-framework-for-key-stages-1-to-4> [accessed 15 November 2021].

- Engage in competitive sports and activities; and
- Lead healthy, active lives.²⁸⁵

194. The DfE, DCMS and DHSC published the *School Sport and Activity Action Plan*²⁸⁶ in 2019 as a “statement of intent” for on-going collaboration and commitment to physical activity in school.²⁸⁷ It sets out three objectives:

- All children and young people to take part in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day (30 minutes at school and 30 minutes outside school);
- Children and young people to have the opportunity to realise developmental, character-building experiences through sport, competition and active pursuits; and
- All sport and physical activity provision for children and young people to be designed around the principles of physical literacy, to focus on fun and enjoyment, and to aim to reach the least active.²⁸⁸

Valuing PE and school sport

195. We heard that PE and school sport do not receive the recognition that they deserve and that the low value placed on PE results in lesson times being reduced.

196. Terry Graves, a former Head of PE and an adviser and consultant for the Association of Physical Education, told us that core subjects get preferential treatment resulting in subjects like PE getting “squeezed in terms of time and resources.”²⁸⁹ Tom Feighan, a primary PE teacher, told us that pupils get two hours a week for PE lessons and “very often” even that gets taken away if “they need to do extra maths or because the hall is being used.”²⁹⁰ Ali Oliver cited findings from the DfE workforce survey which reported that 53,000 hours of physical education had been lost in our schools in the last 10 years.²⁹¹

197. Sport England told us: “We are concerned that some schools are sacrificing time in the curriculum designated for PE in order to redeploy resources towards core curriculum subjects”, adding that “this presents a very real threat to the physical literacy, health and wellbeing of the next generation, and must be halted as a matter of urgency.”²⁹²

285 Department for Education, ‘National curriculum in England: physical education programmes of study’: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-physical-education-programmes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-physical-education-programmes-of-study> [accessed 15 November 2021] and HC Deb, 28 June 2011, [cols 763–4W](#)

286 The plan applies to England only because health, education and grassroots sports policy are devolved matters. In Scotland there is a Physical Activity Delivery Plan, in Northern Ireland, Sport Matters, and in Wales, Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales all of which are based around the principle that physical activity is good for physical and mental wellbeing.

287 Department for Education, Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, and Department of Health and Social Care, *School Sport and Activity Action Plan* (15 July 2019), p 3: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/848082/School_sport_and_activity_action_plan.pdf [accessed 15 November 2021]

288 Department for Education, Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, and Department of Health and Social Care, *School Sport and Activity Action Plan*

289 [Notes of roundtables with PE teachers](#)

290 *Ibid.*

291 [Q 118](#) (Ali Oliver)

292 Written evidence from Sport England ([NPS0100](#))

198. Several witnesses called for PE to be made a core subject of the National Curriculum to elevate its status. Terry Graves suggested that making PE a core subject would alleviate the “lack of funding, lack of time and resources, lack of specialist PE teachers in primary schools, [and] lack of specialist teachers with high-quality curriculums in secondary schools”.²⁹³ Baroness Campbell of Loughborough, Director of Women’s Football at the FA, also called for PE to be made a core subject telling us: “I genuinely believe that if youngsters are not physically literate, physically well, emotionally balanced and socially integrated by the age of 10 and 11, you are constantly on retrieval.”²⁹⁴
199. A symptom of PE being under-valued is that it is not effectively monitored or evaluated. Ali Oliver told us that PE is not assessed, benchmarked or tracked, and as a result “young people can come out of 11 years of physical education with nothing tangible to demonstrate what they have learned and acquired.”²⁹⁵
200. Dr Durden-Myers, Past Chair of the International Physical Literacy Association and Senior Lecturer in Physical Education, Bath Spa University and University of Gloucestershire, recommended that Ofsted holds senior leaders of schools accountable for health and wellbeing, physical education and school sport.²⁹⁶ Sue Wilkinson MBE, Chief Executive Officer of the Association for PE, suggested “a framework to ensure that what is on offer in PE, school sport and physical activity is regulated”.²⁹⁷ Other organisations including the RFU and the LTA also called for greater inspection by Ofsted of PE and physical activity offers within school.²⁹⁸
201. Tim Hollingsworth OBE, CEO of Sport England, said that more could be done to measure and evaluate the delivery of sport in schools through the lens of Ofsted or another mechanism, and with more focus on children’s activity and wellbeing.²⁹⁹

Teacher training

202. A good teacher or coach can make the difference between a negative or positive experience which can shape a child’s attitude towards sport and recreation for life. To be able to deliver enjoyable and engaging offers, teachers must receive proper training, be confident, have access to resources and equipment, and have the support and backing of the school’s leadership.
203. We heard that teachers are not getting nearly enough teacher training in PE and that the problem is particularly acute at primary level where generalist teachers often deliver PE. Dr Durden-Myers told us that primary teachers are getting “as little as six hours’ training in physical education” and that it was “not surprising” that many do not feel confident or competent to deliver PE.³⁰⁰ Professor Edwards, Professor of Sport, Exercise and Nutrition

293 [Notes of roundtables with PE teachers](#)

294 [Q 149](#) (Baroness Campbell of Loughborough)

295 [Q 119](#) (Ali Oliver)

296 [Q 118](#) (Dr Liz Durden-Myers)

297 [Q 124](#) (Sue Wilkinson)

298 Written evidence from the RFU ([NPS0146](#)) and the LTA ([NPS0142](#))

299 [Q 197](#) (Tim Hollingsworth)

300 [Q 118](#) (Dr Liz Durden-Myers)

Education, University of Nottingham, agreed, noting that primary teachers “often had bad experiences themselves, which are perpetuated”.³⁰¹

204. Steve Waide, a PE consultant, said that trainee primary school teachers receive “3 to 6 hours max” during their teacher training. Matthew Rhymer, a secondary school PE teacher, told us that many newly qualified teachers received only one-hour of training on delivering PE lessons during their teacher training course which in turn has a negative impact on the attitude to PE of those teachers.³⁰² Tom Feighan told us that on his teacher training course “we had two hours’ worth of PE ... and I ended up teaching it to my course because I had the eight years previous experience”.³⁰³
205. A consequence of having poorly trained, unconfident teachers is that pupils do not learn the importance of physical activity and are denied crucial opportunities to improve their fitness. Significantly, the Centre for Movement and Occupational Rehabilitation Sciences told us that PE lessons are “very inactive compared to UK guidelines” and pointed to its own research which showed declines in pupil aerobic fitness, strength, power, endurance and other measures related to coordination in recent years.³⁰⁴ Dr Atherton, Adviser at the Behavioural Insights Team, told us that the lack of physical activity in PE lessons can be attributed in part to a lack of teacher confidence. She recommended wider dissemination of tips to support less confident teachers on how to increase activity in lessons.³⁰⁵
206. Dr Durden-Myers recommended that “routes into teaching need to be followed up with career-long professional learning” that enables both new and established teachers “to respond to the changing challenges they face in education.”³⁰⁶ The Youth Sport Trust called for a professional development programme to help teachers “better develop physical literacy and educate through physical activity and sport”.³⁰⁷ Dr Atherton said that there could be more provision for specialists in primary schools.³⁰⁸
207. The Government told us that it has provided £500,000 to nine teaching schools “to test new ways to support schools to deliver high quality PE, improve and coordinate the PE CPD (Continuing Professional Development) for teachers and support primary schools to maximise their PE and Sport Premium funding.”³⁰⁹ Graham Archer, Director for Qualifications, Curriculum and Extracurricular at the Department for Education, told us that progress relating to the 2019 *School Sport and Activity Action Plan* has included work on “teacher training, CPD and whole-school approaches” to enable teachers to improve the design and delivery of PE and sport in schools.³¹⁰

Physical literacy in PE

208. As noted in Chapter 3, physical literacy is best delivered in schools as it is during childhood that children develop the skills, confidence and

301 [Q 51](#) (Professor Kim Edwards)

302 [Notes of roundtables with PE teachers](#)

303 *Ibid.*

304 Written evidence from the Centre for Movement and Occupational Rehabilitation Sciences (MORES), Oxford Brookes University ([NPS0106](#))

305 [Q 51](#) (Dr Kathryn Atherton)

306 [Q 118](#) (Dr Liz Durden-Myers)

307 Written evidence from the Youth Sport Trust ([NPS0115](#))

308 [Q 51](#) (Dr Kathryn Atherton)

309 Written evidence from HM Government ([NPS0134](#))

310 [Q 6](#) (Graham Archer)

attitudes towards sport and recreation that they will carry into adulthood. We have noted that Wales, New Zealand, Australia and others are already incorporating physical literacy into their national curricula because having positive experiences and learning basic coordination and competence during childhood is more likely to lead to a love of movement.

209. Ukactive called for PE to be underpinned by physical literacy.³¹¹ The Youth Sport Trust recommended focusing on physical literacy through building the confidence and competence of young people so they enjoy playing sport.³¹² Tim Hollingsworth said that a child's physical literacy is much more important than them playing an individual sport or focusing on an individual skill.³¹³
210. Dr Durden-Myers said that she “would like physical literacy to be at the centre of physical education, with the provision of clearer guidance and local networks to support senior leaders, generalist teachers and PE specialists to deliver a high-quality physical education offer.”³¹⁴
211. Sport England told us that it plans to increase its focus on the importance of physical literacy and that developing physical literacy “is a focus for government, schools and the sport and physical activity sector alike.”³¹⁵

Creating a welcoming and inclusive environment in PE and school sport

212. In Chapter 3 we discussed the need to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for sport and recreation. This principle necessarily extends to PE and school sport.
213. Stonewall and Mermaids told us that 14 per cent of LGBT+ pupils, including 29 per cent of trans pupils, are bullied during sports lessons and 54 per cent of LGBT+ pupils ‘frequently’ or ‘often’ hear homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language in sports lessons. They called for LGBT+ inclusion guidance for schools and community sports groups to encourage LGBT+ young people to participate in sport and recreation inside and outside school.³¹⁶
214. Women in Sport told us that 64 per cent of girls quit sport by the time that they reach puberty.³¹⁷ Girlguiding told us that their 2020 *Girls’ Attitudes Survey* found that girls’ and young women’s choices of sport and recreation decrease as they get older, with 91 per cent of those aged 7 to 10 saying they have the same choices as boys, falling to 51 per cent aged 11 to 16, and to only 40 per cent for those aged 17 to 21. The survey also found women’s enjoyment of physical activity, sport and PE also declining as girls get older.³¹⁸
215. Goalball UK told us that inclusion in sport for blind and partially sighted children “remains a pipe dream” and called for better and inclusive training as part of the curriculum for teachers and for more consistent engagement between schools and clubs.³¹⁹ Simon Roadley, a teacher in a special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) school in Leicester, told

311 Supplementary written evidence from ukactive ([NPS0124](#))

312 Written evidence from the Youth Sport Trust ([NPS0115](#))

313 [Q 197](#) (Tim Hollingsworth)

314 [Q 118](#) (Dr Liz Durden-Myers)

315 Written evidence from Sport England ([NPS0100](#))

316 Written evidence from Stonewall and Mermaids ([NPS0123](#))

317 Written evidence from Women in Sport ([NPS0093](#))

318 Written evidence from Girlguiding ([NPS0074](#))

319 Written evidence from Goalball UK ([NPS0075](#))

us: “Quite often our young people come to us having had a bad experience within mainstream [education], where lessons are very sport focused”.³²⁰ Evelyn Roberts, a former wheelchair basketball player for Great Britain and now a PE teacher at an SEND school, suggested that there needs to be more inclusivity embedded into the curriculum for PE, sport and education for teachers to think about how they can include somebody with a disability in activities.³²¹

216. Several witnesses drew a link between teacher training and raising awareness of the need for inclusion. Baroness Campbell of Loughborough and Women in Sport noted that teacher training could be adapted so teachers are aware of the needs of girls and young women.³²² Simon Roadley noted that teacher training is crucial for ensuring that the delivery of PE can be inclusive, with PE teachers needing confidence to adjust lessons to facilitate the participation of all students including students with special educational needs and disabilities.³²³

217. We also heard how segregation of girls and boys in PE and sport can reinforce stereotypes, undermine confidence and limit choices. Erin, a student at New College Leicester, explained that, in older year groups in her school, girls and boys are segregated in PE. She told us:

“When it was unisex where I lived before, it was more fun because we didn’t have any stereotypes. Every single time we did PE we played together therefore there was no reason to think of stereotypes because we see each other playing.”³²⁴

218. Filip, another student from New College Leicester, told us that gender stereotypes can affect boys and shared his experience of receiving negative comments when taking part in dance or gymnastics.³²⁵

219. However, Francesca Clarke and Lily MaCaulay-Hick, sixth form pupils at Cranford House School, argued that mixed classes can reinforce gender stereotypes and undermine confidence. They suggested providing opportunities for girls-only teams or groups, and more female coaches.³²⁶ Brianne Turner, a qualified teacher and former Head of PE, told us that she had run after-school clubs just for female pupils which she said helped boost confidence.³²⁷

220. Segregated sports can lead to limited choice and gendered options which may not appeal to everyone. Katie Allen, a female Basingstoke school student, Professor Eric Anderson, Professor of Sport, Masculinities & Sexualities at University of Winchester, and Stacy Hart of the Women’s Equality Party told us about a successful petition led by Katie Allen to be allowed to play with the boys’ football team at her school. They noted that segregated sports perpetuate damaging stereotypes, limiting potential, and discouraging participation.³²⁸ Ali Oliver noted that, in her experience as a PE teacher, if

320 [Notes of roundtables with PE teachers](#)

321 [Notes of engagement event with young adults with disabilities](#)

322 [Q 149](#) (Baroness Campbell of Loughborough) and written evidence from Women in Sport ([NPS0093](#))

323 [Notes of roundtables with PE teachers](#)

324 [Notes of engagement event with school students](#)

325 *Ibid.*

326 Written evidence from Olly Deasy, Francesca Clarke and Lily MaCaulay-Hick ([NPS0048](#))

327 [Notes of roundtables with PE teachers](#)

328 Written evidence from Katie Allen, Professor Eric Anderson and Stacy Hart ([NPS0020](#))

some of the girls do not enjoy netball in year 7 “they certainly would not like it by year 11” and noted that narrow options can lead girls to decide that they do not like organised sport.³²⁹

221. Nick Gibb MP explained that schools should ensure “a diverse and challenging PE curriculum that suits the needs of all pupils” with boys and girls provided equal opportunities to participate in comparable sporting activities.³³⁰
222. **We believe that the physical literacy of children should be valued as highly as their literacy and numeracy. To this end, the Department for Education must designate PE as a core subject across all key stages to ensure that it receives adequate time and resource. The Department for Education must establish expected standards for the delivery of PE and school sport. The quality and delivery of PE and school sport must be assessed during Ofsted inspections of schools.**
223. **We are disappointed and alarmed to hear that some primary school teachers are entering the profession with only a few hours’ training in delivering PE lessons and physical activity. The Government must work with teacher training providers to ensure adequate time is allocated in teacher training courses to build knowledge and confidence in the delivery of PE, and to assess trainee teachers’ understanding of physical literacy.**
224. **Schools should always provide pupils from all backgrounds and abilities with a safe environment where they can feel comfortable and free from judgement or criticism when exploring sport and recreation activities. When reviewing the *School Sport and Activity Action Plan*, the Department for Education should include guidance for schools to ensure that all pupils can try a wide range of sports and activities. Guidance should also be provided to schools to support the participation of young disabled people.**

PE and Sport Premium

225. The PE and Sport Premium (PESP) was set up to provide primary schools with funding to improve the quality of PE, physical activity and sport.³³¹ Since 2017–18, revenue from the soft drinks industry levy has been used to double the value of the PESP from £160 million to £320 million.³³² The budget for the academic years 2020–21 and 2021–22 stood at £320 million.³³³
226. Schools must use the PESP “to make additional and sustainable improvements to the quality of the PE, physical activity and sport offered.”³³⁴ This includes the provision of external, specialist coaches to broaden the range of activities within the school setting, provide specialist tuition in specific sports and facilitate after-school clubs. The PESP should not be used to employ coaches or specialist teachers to cover lesson preparation

329 [Q 120](#) (Ali Oliver)

330 [Q 240](#) (Nick Gibb MP)

331 Department for Education, Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, and Department of Health and Social Care, *School sport and activity action plan*, p 15

332 House of Commons Library, *Physical education, physical activity and sport in schools*, Briefing Paper, [SN 6836](#), 17 December 2019, p 3

333 DfE, ‘Guidance: PE and sport premium for primary schools’ (28 October 2021): <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pe-and-sport-premium-for-primary-schools> [accessed 15 November 2021]

334 *Ibid.*

and assessment arrangements, or to teach the minimum requirement of the National Curriculum.

227. The PESP is most often used to provide specialist support, Continuing Professional Development for teachers, or after-school clubs.³³⁵ It is also commonly spent on buying new equipment or improving facilities.³³⁶ Schools must publish details of how they use the PESP funding on their websites each year along with the impact it has had on pupils' PE and sport participation and attainment.³³⁷
228. Dr Durden-Myers told us that some schools have effectively utilised the PESP, increasing provision of activities such as swimming which can be an expensive activity to facilitate.³³⁸ Simon Roadley explained that his school uses the PESP to bring in external coaches who will work alongside the teacher in delivering the lesson, building their confidence.³³⁹

External provision

229. The PESP is often used to bring in external coaches. When used well, an external coach can provide specialist teaching of a sport, help build teacher confidence and enable a school to broaden the range of activities it offers to pupils. However, we heard that the quality of external providers can vary and that if overused it can lead to a reliance on external providers and undermine the confidence of teachers to deliver PE and sport opportunities in the long-term.
230. Dr Durden Myers told us: "In the primary sector, PE is predominantly being outsourced to coaching companies. That leads to a narrowing because they are not specialists in the range of curriculum activities."³⁴⁰
231. Hon. Grant Robertson, Deputy Prime Minister of New Zealand, Minister for Sport and Recreation and Finance Minister, told us that New Zealand has recently moved away from schools procuring external provision in some cases because use of external providers was creating a "confusing environment for schools and teachers" and impacted on teachers' confidence.³⁴¹
232. Dr Durden-Myers highlighted that the PESP has been used to cover lessons whilst teachers use the time for planning, preparation and assessment which is contrary to the conditions of the PESP.³⁴² Tom Feighan told us that his school utilises the PESP to bring in external providers for their specialism. However, he warned that use of external providers "is probably not going to be sustainable for your PE provision in the long term" if teachers are not involved and learn from the provision.³⁴³

335 Ofsted, *Obesity, healthy eating and physical activity in primary schools* (July 2018): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/726114/Obesity_healthy_eating_and_physical_activity_in_primary_schools_170718.pdf [accessed 15 November 2021]

336 DfE, *Primary PE and Sport Premium Survey: Research Report* (July 2019): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816676/Primary_PE_and_Sport_Premium_Survey_research_report.pdf [accessed 15 November 2021]

337 House of Commons Library, *Physical education, physical activity and sport in schools*, Briefing Paper, [SN 6836](#), 17 December 2019, p 10

338 [Q 122](#) (Dr Liz Durden-Myers)

339 [Notes of roundtables with PE teachers](#)

340 [Q 122](#) (Dr Liz Durden-Myers)

341 [Q 113](#) (Hon Grant Robertson)

342 [Q 122](#) (Dr Liz Durden-Myers)

343 [Notes of roundtables with PE teachers](#)

233. We heard concerns relating to funding of the PESP being confirmed at short notice and allocated on a year-by-year basis. Simon Roadley told us that this had led to uncertainty when planning PE lessons for the forthcoming academic year.³⁴⁴ Ali Oliver called for the Government to make their intentions clear for the future of the PESP at an earlier stage in the academic cycle to allow schools to plan for the use of PESP funding.³⁴⁵ The Government confirmed on 17 June 2021 that funding would continue for the forthcoming 2021/22 academic year, fewer than three months before the end of the academic year.³⁴⁶
234. Nick Gibb MP told us that schools can bring in external coaches, but they are meant to team teach with the existing staff. He added that it is “about upskilling the teachers and making a sustainable change for the long term in that school and not simply to use it to provide teaching of a particular lesson and then they move on”.³⁴⁷
235. We heard concerns relating to the quality of the external providers. Dr Durden-Myers noted that there are “some fantastic coaching companies out there” but warned that there is “a lack of regulation” around outsourcing and warned of potential “child protection and safeguarding issues”.³⁴⁸
236. Sue Wilkinson of the Association for PE agreed, telling us that the PESP has been less effective when coaching is not delivered by “appropriately qualified people”.³⁴⁹ Dr Iain Lindsey, Benjamin Rigby, Professor Brett Smith, Dr Emily Oliver and Dr Caroline Dodd-Reynolds said that “engaging and, if not, regulating private providers working in primary schools is needed to address some poor practices and to sustainably improve provision.”³⁵⁰
237. Lee Mason, former CEO of Active Partnerships, called for a national kitemark or quality assurance scheme to support the provision of high-quality coaching through the PESP.³⁵¹
238. Nick Gibb MP told us that organisations including Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA), ukactive, the Youth Sport Trust, the Association for Physical Education and Sport England published guidance in 2019 “to help schools to know what to look for, for example when employing coaches for children outside school.”³⁵²

Accountability of PE and Sport Premium spending

239. Despite the significant sums of money that have been allocated to the PESP, there remains little accountability of schools in how that money is spent.
240. Research commissioned by the Sport and Recreation Alliance found that for the academic year of 2017–18, only 59.3 per cent of sampled primary schools were fully compliant with DfE requirements to publish their overall allocation of PESP funding and a full breakdown of spending (or prospective

344 *Ibid.*

345 [Q 121](#) (Ali Oliver)

346 DfE, ‘Guidance: PE and Sport Premium for primary schools’ (28 October 2021): <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pe-and-sport-premium-for-primary-schools> [accessed 15 November 2021]

347 [Q 242](#) (Nick Gibb MP)

348 [Q 122](#) (Dr Liz Durden-Myers)

349 [Q 122](#) (Sue Wilkinson)

350 Written evidence from Dr Iain Lindsey, Mr Benjamin Rigby, Professor Brett Smith, Dr Emily Oliver and Dr Caroline Dodd-Reynolds ([NPS0111](#))

351 [Q 20](#) (Lee Mason)

352 [Q 229](#) (Nick Gibb MP)

spending). A further 11.8 per cent of sampled schools had no information on their websites that detailed PESP spending.³⁵³

241. Dr Durden-Myers told us there have been reports of “widespread misuse of the PE and sport premium funding”.³⁵⁴ Simon Roadley told us that there is a lack of clarity amongst teachers on how the PESP should be spent.³⁵⁵

242. Ali Oliver told us that approximately £1.8 billion has been spent on the PESP, but in the absence of any agreed outcomes it was difficult to know what impact it has had.³⁵⁶

243. In their evidence, Dr Lindsey et al highlighted previous academic research by Dr Lindsey which found that there are ongoing concerns about the influence of Ofsted inspections in effectively holding schools to account for the spending of the PESP.³⁵⁷

244. Nick Gibb MP told us:

“We want to give schools discretion about how they spend the money, and we hold them to account by asking them to provide a report on how they have spent the money. There is clear guidance about how they should spend the money”.³⁵⁸

245. Nick Gibb MP also told us that school governors and academy trustees have a key role in providing strategic leadership, holding school leaders to account for financial performance and ensuring that money is well spent.³⁵⁹

246. **The Department for Education must guarantee funding for the PESP for the long-term, ensuring that it is maintained at least at the current amount of £320 million each year, and ensure that schools are aware of their allocated funding well in advance of the forthcoming academic year to ensure that they can plan for effective use of the funding.**

247. **The Department for Education must provide schools with adequate guidance for finding qualified external providers of sports coaching and how to utilise them effectively to build teacher confidence in delivering sport offers. The Department for Education must develop an accreditation scheme for external providers who deliver sport in schools to improve accountability of external provision and ensure that the highest safeguarding standards are maintained.**

248. **The Department for Education needs to monitor PESP spending and outcomes better to ensure it is getting value for money. Failures**

353 Sport and Recreation Alliance, *The PE and Sport Premium: An assessment of primary schools' spending and reporting* (2019), p 1: <http://sramedia.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/d8ef628a-861f-47c3-9178-6ecb389b95b3.pdf> [accessed 15 November 2021]

354 [Q 122](#) (Dr Liz Durden-Myers)

355 [Notes of roundtables with PE teachers](#)

356 [Q 122](#) (Ali Oliver)

357 Iain Lindsey, Sarah Metcalfe, Adam Gemar, Josie Alderman, and Joe Armstrong, ‘Simplistic policy, skewed consequences: Taking stock of English physical education, school sport and physical activity policy since 2013’, *European Physical Education Review*, vol 27, issue 2 (May 2021): <https://doi.org/10.1177/1356336X20939111> [accessed 15 November 2021], see also written evidence from Dr Iain Lindsey, Mr Benjamin Rigby, Professor Brett Smith, Dr Emily Oliver and Dr Caroline Dodd-Reynolds ([NPS0111](#)).

358 [Q 238](#) (Nick Gibb MP)

359 Supplementary written evidence from Rt. Hon. Nick Gibb MP ([NPS0176](#))

by schools to publish their PESP spending and outcomes must be investigated by Department for Education.

Being active throughout the day

249. PE lessons alone will not deliver the amount of physical activity that children need, nor will they instil a lifelong love of physical activity or teach children that being active needs to be part of everyday life.
250. FYI and Sky Kids commissioned a survey of 1,000 children about sport and physical activity. Two-thirds of children said they would like to do more exercise and three-quarters of respondents said that they rely on school for some or most of their physical activity.³⁶⁰ Nigel Harrison, CEO of the Yorkshire Sport Foundation, told us: “We know that children are more active at school than they are at weekends or in the evenings and school holidays”, especially in some poorer areas.³⁶¹
251. Dr Atherton recommended increasing physical activity in the school day through a wider rollout of the Daily Mile programme. The Daily Mile is a social physical activity, with children running or jogging for 15 minutes.³⁶² Professor Dame Marteau, Director of the Behaviour and Health Research Unit at the University of Cambridge, called for every opportunity to be taken to be physically active during breaks and touted the concept of “active homework” in which children are prescribed physical activity to undertake at home.³⁶³ Dr Atherton suggested schools plan with students how to incorporate physical activity in their post-school life before they leave.³⁶⁴
252. The Welsh Institute of Physical Activity, Health and Sport called for better education on how an active lifestyle differs from “being sporty”, including aiding children and young people’s understanding of what constitutes vigorous activity. It suggested lessons on active lifestyles within the curriculum and noted that this may require a change to teacher education.³⁶⁵ The Youth Sport Trust called for a daily physical activity guarantee and a weekly active after-school sport guarantee for every child.³⁶⁶
253. We heard that the family environment can influence how active children are throughout the day. Dr Ferguson told us: “Building a coherence between school-parent-child is vital to promoting and encouraging sport and recreation at a young age”.³⁶⁷ The MRC Epidemiology Unit at Cambridge University noted that family-based physical activity is effective in increasing young people’s activity levels.³⁶⁸
254. However, Professor Edwards noted that “school is often the crucial area” because if the family does not encourage physical activity then the school environment may be the only place in which the child undertakes it. Professor

360 Written evidence from FYI and Sky Kids ([NPS0140](#))

361 [Q 23](#) (Nigel Harrison)

362 The Daily Mile, ‘About the Daily Mile’: <https://thedailymile.co.uk/about/> [accessed 15 November 2021]

363 [Q 50](#) (Professor Dame Theresa Marteau)

364 [Q 52](#) (Dr Kathryn Atherton)

365 Written evidence from Welsh Institute of Physical Activity, Health and Sport ([NPS0101](#))

366 Written evidence from the Youth Sport Trust ([NPS0115](#))

367 Written evidence from Dr Kyle Ferguson ([NPS0025](#))

368 Written evidence from the MRC Epidemiology Unit, University of Cambridge ([NPS0051](#))

Edwards said that it “amplifies the inequality between children who are in a more active family and those who are not.”³⁶⁹

255. The Department for Education must review the untapped potential for physical activity to be embedded in the school day, including incorporating physical activity into lessons beyond PE.

256. To support children to be active, the Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing must work with the Department for Education to launch a campaign to encourage and inspire parents to be active with their children outside of school.

Linking schools, clubs and communities

257. Leaving education, whether at 16, 18 or 21 years of age, is a key drop-off point when many people stop playing sport or being physically active. For schools, links with local sports and recreation organisations can provide opportunities for children and young people to discover activities available in their communities and increase the likelihood that children and young people will continue to be active in adulthood through participation in local sport and recreation organisations. However, witnesses from NGBs and community sports clubs told us that working with schools is difficult, with few incentives for schools to devote time and resource to establishing links with clubs in their community.

258. Hon Grant Robertson told us that Sport New Zealand has developed the “Balance is Better” programme which aims to reduce drop-off rates among those aged 12–18. He explained that the Balance is Better programme shifts the focus away from winning and specialising in a particular sport towards participation, having fun with friends and developing a love of an interest in sport that will carry through into adulthood.³⁷⁰

259. Dr Durden-Myers called for “responsive curricula that utilise what is available in the local community ... to empower individuals and devolve responsibility to them to become physically active in their own environment and local community.”³⁷¹ The Sport for Development Coalition called for “school-community links to provide a weekly after-school sport guarantee for all young people.”³⁷²

260. Dr Fahlén, then Associate Professor at Umeå University, Sweden and Visiting Professor, Norwegian School of Sport Sciences, Norway, told us how schools in Sweden regularly bring in sports clubs to promote themselves in schools which can establish links with community clubs for young people.³⁷³ Dr Skille, Professor of Sport Sociology, Faculty of Social and Health Sciences, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway, told us that schools advertise local sport clubs to children at the start of the school year and this often leads children to trying those clubs shortly afterwards.³⁷⁴

261. We heard that schools can be doing much more to link with clubs and facilities that offer opportunities for disabled children. Morgan Woods, a

369 [Q 51](#) (Professor Kim Edwards)

370 [Q 112](#) (Hon Grant Robertson)

371 [Q 120](#) (Dr Liz Durden-Myers)

372 Written evidence from the Sport for Development Coalition ([NPS0144](#))

373 [Q 84](#) (Dr Josef Fahlén)

374 [Q 81](#) (Dr Eivind Å Skille)

T33 wheelchair racer, told us that he attended a mainstream school where he was excluded and his role in PE was “holding the high jump for the other boys and girls”, whilst across the road there was a disabled needs school that “had all the stuff and equipment” that would have allowed him to be active during PE and sport lessons. Azeem Amir, who plays blind football for England and Great Britain, told us there are blind football and goalball clubs “begging for schools to reach out” to them, and that schools need to network together and with local clubs to learn how and where to access facilities with specialist equipment for disabled students.³⁷⁵

262. We were told that establishing connections between schools and clubs has become more difficult since the decline of School Sports Partnerships (which are summarised in Box 3). Mark Hardie told us that that it is now “far more difficult for clubs to connect with schools, which have to do it on a very individual basis”.³⁷⁶ Ian Halliday, a Level 2 UK Athletics coach, told us that School Sports Partnerships were “instrumental” in helping deliver competition, building links between primary and secondary schools and signposting children towards local clubs.³⁷⁷

Box 3: School Sports Partnerships

School Sport Partnerships (SSPs) were established in 2002 following the launch of the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links strategy. SSPs aimed to increase the quality and quantity of PE and sports opportunities for young people by establishing networks of primary, secondary and SEND schools with a specialist sports college. The Youth Sport Trust was appointed to help deliver the strategy and had helped create 450 School Sport Partnerships across England by 2008.³⁷⁸

In October 2010, the Department for Education announced that ring-fenced funding for SSPs would cease after March 2011 to allow schools to concentrate on competitive school sport. Schools were free to continue to work in partnership to deliver school sport if they wished, but they were not required to do so.³⁷⁹

263. Nick Pink, CEO of England Hockey, told us that it has become more difficult for NGBs to forge links with schools since the decline of School Sport Partnerships and suggested that a national plan could embed opportunities for NGBs to work with schools to provide talent pathways for children.³⁸⁰
264. Dr Lindsey et al told us that enhancing pathways from schools to participation outside schools requires “the commitment of greater resource and human capacity within schools or else amongst other local organisations.” They suggested Active Partnerships alongside local education agencies could lead on improvements to the delivery of sport in schools including by facilitating school-club ties.³⁸¹

375 [Notes of engagement event with young adults with disabilities](#)

376 [Q 125](#) (Mark Hardie)

377 Written evidence from Ian Halliday ([NPS0040](#))

378 Youth Sport Trust, ‘Our Story’: <https://www.youthsporttrust.org/about/what-we-do/our-story> [accessed 15 November 2021]

379 Ofsted, *School Sport Partnerships - A survey of good practice* (June 2011): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/413538/School_Sport_Partnerships.pdf [accessed 15 November 2021]

380 See Appendix 4, note on the roundtable discussion with CEOs of NGBs and experts

381 Written evidence from Dr Iain Lindsey, Mr Benjamin Rigby, Professor Brett Smith, Dr Emily Oliver and Dr Caroline Dodd-Reynolds ([NPS0111](#))

265. There are positive examples in which NGBs have worked with schools and adapted their sports to attract younger players in a fun and inclusive way. For example, the FA told us about its Football for Fun and Fitness programme targeting school-age girls and the FA Shooting Stars which delivers physical activity through imaginative play and storytelling. The FA argued that sport for children and young people needs to be delivered “in tandem” across school, community and home.³⁸² The RFU similarly emphasised the importance of linking schools and community sport.³⁸³
266. The Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society at DCMS, Nigel Huddleston MP, told us that there is “a very mixed pattern around the country” in regard to how NGBs work with schools, although he has “a very sincere commitment from the governing bodies about wanting to get closer to schools.”³⁸⁴

Opening school facilities

267. Approximately 49 per cent of grass pitches and 76 per cent of sports halls in England are located on school sites.³⁸⁵ Creating links with the community and bringing in local clubs and organisations during and outside school hours to host activities is an effective way to introduce children and young people to a broader range of activities in their communities, and to enable local clubs to engage the next generation of participants.
268. Ali Oliver of the Youth Sport Trust argued for the creation of schools as multi-sport hubs in the community, which offer an extended school day to its pupils and can “drive closer links between schools and clubs” and form a route for students to those clubs.³⁸⁶
269. Terry Graves explained that his school had established links with local community sports clubs through renting their facilities at low cost and that his school received funding from the local Active Partnership to cover the cost of caretakers being on-site.³⁸⁷
270. Lee Mason told us that many schools “want to reach out to their community”.³⁸⁸ The Active Partnerships said that efforts to open up school facilities “should sit in a wider policy context which encourages schools to be more outward looking”.³⁸⁹
271. AoC Sport said colleges also have high-quality facilities and over 100,000 students studying sports courses making them an ideal channel for delivering sport and physical activity opportunities.³⁹⁰
272. Nick Gibb MP told us that “there are challenges and barriers” for schools to open up their facilities such as the ownership of playing fields, and

382 Written evidence from the FA ([NPS0135](#))

383 Written evidence from the RFU ([NPS0146](#))

384 [Q 244](#) (Nigel Huddleston MP)

385 Sport England, *Sport England Annual Report and Accounts 2017 to 2018* (11 July 2018), p 16: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/723120/CCS0518665748-1_HC_English_Sports_Council_ARA_2017-18_Web.pdf [accessed 15 November 2021]

386 [Q 123](#) (Ali Oliver)

387 Supplementary written evidence from Terry Graves ([NPS0162](#))

388 [Q 22](#) (Lee Mason)

389 Supplementary written evidence from Active Partnerships ([NPS0098](#))

390 Written evidence from AoC Sport ([NPS0117](#))

infrastructure issues such as ensuring that changing rooms are compliant with disability access requirements.³⁹¹ He drew attention to the DfE's pilots with 23 Active Partnerships and Sport England in 2020 to work with approximately 230 primary and secondary schools to resolve barriers to opening up school sport facilities. He noted that the Government has allocated £10.1 million to expand the pilot to all 43 Active Partnerships.³⁹² He told us that the earlier pilot had helped to rebuild community links between schools and local sports clubs and that the expansion of the pilot "is a major initiative to open up assets that lie silent after the school day finishes".³⁹³

273. **Some sports and local clubs have established positive partnerships with schools, but there is considerably more potential for schools and local sports clubs to connect and work together to encourage more participation in grassroots sport.**
274. **The Department for Education must work with NGBs to support the delivery of tuition and sport offers by local clubs. This can establish links between schools and wider community and grassroots sport and physical activity opportunities for children and young people.**
275. **We are encouraged by the efforts made to support the opening of school sport facilities to their communities. However, we do not believe that progress is being made swiftly enough in this area and there remains significant untapped potential which restricts the availability of sport facilities to community sport clubs and the wider population.**
276. **We believe that with the right support, schools can open their facilities to local communities. The Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing will need to work closely with the Department for Education, local authorities and Active Partnerships, including through the Strategic Forum, to identify, engage with and support schools and other educational institutions, such as colleges, to open their facilities to local clubs and their communities.**

391 [Q 245](#) (Nick Gibb MP)

392 *Ibid.* See also written evidence from HM Government ([NPS0134](#)) and Sport England ([NPS0100](#)).

393 [Q 245](#) (Nick Gibb MP)

CHAPTER 5: ENABLING ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

277. This chapter looks at ways to enable people to be active in everyday life. We start by looking at the need to develop a whole system, place-based approach to deliver the national plan. We then consider how planning and design can lead to the creation of active environments and increase opportunities for active travel. We then discuss the opportunities and limitations of technology to support and motivate people to be more active. Finally, we consider how the science of behaviour and motivation can help to make movement part of everyone's everyday routine.

Developing a whole system, place-based approach

278. A whole system approach is about creating a shared vision that links multiple sectors and stakeholders to work together and drive forward mutually agreed changes. A place-based approach advocates the leveraging of local systems and partnerships to work for the benefit of local people and communities and supporting the needs of the local area. A place-based approach also envisages local communities shaping local systems and creating partnerships with stakeholders to drive forward local priorities. We believe this approach can apply to local planning and delivery of sport and recreation policy.

279. Key elements of a whole-system, place-based approach to physical activity might be characterised as follows:

- A recognition and mapping of how seemingly disparate services and provision can connect to create a system that delivers meaningful change;
- A focus on partnership among all stakeholders at national and local level and between public, private, social, voluntary and community enterprises;
- An emphasis on collaboration, coordination and locally-driven solutions; and
- A focus on capacity-building at local and community level, including developing effective leadership to support the design, development and implementation of local interventions.

280. Andy Reed, Co-Founder and Director of the Sports Think Tank, described a whole system approach as “creating an ecosystem at a local level to build physical activity back into our daily lives.”³⁹⁴ BASES told us that a whole system approach is a pre-requisite to achieving the kind of consistency in policy that can lead to long-term, sustainable change.³⁹⁵

281. Hayley Lever, CEO of Greater Sport, the Active Partnership covering Greater Manchester, told us that diverse offers delivered by different bodies are the hallmark of a strong whole system, place-based approach. She added that Active Partnerships and local authorities are at their best when they embrace the complexity and work together without needing to control or coordinate what is happening.³⁹⁶

394 Q 13 (Andy Reed)

395 Written evidence from the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES) ([NPS0035](#))

396 Written evidence from Hayley Lever ([NPS0137](#))

282. PHE said that it recognised the need for a whole system approach that engages locally to get people active.³⁹⁷ However, the Richmond Group of Charities, a collection of national charities focussing on England’s health and care systems, noted that there is a limited and inconsistent approach to prioritising physical activity among health policy makers, a lack of coordination at the local and regional level, and a lack of training, confidence and awareness of physical activity guidance and available tools among GPs.³⁹⁸
283. It was clear that our witnesses did not think that a whole system, place-based approach is currently being achieved. Versus Arthritis called for the introduction of “a whole system, place-based approach, with a focus on collaborative working, community co-design, and building on the assets which already exist at a local level.”³⁹⁹ The Sport and Recreation Alliance said there needed to be “a much more coordinated and coherent whole-of-government approach” with clear and ambitious outcomes and robust measures, and accountability mechanisms.⁴⁰⁰
284. **A national plan must take a broad, whole system approach so that activity can be embedded in all aspects of our everyday life including work, leisure time, health and travel. At the same time, a one-size fits all approach will not work. Funding needs to be distributed to the local, grassroots level with power residing in local authorities, metro mayors and communities to develop place-based approaches.**

Planning and design

285. The planning and design of our communities can play a critical role in promoting physical activity. This includes creating active environments, improving access to the countryside’s green and blue spaces, and building infrastructure that allows greater opportunities for active travel. This will be a key part of the national plan and will require significant cross-departmental buy-in and coordination.

Active environments

286. Creating active environments is about designing and developing the right conditions for people to be active in their everyday life. It encompasses planning, housing, transport, and other infrastructure and access considerations that influence when and how people choose to be active.
287. Professor Dame Marteau, Director of Behaviour and Health Research Unit, University of Cambridge, told us that we need to be creating “enabling environments” which support people to make active lifestyle choices.⁴⁰¹ Active Partnerships noted that “spaces and places are one of the most important conditions in influencing people’s ability to be active”.⁴⁰² Sport England emphasised the importance of integration of public leisure infrastructure including clubs, travel networks, green spaces and schools.⁴⁰³
288. Cycling UK told us that too many new housing developments are placed in car-dependent locations, with poor cycling or walking access to public

397 Written evidence from Public Health England ([NPS0125](#))

398 Written evidence from the Richmond Groups of Charities ([NPS0141](#))

399 Written evidence from Versus Arthritis ([NPS0042](#))

400 Supplementary written evidence from the Sport and Recreation Alliance ([NPS0138](#))

401 [Q 50](#) (Professor Dame Theresa Marteau)

402 Supplementary written evidence from Active Partnerships ([NPS0098](#))

403 Written evidence from Sport England ([NPS0100](#))

transport and other key amenities.⁴⁰⁴ Hayley Lever, CEO of Greater Sport, called for greater consideration of physical activity in the planning of homes, streets, neighbourhoods, services, towns, cities and transport infrastructure.⁴⁰⁵ Dr Kathryn Atherton, Adviser to the Behavioural Insights Team, told us that the construction of new buildings should be designed to maximise incidental physical activity through, for example, “the positioning of stairs relative to lifts and escalators, and ensuring that there are safe, walkable routes from housing to all local amenities.”⁴⁰⁶

289. Playing Out, a charity promoting safe streets activities for children, identified motorised traffic as the main barrier for children to play outside safely. It highlighted Dutch urban planning which attempts to improve child health through the provision of safe urban play space, as an example of good practice.⁴⁰⁷ British Cycling noted the “leadership” demonstrated by the publication of the London-wide planning guidance on children’s play and recreation in *The London Plan 2016* produced by the Mayor of London. It states that “development proposals that include housing should make provision for play and informal recreation.”⁴⁰⁸
290. We heard about the importance of access to parks and other green spaces to facilitate physical activity. Gemma Cantelo, former Head of Policy and Advocacy at the Ramblers, told us that people within 500 metres of accessible green space are 24 per cent more likely to meet recommended levels of physical activity. She called for more investment to improve accessibility including replacing and removing inaccessible path furniture such as stiles and addressing “other, less visible barriers to access, such as poor public transport and poor signposting.”⁴⁰⁹ She suggested that there is an opportunity to use the new agricultural payments regime “to direct money towards schemes that would improve public access ... and make our paths more accessible to people who currently struggle to access them because there are stiles or there is no circular route near where they live.”⁴¹⁰
291. The Country Land and Business Association told us that many of its members, including private landowners, would be willing to facilitate public access if there was “the right support, flexibility and incentives”, such as support for landowners to balance commitments for nature recovery with increased public access.⁴¹¹ The National Farmers Union noted that farmers, especially those on urban fringes, could be supported in increasing public access to the countryside through future Environmental Land Management Schemes which could be administered to aid farmers “to maintain, create or enhance public rights of way”.⁴¹²
292. Cycling UK noted that just 22 per cent of England’s rights of way network permit the use of cycles, and parts of that are “not necessarily the most

404 Written evidence from Cycling UK ([NPS0129](#))

405 Written evidence from Hayley Lever ([NPS0137](#))

406 [QQ 48–49](#) (Dr Kathryn Atherton)

407 Written evidence from Playing Out ([NPS0052](#))

408 Written evidence from British Cycling Federation ([NPS0083](#)). See also Mayor of London, ‘The London Plan 2016’, Policy 3.6: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/past-versions-and-alterations-london-plan/london-plan-2016/london-plan-chapter-three-londons-people/polic-0> [accessed 15 November 2021].

409 [Q 70](#) and [Q 74](#) (Gemma Cantelo)

410 [Q 70](#) (Gemma Cantelo)

411 Written evidence from the Country Land and Business Association ([NPS0151](#))

412 Written evidence from the NFU ([NPS0173](#))

suitable or useful sections” for cyclists. It called for “greater integration between the planning and funding of ‘active travel’ networks and rights of way networks.”⁴¹³

293. British Canoeing noted that more could be done to improve access to blue space. It noted that it has been working with British Mountaineering Council and the Ramblers to ensure that public access to the countryside via rights of way and navigation on water are part of the new Environmental Land Management schemes.⁴¹⁴ Clive Copeland, Head of Participation at the Angling Trust, told us that one of the barriers to participation in angling is lack of knowledge about where to fish.⁴¹⁵
294. The *Uniting the Movement* strategy set out Sport England’s ambition to “make the choice to be active easier and more appealing for everyone” including through planning and design of communities and active travel.⁴¹⁶

Active travel

295. The Government published its *Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy* (CWIS) in 2017 and its *Gear Change: a bold vision for cycling and walking* strategy in 2020.⁴¹⁷ The Government told us that of the 26 actions outlined in the CWIS “around half are substantially completed” and most of the others were long-term interventions.⁴¹⁸ The *Gear Change* strategy includes a £2 billion package of funding for cycling and walking over the next five years. The Government said that the Department for Transport is also supporting 46 local authorities with their Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans so they can deliver high-quality cycling and walking programmes.⁴¹⁹
296. Cycling UK “warmly welcomed” the *Gear Change* strategy but told us that it “needs stronger buy-in from several key Government departments, notably the Treasury.”⁴²⁰ Sarah Mitchell, CEO of Cycling UK, told us that the strategy includes many cross-departmental commitments but that other departments, such as the DfE and DHSC, were not showing enough buy-in.⁴²¹
297. Professor Dame Marteau explained that in encouraging the population to use active travel infrastructure such as cycle routes, it needs to be made safe enough so that travelling by bike is “safer than travelling by car”.⁴²²
298. We also heard that providing safe cycle routes is essential to encourage children and young people to take up active travel. Sarah Mitchell told us that in the Netherlands approximately two-thirds of primary school children

413 Written evidence from Cycling UK ([NPS0129](#))

414 Written evidence from British Canoeing ([NPS0090](#))

415 [Q 190](#) (Clive Copeland)

416 Sport England, *Uniting the Movement: A 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity*, p 33

417 Department for Transport, *Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy* (April 2017): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/918442/cycling-walking-investment-strategy.pdf [accessed 18 November 2021] and Department for Transport, *Gear Change: A bold vision for cycling and walking* (July 2020): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904146/gear-change-a-bold-vision-for-cycling-and-walking.pdf [accessed 18 November 2021]

418 Written evidence from HM Government ([NPS0134](#))

419 *Ibid.*

420 Written evidence from Cycling UK ([NPS0129](#))

421 [Q 70](#) (Sarah Mitchell) and written evidence from Cycling UK ([NPS0129](#))

422 [Q 49](#) (Professor Dame Theresa Marteau)

cycle to school, whereas in the UK it is only 1–3 per cent of primary and secondary schoolchildren.⁴²³

299. The Bikeability Trust, the Department for Transport’s cycle education programme, identified barriers to encouraging more people to use bikes. These included a lack of safe, affordable cycle storage, particularly in urban areas, costs of owning a bike, the costs of adapted equipment and access to training in specialist schools for those with SEND, and cultural barriers within ethnic groups about the importance of cycling.⁴²⁴
300. Gemma Cantelo raised the role of walking as part of active travel and told us that it is important to ‘normalise’ walking for children by providing safe pathways and encouraging children and parents to walk to school as part of their daily activity.⁴²⁵
301. The Centre for Ageing Better noted barriers for pedestrians including a lack of pavements, poor street lighting and exposure to high motor vehicle speeds. It noted that people from lower socioeconomic groups are more likely to live in areas with pedestrian infrastructure that is more hazard strewn, for example uneven and deteriorating surfaces or lacking dropped kerbs, making it harder to navigate, especially for those with mobility issues. The Centre for Ageing Better called for Government to tackle barriers for older age groups, including separating cyclists from cars and pedestrians and ensuring that pavements, cycle lanes and roads are free of potholes. It also called for investment and planning around active travel to “apply an ageing lens” so that the needs of older age groups are considered.⁴²⁶
302. Dr Atherton said that further consideration should be given to encouraging those who are less likely to adopt active modes of transport, noting that there is little evidence to show that constructing new cycle lanes does not just increase cycling among those who are already active and affluent.⁴²⁷
303. **The Government’s ‘levelling up’ agenda provides an opportunity to invest in active travel infrastructure and improve the planning and design of our buildings, homes and public spaces to increase physical activity. We must move away from disconnected systems that result in car dependency and which make it less convenient for people to be active in their everyday life. This also includes improving access to parks, rights of way, rivers and lakes, coastal paths and national parks.**
304. **The Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing will need to work with Defra, local authorities and other stakeholders, including private landowners, to improve public access to the countryside, using opportunities such as the Environment Land Management Schemes to incentivise and improve maintenance, signage, facilities, parking and public transport options.**

423 [Q 75](#) (Sarah Mitchell)

424 Written evidence from the Bikeability Trust ([NPS0158](#))

425 [Q 75](#) (Gemma Cantelo)

426 Written evidence from the Centre for Ageing Better ([NPS0049](#))

427 [Q 50](#) (Dr Kathryn Atherton)

Technology

305. Technology is used in multiple ways to promote physical activity including smart phone apps, wearable technology and virtual classes and events. Harnessing the opportunities that technological innovations present through the national plan will be vital in facilitating active lifestyles.
306. Although adoption of fitness technology was already increasing, it accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴²⁸ According to Sport England, nearly two-fifths (39 per cent) of adults found new ways to be active during the pandemic and 84 per cent said they intended to continue with these activities after lockdown restrictions eased.⁴²⁹ For example, Marcus Kingwell, CEO of EMD UK, noted that during lockdown, 23 per cent of adults were taking part in online fitness classes.⁴³⁰ Paul Foster, Chief Executive of The Great Run Company, said that the virtual running events—in which participants run independently and post their run online—were held to replace the physical events during lockdown periods and “reached a very different audience” including many more women.⁴³¹
307. We heard that one of the ways to engage people was through the use of ‘gamification’ and ‘exergaming’ techniques.⁴³² The University of Salford explained that the FanFit app, which encourages football fans to be more active, uses gamification techniques by allowing fans to compete with one another via league tables and offers prizes linked to football clubs as rewards.⁴³³ Shaun Azam, Chief Financial Officer of SweatCo Ltd and Dr Mark T. Elliott, Associate Professor, Institute of Digital Healthcare, WMG, University of Warwick, said that incentivising healthy behaviours by using rewards can be an effective intervention.⁴³⁴ The Health Ageing Research Centre, University of Manchester told us that it has developed smartphone and tablet-based technologies to assist older adults and that its exergaming techniques had helped to significantly reduce falls and fear of falling among older people.⁴³⁵
308. Professor Chris Todd, Director of the National Institute for Health Research Older People and Frailty Policy Research Unit, emphasised the importance of working with target users “in the construction and creation of the app” to fit their needs and expectations.⁴³⁶ Anton Derlyatka, Co-founder and CEO of Sweatcoin, told us that they “work backwards”, starting with target users to understand what they need and to create an experience that is simple and personalised.⁴³⁷
309. We were reminded that not all apps are effective. Professor Anna Cox, lead of the GetAMoveOn Network+ network of practitioners, highlighted

428 [Q 167](#) (Anton Derlyatka) and [Q 172](#) (Jamie Foale)

429 Sport England, *Understanding the Impact of COVID-19* (April 2021): https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-04/Understanding%20the%20Impact%20of%20Covid%20April%202021_0.pdf [accessed 15 November 2021]

430 [Q 191](#) (Marcus Kingwell)

431 [Q 174](#) (Paul Foster)

432 Exergaming is a portmanteau of exercise and gaming. Gamification is the deployment of elements of game playing, such as point scoring or competition with others to encourage engagement with a product or service.

433 Written evidence from the University of Salford ([NPS0005](#))

434 Written evidence from Shaun Azam and Dr Mark T. Elliott ([NPS0037](#))

435 Written evidence from the Healthy Ageing Research Group, University of Manchester ([NPS0064](#))

436 [Q 169](#) (Professor Chris Todd)

437 [Q 169](#) (Anton Derlyatka)

research which assessed whether a high rating in commercial app stores was an accurate indicator of the quality and efficacy of physical activity apps. It found “no evidence of an association between popularity and likely efficacy”.⁴³⁸ Professor Todd conducted a review of 7,500 apps that purported to promote physical activity and found that only six presented an evidence base in exercise interventions aimed at or for the use of older people.⁴³⁹

310. Professor Edwards, Professor of Sport, Exercise and Nutrition Education, University of Nottingham, told us there is a lack of evidence on the long-term effect of using technological interventions on behaviour, but caveated that the number of apps has increased rapidly and that more apps are now incorporating behaviour change theories than was the case five years ago.⁴⁴⁰ Professor Todd also told us it has been “clearly demonstrated” that apps which incorporate behaviour change theories can be effective.⁴⁴¹
311. Professor Cox called for funding for further research to understand how behaviour change techniques can best be incorporated into physical activity apps.⁴⁴² Similarly, Shaun Azam and Dr Elliott noted that there is “a need for wider research in this area, in particular around personalised incentives schemes, that optimise the level of behaviour change.”⁴⁴³
312. We also heard that there is scope for more public, private and research collaboration to develop fitness technology. Anton Derlyatka recommended that the public and private sector collaborate on technological interventions and called for the Government to develop “more appetite for innovation” and risk taking.⁴⁴⁴ Shaun Azam and Dr Elliott gave the example of a partnership between Sweatcoin and NHS Merton Clinical Commissioning Group to co-design a new version of their app for specific demographics as part of a diabetes prevention programme.⁴⁴⁵
313. The Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society at DCMS, Nigel Huddleston MP, acknowledged that “there is a co-ordinating role for government” in supporting technology collaboration, but at the same time “there is a financial incentive for the private sector and sports’ governing bodies themselves to take the lead”.⁴⁴⁶

Accessing facilities

314. In Chapter 2 we discussed how data can be collected to obtain a clearer picture of how and when people exercise. Technology can play a two-fold role. It can be used to improve data collection, for example by recording bookings and monitoring usage patterns. It can also be used to make facilities more accessible, for example by making it easier to book online. Sport England supports initiatives like the Open Data Institute’s Open Active programme

438 Written evidence from Professor Anna Cox ([NPS0045](#)), see also Paulina Bondaronek, April Slee, Fiona L Hamilton, and Elizabeth Murray (2019) ‘Relationship between popularity and the likely efficacy: an observational study based on a random selection on top-ranked physical activity apps’, *BMJ Open*, vol 9, issue 11 (2019): <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/9/11/e027536.info>.

439 [Q 167](#) (Professor Chris Todd)

440 [Q 53](#) (Professor Kim Edwards)

441 [Q 167](#) (Professor Chris Todd)

442 Written evidence from Professor Anna Cox ([NPS0045](#))

443 Written evidence from Shaun Azam and Dr Mark T Elliott ([NPS0037](#))

444 [Q 169](#) and [Q 171](#) (Anton Derlyatka)

445 Written evidence from Shaun Azam and Dr Mark T Elliott ([NPS0037](#))

446 [Q 235](#) (Nigel Huddleston MP)

which publishes open data about activities taking place to make it easier for people to find and book activities online.

315. Paul Foster highlighted a Sport England study that found people find it twice as easy to order takeaway food online than they do to book a sport or fitness class.⁴⁴⁷ Jamie Foale, CEO of Playfinder, told us that people are “five times more likely to make a booking for an activity if they are able to do it online” and are more likely to book facilities more often.⁴⁴⁸
316. The LTA told us about gate access technology which it developed, allowing local authorities to control access to their tennis courts remotely, take payment for court bookings where a hire fee is in place, track its usage and secure the facilities. The LTA noted that this technology streamlines the booking process and saw potential to use this system to improve access to school-based facilities.⁴⁴⁹
317. However, Reece Finnegan, a tennis player at Metro Blind Sport, highlighted some of the barriers disabled people face, telling us that some websites for booking sport and leisure facilities are not accessible to those who are blind or visually impaired.⁴⁵⁰
318. Jamie Foale called for public funding to come with the condition of having open data along with online booking systems. Open data, he argued, would enable technology innovators to build and improve online booking systems, and it could also lead to personalisation through targeting different demographics.⁴⁵¹
319. Nigel Huddleston MP said that “there is a golden opportunity” to use technology “to enhance the physical activity experience” and improve access. He noted that, although “there are some data concerns and issues ... we can overcome those or work with all stakeholders to do so”.⁴⁵²

Digital divide

320. Despite the potential that technology has in facilitating and promoting physical activity, we also heard about its limitations. Sport England’s *Uniting the Movement* strategy sets out its ambition to “accelerate progress” in digital interventions whilst ensuring “we don’t leave communities and audiences behind.”⁴⁵³
321. Dr Atherton explained that it is those who are already active and who are more affluent that buy technologies rather than those who are inactive to start with.⁴⁵⁴ Professor Dame Marteau cautioned us against “techno-optimism” and the risk of creating “intervention-generated inequalities”.⁴⁵⁵

447 [Q 172](#) (Paul Foster), see also Sport England, ‘Call for sport and physical activity sector to embrace digital revolution’ (30th April 2019): <https://www.sportengland.org/news/leaders-call-on-sport-and-physical-activity-sector-to-embrace-digital-revolution> [accessed 15 November 2021].

448 [Q 172](#) (Jamie Foale)

449 Supplementary written evidence from the LTA ([NPS0157](#))

450 [Notes of engagement event with young adults with disabilities](#)

451 [Q 173](#) (Jamie Foale)

452 [Q 235](#) (Nigel Huddleston MP)

453 Sport England, *Uniting the Movement: A 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity*, p 38

454 [Q 53](#) (Dr Kathryn Atherton)

455 [Q 53](#) (Professor Dame Theresa Marteau)

322. Professor Todd told us that “it is very clear that there is a digital divide related to class, poverty, ethnicity and age” and pointed out that the cost of smartphones is a significant barrier to underrepresented groups. He also flagged the lack of digital skills that older age groups may have which can limit access to fitness technologies and exacerbate the digital divide.⁴⁵⁶
323. Anton Derlyatka was more confident about the potential of technology to reach underrepresented groups. He noted that “the vast majority of apps” available on Android phones and iPhones are free, and that although not everyone owns a smartphone, they are significantly more accessible compared to purchasing a wearable fitness tracker or a gym membership.⁴⁵⁷ Dr Alex Fenton, Lecturer in Digital Business at Salford Business School, University of Salford and developer of the FanFit app, agreed that smartphone technology is increasingly common and noted his own research developing the FanFit app which found that 98 per cent of football fans own an Android phone or iPhone.⁴⁵⁸
324. Some witnesses emphasised the need to offer both digital and analogue solutions to ensure everyone can access facilities and events. Paul Foster told us that it is “really important” to maintain a strong physical relationship “through all aspects of the chain for the consumer”.⁴⁵⁹ Chris Wilkins, Co-founder of Sporting Memories, told us that during the pandemic they used a “blended delivery” model which combined phone calls with online messaging and group video calls to ensure that everyone could stay engaged.⁴⁶⁰
325. **Technology has the potential to transform the way people stay active and how they access facilities and physical activity opportunities. Although it has limitations, including in reaching underrepresented groups, it has the potential to incentivise physical activity at scale through methods including gamification.**
326. **As part of the national plan, relevant Government departments must reach out to and work with the private sector and academia to develop, trial and roll out new evidence-based apps and use open data better. The priority must be finding new ways to engage and target underrepresented groups and to bring new audiences to physical activity.**

456 [Q 168](#) (Professor Chris Todd)

457 [Q 168](#) (Anton Derlyatka)

458 [Q 175](#) (Dr Alex Fenton)

459 [Q 176](#) (Paul Foster)

460 [Q 58](#) (Chris Wilkins)

CHAPTER 6: DUTY OF CARE AND SAFEGUARDING

327. This chapter will begin by setting out the existing duty of care and safeguarding framework. We then identify limitations around the system and set out how to create a robust duty of care and safeguarding framework from grassroots to elite sport in a national plan. This includes examination of the need for an independent sports ombudsman, mandatory reporting, and improvements to adult and elite safeguarding. Finally, we look at issues around monitoring and evaluation of duty of care and safeguarding.
328. In this chapter, we primarily use the term “safeguarding” to refer to the obligations organisations have to protect children and adults from harm proscribed by legislation and standards established in the sector.⁴⁶¹ The term “duty of care” is used to denote wider responsibilities that those who facilitate sport and recreation offers have to ensure the welfare, personal safety and mental wellbeing of participants, volunteers and staff.

Existing framework

329. The 2015 *Sporting Future* strategy identified duty of care responsibilities in the following areas:
- Ensuring coaches are trained to meet people’s needs and help them enjoy themselves;
 - Making sure that medical expertise and facilities are available to prevent concussions, identify risk from heart problems and provide emergency assistance in the case of cardiac arrest;
 - Safeguarding children and people in a vulnerable situation; and
 - Making sure that sports grounds and sporting activities are properly licensed and regulated.⁴⁶²
330. Sport England and UK Sport’s *Code for Sports Governance* (‘the Code’) was published in 2016. It established requirements relating to duty of care and safeguarding for bodies, such as NGBs, in receipt of public funding that Sport England and UK Sport distribute.⁴⁶³ In July 2021, Sport England and UK Sport announced that the *Code* was to be revised and that it would include new requirements including funded bodies appointing a Director responsible for welfare and sport safety. The revised Code is expected to be published in December 2021.⁴⁶⁴ This is coupled with existing work by Sport England and UK Sport to support organisations with their own safeguarding work, and the expansion of the Safeguarding Case Management Service,

461 Ofsted, ‘Ofsted safeguarding policy’: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-safeguarding-policy/ofsted-safeguarding-policy> [accessed 17 November 2021]

462 Cabinet Office, *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation*, pp 70–71

463 Cabinet Office, *Sport England and UK Sport, A Code for Sports Governance* (October 2016): https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/a_code_for_sports_governance.pdf [accessed 17 November 2021]. The Code identifies three tiers of investment and those in each tier are expected to meet a certain level of governance compliance. Those applying for amounts of money over £1 million, for a continuing project and over a period of years must meet the requirements set out for tier 3. Those asking for smaller amounts, generally £250,000 or less, are subject to tier one requirements, and organisations looking for amounts in between must meet the requirements of tier 2.

464 Sport England, ‘A Code for Sports Governance’: <https://www.sportengland.org/campaigns-and-our-work/code-sports-governance> [accessed 17 November 2021]

which is offered by Sport Resolutions⁴⁶⁵ to provide NGBs with access to administrative support and expert safeguarding services.⁴⁶⁶

Safeguarding children, adults, and elite athletes

331. The Standards for safeguarding and protecting children in sport were established by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) in 2006 and revised in 2018. The Standards cover 10 areas including policy and procedures for responding to concerns, prevention, codes of ethics and conduct, and access to advice and support.⁴⁶⁷ The CPSU provides guidance, education and training, and evaluation and benchmarking to organisations across the sport and physical activity sector, including NGBs.⁴⁶⁸ Sport England works with the CPSU to support child safeguarding in the sector and provides £500,000 to the CPSU each year.⁴⁶⁹
332. The Ann Craft Trust leads on providing advice, guidance and targeted training for sports organisations around safeguarding of adults.⁴⁷⁰ Its *Safeguarding Adults in Sport Framework* covers safeguarding and governance, implementation of safeguarding responsibility, training, recruitment, codes of conduct and case management.⁴⁷¹ Sport England provides £300,000 to the Ann Craft Trust each year.⁴⁷² The CPSU and Ann Craft Trust inform professional safeguarding standards established by CIMSPA for children and young people, and adults at risk.⁴⁷³
333. For elite athletes, UK Sport funds the British Athletes Commission which provides independent, confidential expert and professional support to athletes. If necessary, the British Athletes Commission can provide athletes with legal advice and support to challenge discriminatory or inappropriate behaviour.⁴⁷⁴ UK Sport also facilitates the Sport Integrity Team which works with the Ann Craft Trust “to develop better ‘adults at risk’ safeguarding procedures” for NGBs funded by UK Sport.⁴⁷⁵

465 Sport Resolutions is an independent body that provides arbitration services to deal with sports disputes. It also operates the National Anti-Doping Panel, under a contract from DCMS and in accordance with the UK National Anti-Doping Policy. See Sports Resolutions UK, ‘About Sport Resolutions’: <https://www.sportresolutions.com/about-us/who-we-are/overview> [accessed 17 November 2021]

466 Sport England, ‘Changes made to strengthen Code for Sports Governance’: <https://www.sportengland.org/news/changes-made-strengthen-code-sports-governance> [accessed 17 November 2021]. See also Sport Resolutions, ‘Sport Resolutions to launch the Safeguarding Case Management Pilot Service’: <https://www.sportresolutions.com/news/view/sport-resolutions-to-launch-the-safeguarding-case-management-pilot-service> [accessed 17 November 2021].

467 NSPCC CPSU, Standards for safeguarding and protecting children in sport (7 September 2018): https://thecpsu.org.uk/media/445556/web_cpsustandards.pdf [accessed 17 November 2021]

468 Written evidence from Sport England (NPS0100)

469 *Ibid.*

470 *Ibid.*

471 Ann Craft Trust, ‘Safeguarding Adults in Sport Framework’: <https://www.anncrafttrust.org/safeguarding-adults-sport-activity/the-safeguarding-adults-in-sport-framework/> [accessed 17 November 2021]

472 Written evidence from Sport England (NPS0100)

473 *Ibid.*

474 British Athletes Commission, ‘What We Do’: <https://britishathletes.org/about-us/> [accessed 17 November 2021]

475 UK Sport, *Annual Report 2018–19* (July 2019), p 29: <https://www.ukспорт.gov.uk/resources/annual-reports> [accessed 17 November 2021]

The role of NGBs

334. NGBs and other bodies in receipt of public funding from Sport England or UK Sport are required to uphold standards set out by the *Code for Sports Governance* and have “clear, legally compliant athlete disciplinary and grievance policies”. The Code states that individual funding agreements between Sport England and UK Sport and NGBs “contain specific obligations concerning safeguarding” that require appropriate policies and procedures to be put in place.⁴⁷⁶
335. NGBs funded by Sport England or UK Sport must implement and adhere to the *Standards for safeguarding and protecting children in sport* issued by the CPSU.⁴⁷⁷ This requires any organisation providing activities for people under the age of 18 to have a child protection and safeguarding policy consistent with relevant legislation and Government guidance, and to have a lead safeguarding officer.⁴⁷⁸
336. Smaller, unfunded NGBs and sports bodies, from charities to coaching companies, are not required to meet those standards except as necessary to comply with statutory requirements for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. Unfunded NGBs and other bodies are not routinely monitored or assessed for compliance.
337. Examples of how NGBs are meeting duty of care and safeguarding standards in their sport are included in Box 4.

Box 4: Examples of duty of care and safeguarding initiatives by NGBs

The LTA established dedicated venue welfare officers who ensure that appropriate criminal record checks for staff at the venue are undertaken. The LTA said that its coaches are LTA-accredited and therefore meet safeguarding standards. Oliver Scadgell, Participation Director for the LTA, told us that they partnered last year with Sport England on a ‘Safe to Play’ campaign. This used augmented reality and real-life safeguarding cases to train coaches, venue staff and parents.⁴⁷⁹

Swim England launched its ‘Stronger Affiliation’ accreditation scheme which acts as a kitemark of safeguarding quality. It noted that over 450 swimming clubs have achieved accreditation which gives pool users confidence that personnel “have the necessary safeguarding checks in place to ensure members’ safety”.⁴⁸⁰

338. Sport England has run a pilot project with smaller NGBs to explore how NGBs’ safeguarding processes can be supplemented and supported by the provision of outsourced case management expertise. Working with nine NGBs, this initial pilot tested and developed four support services: initial case advice, investigation services and access to the National Safeguarding Panel for investigations, hearings and appeals, an online case management

476 Sport England and UK Sport, ‘A Code for Sports Governance’ (October 2016), p 52: https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/a_code_for_sports_governance.pdf [accessed 17 November 2021]

477 *Ibid.*

478 NSPCC CPSU, *Standards for safeguarding and protecting children in sport* (2002, updated 7 September 2018), p 6: https://thecpsu.org.uk/media/445556/web_cpsustandards.pdf [accessed 17 November 2021]

479 [Q 127](#) (Oliver Scadgell)

480 Written evidence from Swim England ([NPS0060](#))

system for children and young people, and accredited training for NGBs' lead safeguarding officers.⁴⁸¹

339. The evaluation of the initial pilot in autumn 2020 concluded that the programme successfully improved the effectiveness and ability of NGBs to handle safeguarding cases and made several recommendations that are being implemented by Sport England. These include the phased roll-out of support services to NGBs, further help to share expertise, and efforts to ensure consistency and embed safeguarding best practice and oversight.⁴⁸²

Creating a robust duty of care and safeguarding system from grassroots to elite sport

340. Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all participants is critical to deliver the national plan's principle of a welcoming and inclusive environment in sport and recreation.
341. We heard about the challenges that NGBs face to uphold high duty of care and safeguarding standards for both adults and children. Ralf Rimmer, CEO of the Rugby Football League (RFL), Natalie Justice-Dearn, CEO of Rounders England, and Adrian Christy, former CEO of Badminton England, told us there is a lack of resource available to uphold safeguarding standards and deal with incidents and complaints consistently. Nick Pink, CEO of England Hockey, told us that publicly funded NGBs also struggle with resources because public funding cannot be used to cover duty of care and safeguarding responsibilities.⁴⁸³
342. We heard that resource constraints can be more acute among smaller NGBs and those which are not publicly funded. Professor Mike Hartill, Director of the Centre for Child Protection & Safeguarding in Sport at Edge Hill University, told us that "smaller governing bodies do not have the resources of the bigger and richer governing bodies to implement safeguarding ... at the same speed or scale as other bodies."⁴⁸⁴ Sally Munday, CEO of UK Sport, told us that although some governing bodies "are very well equipped ... there are other sports that are probably less mature and need some more help."⁴⁸⁵
343. Lisa Wainwright, CEO of the Sport and Recreation Alliance, warned that smaller, unfunded bodies that do not have strong standards in place present a potential safeguarding risk.⁴⁸⁶ The CPSU said that "there are millions of children taking part in activity outside the traditional sport structures" and called for additional resources to support safeguarding in those activities too.⁴⁸⁷
344. British Cycling suggested that NGBs should receive ring-fenced funding to ensure that the quality of safeguarding services offered to individuals is not dependent on revenue.⁴⁸⁸ Kimberley Walsh, Safeguarding Adults in Sport

481 The National Safeguarding Panel is designed to support NGBs to professionally manage safeguarding complaints and concerns. The Panel is operated by Sport Resolutions.

482 Supplementary written evidence from Sport England ([NPS0172](#))

483 See Appendix 4, note on the roundtable discussion with CEOs of NGBs and experts

484 [Q 152](#) (Professor Mike Hartill)

485 [Q 206](#) (Sally Munday)

486 [Q 18](#) (Lisa Wainwright)

487 Written evidence from the NSPCC CPSU ([NPS0159](#))

488 Written evidence from British Cycling Federation ([NPS0083](#))

Manager at the Ann Craft Trust, suggested that some of the public funding for NGBs could be ring-fenced for adult safeguarding.⁴⁸⁹

345. In addition to resource constraints, we heard that duty of care and safeguarding is not always given the priority it needs from those in senior leadership positions. The CPSU warned that a “block” to progressing and elevating duty of care and safeguarding can be found “at a senior level where safeguarding is not seen as so much of a priority”.⁴⁹⁰ Kimberley Walsh told us that there are instances of “a real disconnect” between lead safeguarding officers in NGBs and the senior leadership.⁴⁹¹ Professor Hartill told us that some NGB lead safeguarding officers have felt isolated and found it very difficult to do their role.⁴⁹² EMD UK noted that in some organisations, the lead safeguarding officer roles “are wrapped into other roles” reducing the amount of time given to this area of work and this is more likely to be the case in smaller, unfunded NGBs.⁴⁹³
346. The CPSU noted that although safeguarding is part of the funding agreements for NGBs and Active Partnerships, there is no regulatory body or clear process about what would happen if they were not meeting their safeguarding requirements.⁴⁹⁴ Adrian Christy, former CEO of Badminton England, told us that currently the sector cares “more about what someone sticks in their arm than we do about someone protecting a child”.⁴⁹⁵
347. The EFL Trust, the charitable arm of the EFL, said that “it is vital” organisations work with the CPSU and the Ann Craft Trust to review their standards and clearly define the responsibilities relating to safeguarding throughout all levels of organisations. It added that this includes “clarity of responsibility for board members and leadership teams, through to the designated safeguarding staff, project managers and delivery staff.”⁴⁹⁶

An independent sports ombudsman

348. Baroness Grey-Thompson, a member of this committee, published her independent review on Duty of Care in Sport in April 2017. The call for an independent ombudsman is one of seven priority recommendations made in the report. The priority recommendations are set out in Box 5.

489 [Q 155](#) (Kimberley Walsh)

490 Written evidence from the NSPCC CPSU ([NPS0159](#))

491 [Q 152](#) (Kimberley Walsh)

492 [Q 152](#) (Professor Mike Hartill)

493 Written evidence from EMD UK ([NPS0065](#))

494 Written evidence from the NSPCC CPSU ([NPS0159](#))

495 See Appendix 4, note on the roundtable discussion with CEOs of NGBs and experts

496 Written evidence from the English Football League Trust ([NPS0097](#))

Box 5: Seven ‘priority recommendations’ in Baroness Grey-Thompson’s independent review on Duty of Care in Sport

- To create a Sports Ombudsman (or Sports Duty of Care Quality Commission);
- Develop an independent benchmark survey to measure duty of care, to monitor whether duty of care policies are working, and to inform future policy and investment decisions;
- All NGBs to have a mandatory, named Duty of Care Guardian with responsibility for engaging with participants across the talent pathways and in community sport and to provide assurance at board level;
- All prospective elite athletes (and families, if relevant) to be given a full induction including steps involved with entering the elite system, training and competing expectations, and what to expect when exiting the elite level;
- Conduct independent exit surveys for participants leaving formal programmes, the results of which would be taken into account in future funding discussions;
- To establish a Duty of Care Charter; and
- To independently fund the British Athlete Commission (BAC).

Source: Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson DBE, DL, *Duty of Care in Sport: Independent Report to Government* (April 2017): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/610130/Duty_of_Care_Review_-_April_2017_2.pdf [accessed 17 November 2021]

349. The independent review stated that an independent sports ombudsman should have powers to hold NGBs to account “for the duty of care they provide to all athletes, coaching staff and support staff, providing independent assurance and accountability”, and could support the British Athletes Commission by providing “third party assurance”.⁴⁹⁷
350. At present, NGBs are responsible for investigating complaints made within their sport. If a criminal offence is alleged, the NGB would be expected to report it to the police and appropriate safeguarding authorities. Otherwise, the complaint will fall within the NGB’s own internal procedures. UK Sport developed new athlete discipline and grievance policies in response to the independent review. This mandated an independent appeal element facilitated by Sport Resolutions in cases where matters remain unresolved following an NGB internal process or when a complaint would be best resolved by independent intervention.⁴⁹⁸
351. Witnesses expressed disappointment at the pace at which Baroness Grey-Thompson’s recommendations had been implemented. The CPSU said the Government’s lacklustre response to the report and subsequent delays in implemented recommendations “has not been helpful”.⁴⁹⁹ Anna Kessel, Women’s Sports Editor at *The Telegraph*, said the independent review was

497 Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, *Duty of Care in Sport: Independent Report to Government* (April 2017), p 6 and p 15: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/610130/Duty_of_Care_Review_-_April_2017_2.pdf [accessed 17 November 2021]

498 Written evidence from HM Government (NPS0134)

499 Written evidence from the NSPCC CPSU (NPS0159)

“a landmark moment” but that it has not been properly taken forward by Government or the sector.⁵⁰⁰

352. Explaining the lack of progress in implementing the review, Ben Dean, Director for Sport and Gambling at DCMS, told us that “some of the resources for duty of care had to be reprioritised to focus on urgent Covid work”.⁵⁰¹
353. On the issue of the independent sport ombudsman, we heard that athletes at all levels are increasingly coming forward to speak out about duty of care and safeguarding issues but more support was needed, including from an independent body such as an independent sports ombudsman. We also heard that the capacity of NGBs to deal with complaints can vary and that NGBs themselves would welcome more support in this area.
354. Joanna Coates, former CEO of UK Athletics, told us that increasing diversity within NGBs and better governance standards has contributed to athletes being more willing to come forward to raise duty of care and safeguarding issues.⁵⁰² However, Kimberley Walsh expressed concern that failure on the part of NGBs to deal with complaints effectively can lead to participants feeling that their only options are to “put up with it” or leave the sport.⁵⁰³
355. Jane Nickerson, CEO of Swim England, told us that there are some cases which do not meet existing thresholds for a full investigation or fit within the internal complaints system which end up being difficult for NGBs to adjudicate. She suggested that some centralised support including resources would be helpful in dealing with such cases.⁵⁰⁴ Women in Sport said that an independent sports ombudsman would support vulnerable individuals to come forward.⁵⁰⁵
356. Barry Jones MBE, Secretary and Founder of the Police Community Clubs of Great Britain, Active Partnerships and the APPG on Sport, Modern Slavery and Human Rights all spoke in favour of an independent body on safeguarding issues.⁵⁰⁶ Goalball UK called for an independent body to act “across all sport and recreation bodies” independent of UK Sport and Home Nations Sports Councils.⁵⁰⁷ Adrian Christy, former CEO of Badminton England, called for a UK Anti-Doping-style body for safeguarding to ensure that the sector implements consistent standards.⁵⁰⁸ Kimberley Walsh said that an independent body should have the jurisdiction to address issues that it finds in regard to sport organisations’ duty of care standards.⁵⁰⁹
357. Joanna Coates suggested that an independent body could triage cases so that those which do not meet a certain severity threshold would be referred

500 [Q 46](#) (Anna Kessel)

501 [Q 10](#) (Ben Dean)

502 See Appendix 4, note on the roundtable discussion with CEOs of NGBs and experts

503 [Q 155](#) (Kimberley Walsh)

504 See Appendix 4, note on the roundtable discussion with CEOs of NGBs and experts

505 Written evidence from Women in Sport ([NPS0093](#)), see also BBC Sport, ‘BBC Elite British Sportswomen’s Survey results’ (9 August 2020): <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/53593459> [accessed 17 November 2021].

506 [Q 94](#) (Barry Jones), see also written evidence from All-Party Parliamentary Group on Sport, Modern Slavery and Human Rights ([NPS0076](#)) and supplementary written evidence from Active Partnerships ([NPS0098](#)).

507 Written evidence from Goalball UK ([NPS0075](#))

508 See Appendix 4, note on the roundtable discussion with CEOs of NGBs and experts

509 [Q 155](#) (Kimberley Walsh)

back to the NGBs for an internal investigation whilst the most serious cases would be investigated by the independent body. She also recommended an independent hotline which could be used by athletes and participants to report concerns.⁵¹⁰

358. Tim Hollingsworth, CEO of Sport England, noted that all funded bodies need to comply with common safeguarding standards but that Sport England is not a regulator and therefore is “not in a position to do anything other than hear complaints about organisations’ compliance” with their funding agreements.⁵¹¹ Sally Munday of UK Sport was “open minded” about an ombudsman and agreed that there does need to be enhanced independence around duty of care and safeguarding issues.⁵¹²
359. The Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society at DCMS, Nigel Huddleston MP, said that the Government is “keeping an open mind on the ombudsman”. He told us that there has been progress in duty of care and safeguarding in recent years “with many governing bodies taking their responsibilities far more seriously.”⁵¹³
360. **We are unimpressed by the Government’s assertion that progress on implementing recommendations from the independent review on Duty of Care in Sport was de-prioritised to redirect efforts to the Government pandemic response. Issues raised in the independent review have not gone away. The lack of progress on the implementation of an independent sports ombudsman, which pre-dates the outbreak of COVID-19, is unacceptable.**
361. **We strongly recommend that the Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing proceeds with implementing the remaining recommendations in the independent review on Duty of Care in Sport, prioritising the establishment of an independent sports ombudsman with a remit to cover all bodies delivering sport regardless of whether they receive public funding.**
362. **The Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing must work with Sport England and UK Sport to ensure that publicly funded bodies are dedicating sufficient resources and attention to uphold duty of care and safeguarding standards at all levels of their sports.**
363. **We welcome the additional requirements in the revised *Code for Sports Governance* including for publicly funded bodies to appoint a Director responsible for welfare and sport safety. However, we are not convinced that this will be enough to shift the culture within publicly funded bodies that do not prioritise duty of care and safeguarding standards. We recommend that Sport England and UK Sport conduct and publish a review after 18 months which evaluates the impact of the revised Code to ensure that the ambitions for the updated Code are being delivered by funded bodies and NGBs, and that it is making a difference on the ground.**

510 See Appendix 4, note on the roundtable discussion with CEOs of NGBs and experts

511 [Q 206](#) and [Q 208](#) (Tim Hollingsworth)

512 [Q 208](#) (Sally Munday)

513 [Q 227](#) (Nigel Huddleston MP)

Mandatory reporting

364. We heard evidence on the lack of communication between sporting bodies, police and local authorities around safeguarding issues and on the potential for mandatory reporting to place an obligation on individuals, and bodies delivering sport and recreation to report concerns of abuse to the appropriate authorities.
365. The Government's current guidance on *Working together to safeguard children*⁵¹⁴ states that paid and volunteer sport staff need to be aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.⁵¹⁵ However, there is no legal requirement for those within the sport and recreation sector to report suspected duty of care or safeguarding issues to the police or local authorities, and no penalty for failing to report suspicions.
366. In 2016, the Government conducted a consultation on the introduction of mandatory reporting and concluded that it did not intend to introduce it. This was due to concerns that the likely increase in referrals “risks creating a ‘needle in a haystack’ effect in which it is less likely, rather than more likely, that the social care system will identify key cases”. It also said that mandatory reporting may “undermine effective practice by instilling risk-averse behaviour driven by the fear of sanctions, rather [than] empowering the workforce to make the right decisions.”⁵¹⁶
367. We heard that the links between the sport and recreation sector and safeguarding authorities, including local authority safeguarding boards and the police, are inconsistent and inadequate. For example, Professor Hartill told us that relationships between NGBs and local authorities and local authority-designated officers vary considerably, and called for engagement between them to be “stronger”.⁵¹⁷ Oliver Scadgell, Participation Director at the LTA, noted that there could be more consistent processes for sharing information between the police and NGBs.⁵¹⁸
368. The LGA identified a weakness in current safeguarding contingency plans, describing a scenario in which the local council takes over responsibility for a leisure trust without sufficient knowledge of the current position of safeguarding issues. In such situations, communication between sporting providers and local agencies needs to be improved to prevent lapses in safeguarding.⁵¹⁹ Active Partnerships called for local authority safeguarding boards to engage proactively with local sports bodies, including Active Partnerships, to ensure awareness, coordination and compliance with local procedures.⁵²⁰

514 *Working together to safeguard children* is statutory guidance that applies to all organisations and agencies who have functions relating to children. The guidance applies in its entirety to all schools.

515 HM Government, *Working together to safeguard children* (July 2018), p 74: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf [accessed 17 November 2021]

516 Home Office and Department for Education, *Reporting and acting on child abuse and neglect* (5 March 2018), pp 5–6: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/685465/Reporting_and_acting_on_child_abuse_and_neglect_-_response_to_consultati....pdf [accessed 17 November 2021]

517 [Q 151](#) (Professor Mike Hartill)

518 [Q 127](#) (Oliver Scadgell)

519 Written evidence from the LGA ([NPS0050](#))

520 Supplementary written evidence from Active Partnerships ([NPS0098](#))

369. Mandate Now, a pressure group supporting the introduction of mandatory reporting, said that the absence of a well-designed mandatory reporting law is at the heart of the safeguarding shortcomings in institutional settings like sport and recreation. It added that the Government's failure to implement mandatory reporting is based on "an irrational and exaggerated fear of cost increases" and "a fear of capacity shortcomings in the relevant agencies".⁵²¹
370. Gary Cliffe, Ambassador for the Offside Trust, strongly favoured the introduction of mandatory reporting which would help to "focus people's minds to report thorny issues".⁵²² He added that a concern that mandatory reporting would lead to a deluge of referrals was not a good reason to not introduce it and he predicted that the quality of referrals would improve over time.⁵²³
371. Professor Hartill supported the introduction of mandatory reporting, telling us that it "would be a very important addition" to the child safeguarding system.⁵²⁴ However, he cautioned that further consideration would need to be given to how it is constituted including whether "it can apply to different groups and offences".⁵²⁵
372. The CPSU was more circumspect about how much impact a mandatory reporting system would have. It told us that there is little evidence at this time that children are safer because of mandatory reporting in jurisdictions that have implemented it. It suggested that more work could be done to educate all stakeholders and build confidence to raise concerns and how to challenge authorities if they do not get the response they should have received.⁵²⁶
373. **We would like to see stronger links and communication between bodies delivering sport, and the police and local authority safeguarding boards to ensure that crucial information is shared. There should be a representative from the sector, potentially from the local Active Partnership, who will act as a contact for the police and safeguarding boards to help them liaise with the sector.**
374. **Given the potential for abuse in sport and recreation settings, we recommend that the Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing consult and work with the sector to introduce mandatory reporting in sport and recreation settings.**
- Duty of care and safeguarding of adults, elite athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers**
375. We heard that the 2016 *Code for Sports Governance* has led to increased salience and delivery of safeguarding standards for adults.⁵²⁷ However, there is more to do to ensure that adults—both at the grassroots and elite levels—are protected by the highest duty of care standards.

521 Written evidence from Mandate Now ([NPS0161](#))

522 [Q 151](#) (Gary Cliffe)

523 [Q 150](#) (Gary Cliffe)

524 [Q 151](#) (Professor Mike Hartill)

525 *Ibid.*

526 Written evidence from the NSPCC CPSU ([NPS0159](#))

527 [Q 150](#) (Kimberley Walsh)

Duty of care and safeguarding adults

376. Adults who are at higher risk of abuse include those with care and support needs, such as older people and disabled people. We heard that there is a disparity between adult and child safeguarding.
377. Kimberley Walsh told us that adult safeguarding requirements under the Code and funding agreements are advisory whilst child safeguarding requirements are mandatory.⁵²⁸ Nick Pink of England Hockey and Ralf Rimmer of the RFL suggested that the distinction between requirements for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults should be made clearer as it requires different skillsets within NGBs to uphold safeguarding standards for these groups.⁵²⁹
378. We heard concerns regarding adult safeguarding in relation to concussion and head injuries. BASES, the professional body for sport and exercise sciences in the UK, told us that there are contradictions between sport science advice over injuries and a coach's desire for an individual to play which need to be resolved.⁵³⁰ The Police Community Clubs of Great Britain said it has concerns about competition care around head injuries.⁵³¹
379. The former Minister for Prevention, Public Health and Primary Care at DHSC, Jo Churchill MP, and the Minister for Sport and Tourism at DCMS, Nigel Huddleston MP, informed us that work was ongoing between their two departments to consider the issue of concussion and head injuries in sport.⁵³²
380. Matthew Maguire, National Sport Manager at Mencap, told us that disabled people, particularly those with multiple conditions, are at high risk of abuse and neglect and said that recent high-profile cases of abuse in sport have undermined confidence in the policies and systems currently in place.⁵³³
381. The Richmond Group of Charities said that procedures to support safeguarding and physical safety need to be proportionate to avoid creating barriers to participation.⁵³⁴
382. We also heard that a duty of care is owed not just to adult participants, but to officials, coaches, volunteers and other staff in the sector. For example, Dr Tom Webb, Senior Lecturer at the University of Portsmouth and founder and coordinator of the Referee and Match Official Research Network, told us that the duty of care of sports officials "has been neglected and ... [sports officials] are often an underrepresented and forgotten group." He called on NGBs to develop initiatives to reduce the abuse of sports officials and for more sharing of good practice.⁵³⁵
383. As an example of good practice in supporting coaches, UK Coaching told us that it has produced a 'Duty to Care' toolkit. This aims to support coaches to look after their participants and themselves better. The toolkit provides learning solutions for coaches across five 'pillars': safeguarding, inclusion,

528 [Q 155](#) (Kimberley Walsh)

529 See Appendix 4, note on the roundtable discussion with CEOs of NGBs and experts

530 Written evidence from the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES) ([NPS0035](#))

531 Written evidence from the Police Community Clubs of Great Britain ([NPS0043](#))

532 [QQ 228–229](#) (Jo Churchill MP, Nigel Huddleston MP)

533 [Q 132](#) (Matthew Maguire)

534 Written evidence from the Richmond Group of Charities ([NPS0141](#))

535 Written evidence from Dr Tom Webb ([NPS0011](#))

diversity, mental health and wellbeing. UK Coaching awards a digital badge to coaches who complete knowledge checks across the five pillars.⁵³⁶

384. Sally Munday told us that UK Sport is aware that “there is not enough in place at the moment” on staffing and highlighted UK Sport’s Integrity Priorities, which are aimed to influence and encourage positive change among funded bodes.⁵³⁷

Duty of care and safeguarding of aspiring and elite athletes

385. The UK Sport Culture Health Check is designed to capture information about the culture, systems and support available in World Class Performance Programmes. In 2020, it found that 10 per cent of athletes and staff experienced or witnessed unacceptable behaviour, down from 24 per cent in 2018. Only 53 per cent of respondents believed that there are consequences when people behave inappropriately—a rise from 44 per cent in 2018, but lower than the 61 per cent recorded in 2017.⁵³⁸

386. The CPSU told us that aspiring and elite athletes of all ages may be vulnerable to abuse because of the closer relationship and power imbalance between player and sports coach, and the significant amounts of time spent training with coaches.⁵³⁹ Professor Hartill told us that the financial and emotional investment made by an individual who is aspiring to the highest levels of sport, along with the investments of their parents and the wider community, contributes to an athlete’s vulnerability.⁵⁴⁰

387. Sally Munday told us that the focus on UK Sport is to “make it very difficult” for people who do not adhere to duty of care and safeguarding standards to come into the industry and to “make it very easy” for people to call out inappropriate behaviours.⁵⁴¹ She told us that UK Sport “are unequivocal in the conversations we are having with sports and sports governing bodies about making sure that the right things are in place” and is considering enhancing independent disclosure and complaints processes.⁵⁴²

Mental health

388. We have heard evidence on the importance of mental health in sport, particularly at the elite level. Mind has worked with DCMS and the Sport and Recreation Alliance to form the *Mental Health and Elite Sport Action Plan* which was published in 2018. The plan set out actions for the sector to take to promote mental health at the elite level.⁵⁴³

389. Mind told us that they have seen increased awareness of sport organisations’ duty of care in relation to mental health but said there is still “much more that can be done” if mental health is to achieve parity with physical health in the sector. They called for:

536 Written evidence from UK Coaching ([NPS0054](#))

537 [Q 211](#) (Sally Munday)

538 UK Sport, ‘Latest culture findings show progress in high-performance system’ (8 September 2020): <https://www.uk sport.gov.uk/news/2020/09/07/an-update-on-culture> [accessed 17 November 2021]

539 Written evidence from the NSPCC CPSU ([NPS0159](#))

540 [Q 154](#) (Professor Mike Hartill)

541 [Q 206](#) (Sally Munday)

542 *Ibid.*

543 DCMS, *Action Plan – Mental Health and Elite Sport* (March 2018): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/691770/180320_FINAL_Mental_Health_and_Elite_Sport_Action_Plan.pdf [accessed 17 November 2021]

- Mental health training in coach development pathways so it achieves parity of esteem with physical first aid and safeguarding;
- An investment in free mental health training so that coaches “are better able to take care of themselves and others”; and
- A dedicated support line for coaches and volunteers from the sector to support both their own and participants mental health.⁵⁴⁴

390. Martin McElhatton, CEO of WheelPower, noted that safeguarding needs to include the mental health and wellbeing of disabled people. He referred to Baroness Grey-Thompson’s recommendation in her independent review to support elite athletes when they leave elite level sport, and noted that for Paralympians, finishing their career can create a “big void” in their life.⁵⁴⁵

391. Rebecca Quinlan, a survivor of an eating disorder and sports speaker, supported development of resources and educational programmes to improve coaches’ knowledge about eating disorders in athletes.⁵⁴⁶

Online abuse

392. We outlined the potential impacts of abuse posted through social media in Chapter 3. Witnesses have expressed frustration at the existing regulatory framework in which perpetrators can remain anonymous and can continue to post abuse at sporting personalities without consequence.

393. Sanjay Bhandari, Chair of Kick It Out, told us that social media is akin to “the Wild West” leading to a “toxic culture” where abuse is normalised.⁵⁴⁷ Baroness Campbell of Loughborough, Director of Women’s Football at the FA, told us that female football players “receive some of the worst online hate and discriminatory abuse”.⁵⁴⁸

394. We also heard how online abuse impacts grassroots sport. Ian Halliday, a Level 2 UK Athletics coach, told us that “social media issues can pervade into the day to day running of groups and clubs, causing coaches, club officials and referees to give up the sport”.⁵⁴⁹

395. Women in Sport said that the threat of online abuse “is a key factor in preventing women either from progressing in sport or if they do, from expressing their views”. It added that although abuse is mostly associated with elite athletes and commentators, it is participants at the grassroots who are statistically more likely to experience abuse and have no route of redress.⁵⁵⁰ Stonewall and Mermaids recommended that policies and codes of conduct implemented across sports must extend to digital spaces.⁵⁵¹

396. **The independent sports ombudsman should provide an avenue for grassroots and elite sportspeople to report mistreatment in their sport. NGBs must promote the independent sports ombudsman’s**

544 Supplementary written evidence from Mind ([NPS0109](#))

545 [Q 132](#) (Martin McElhatton)

546 Written evidence from Rebecca Quinlan ([NPS0023](#))

547 [Q 140](#) (Sanjay Bhandari)

548 [Q 145](#) (Baroness Campbell of Loughborough)

549 Written evidence from Ian Halliday ([NPS0040](#))

550 Written evidence from Women in Sport ([NPS0093](#))

551 Written evidence from Stonewall and Mermaids ([NPS0123](#))

functions and how elite athletes can contact them once it has been established.

397. **Safeguarding policies for adults and children in sport must be extended and made consistent across all sports to include conduct online, including social media, to ensure that participants in sport and recreation can be better protected.**

Monitoring and oversight of duty of care and safeguarding standards

398. Sport England and UK Sport looks at how organisations it funds are meeting safeguarding standards as part of assessing funding eligibility, but there is no external watchdog overseeing compliance.
399. We heard that the first step to effective monitoring and oversight is understanding what measures are most effective. Professor Hartill told us that “we know too little about what has worked, what does not work and where the weaknesses are” in existing safeguarding and duty of care procedures.⁵⁵² He called for “independent monitoring and an evaluation of the systems and processes that are in place” within NGBs and delivery bodies.⁵⁵³ British Canoeing recommended “greater centralised support” for NGBs to raise safeguarding standards including standardisation of recording methods and data analysis to aid cross-sector safeguarding comparisons.⁵⁵⁴
400. Nigel Huddleston MP said he was “concerned” that there is not enough data on duty of care and safeguarding issues. He added that, although anecdotal reporting through private mechanisms and whistleblowing is important, the level of data is currently not good enough.⁵⁵⁵
401. Some witnesses felt that expectations to meet duty of care and safeguarding standards should be higher. For example, the FA suggested that the *Code for Sports Governance* should be strengthened to require organisations beyond tier 3 organisations comply with the most rigorous safeguarding requirements.⁵⁵⁶ British Canoeing called for welfare and safeguarding targets and standards as conditions for funding.⁵⁵⁷
402. Richard Baldwin MBE, a tax adviser specialising in the sports sector, recommended that funding could be removed if NGBs fail to meet duty of care standards.⁵⁵⁸ However, Ed Malyon, Managing Director of *The Athletic*, cautioned that removing funding for poor governance can end up punishing participants of sport rather than those at the top.⁵⁵⁹
403. UK Sport said that it would “welcome a more defined link between the setting and maintenance of standards for duty of care and the receipt of public funding”.⁵⁶⁰ Sally Munday told us that although money has not been removed in the past, it is a tool available for them to apply if it is found

552 [Q 155](#) (Professor Mike Hartill)

553 [Q 152](#) (Professor Mike Hartill)

554 Written evidence from British Canoeing ([NPS0090](#))

555 [Q 228](#) and [Q 229](#) (Nigel Huddleston MP)

556 Written evidence from the FA ([NPS0135](#))

557 Written evidence from British Canoeing ([NPS0090](#))

558 Written evidence from Richard Baldwin ([NPS0010](#))

559 [Q 39](#) (Ed Malyon)

560 Supplementary written evidence from UK Sport ([NPS0171](#))

that a funded organisation is not taking its duty of care and safeguarding responsibilities seriously enough.⁵⁶¹

404. Tim Hollingsworth of Sport England told us that he was not confident that all organisations funded by Sport England are meeting the required duty of care and safeguarding standards, but added that Sport England will ultimately consider the withdrawal of funding if those standards are not upheld.⁵⁶²
405. **Monitoring of what works for duty of care and safeguarding in the sector is insufficient. Monitoring and sharing good practice should form part of the role of the independent sports ombudsman.**
406. **The credibility of Sport England and UK Sport is undermined if the threat of financial sanctions is raised but not implemented. Sport England and UK Sport must follow through and remove funding from NGBs and other funded bodies which fail to meet required duty of care and safeguarding standards.**

561 [Q 207](#) (Sally Munday)

562 [Q 208](#) (Tim Hollingsworth)

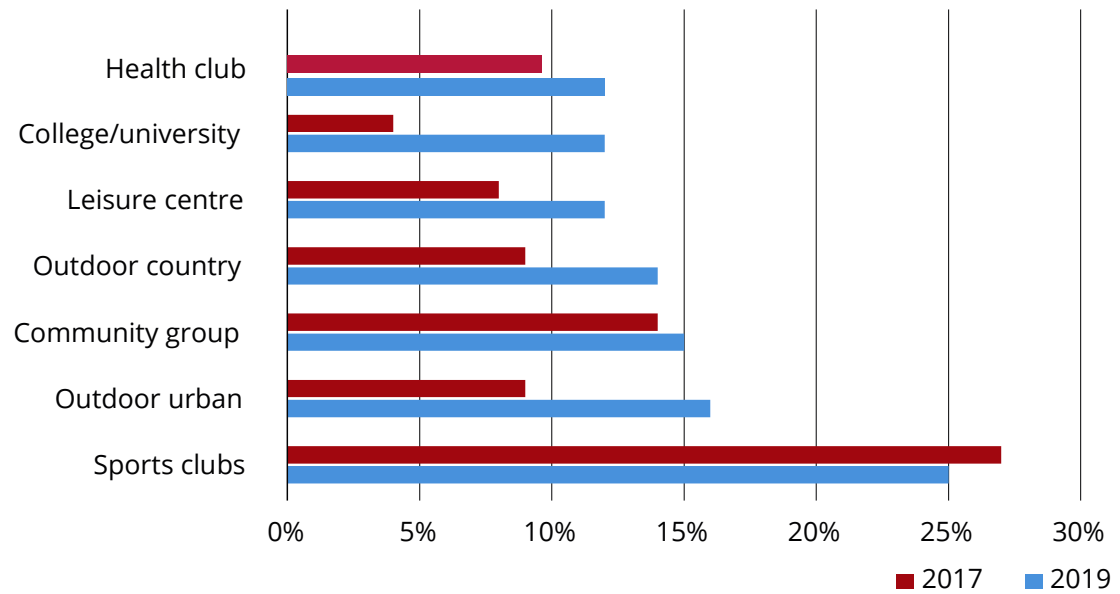
CHAPTER 7: THE WORKFORCE

407. The workforce includes staff, coaches and volunteers. This is the backbone of the sport and recreation sector and vital to the delivery of the objectives of the national plan. Every individual in the workforce plays a critical role in keeping the nation active, whether that is supporting amateur clubs, coaching the next generation or supporting our elite athletes obtain medal success. The national plan must facilitate and support the development of the workforce. This Chapter looks at challenges facing the sport and recreation workforce including issues around training and career progression, and we examine the case for a national register for coaches. The Chapter also considers the lack of diversity in the grassroots workforce and in senior leadership roles.
408. In this Chapter, ‘workforce’ encompasses both volunteers and paid staff and coaches. ‘Coaches’ means those who are paid for the coaching they deliver. ‘Volunteers’ means those who are unpaid and provide their time to facilitating sport and recreation opportunities, including unpaid coaches and those who support the administration of sport and recreation organisations.
409. The sport and recreation workforce is made up of volunteers, coaches, and the wider professional workforce. According to Sport England, around 266,000 people are directly employed in sports occupations in England. Wider sports related activity supports around 400,000 full-time equivalent jobs, around 2 per cent of all employment in England. Across the UK, Olympic and Paralympic sport supports over 1.2 million jobs.⁵⁶³ According to the CIMSPA, 58 per cent of the sport sector workforce are self-employed, 32 per cent are direct employees of a business or organisation, and 7 per cent have full-time or part-time employment as well as working on a self-employed basis.⁵⁶⁴

563 Sport England, *Diversity in Sport Governance: Annual Survey 2018/19*, p 15: <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/diversity-in-sport-governance-full-report.pdf> [accessed 17 November 2021]

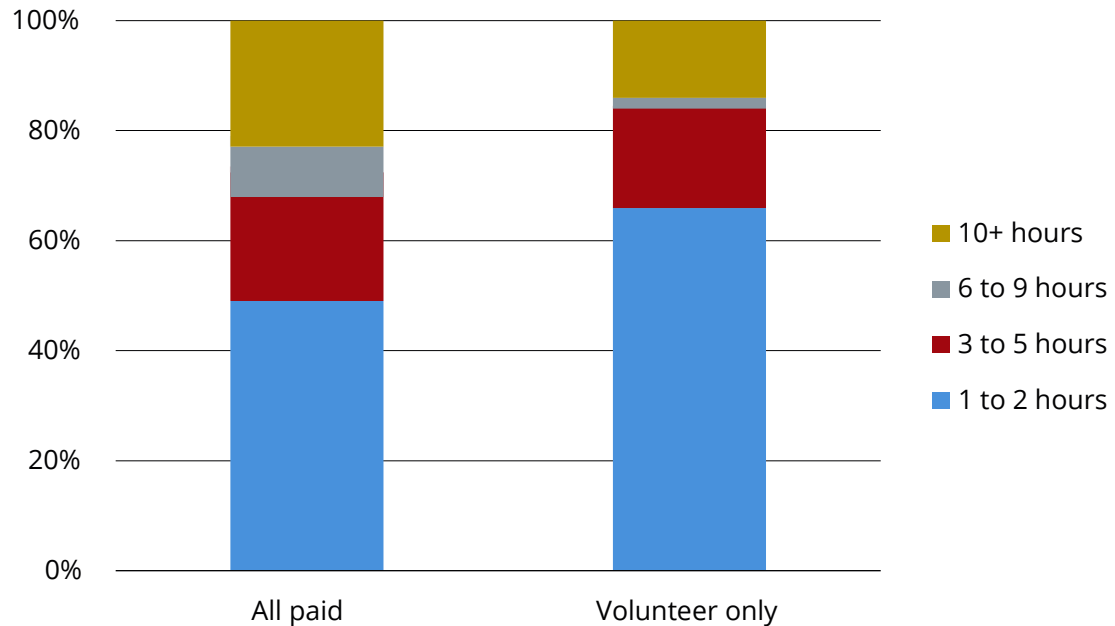
564 CIMSPA, ‘Covid-19: Sector Impact – Phase One Report’ (April 2020): <https://www.cimspa.co.uk/cimspa-news/workforce-insight> [accessed 17 November 2021]

Figure 9: Locations of coaching in 2017 and 2019



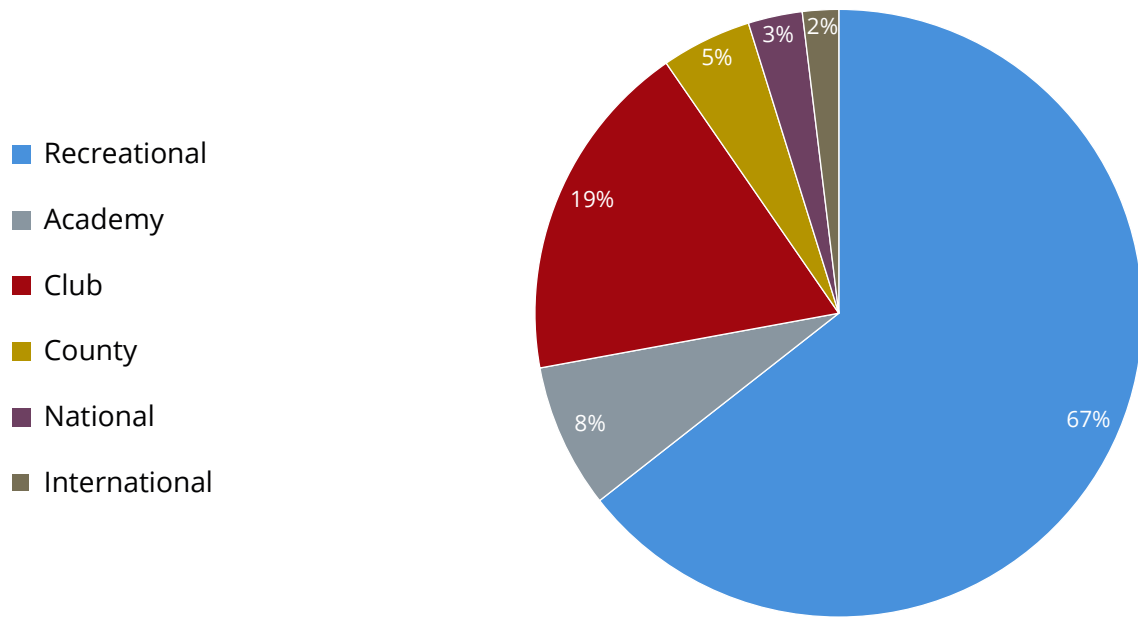
Source: UK Coaching, *Coaching in the UK, 2019: Coach Survey, Executive Summary* (February 2020), p 5: [https://www.ukcoaching.org/getattachment/Resources/Topics/Research/Coaching-in-The-UK/Coaching-in-the-UK-\(summary\)_Coaches.pdf](https://www.ukcoaching.org/getattachment/Resources/Topics/Research/Coaching-in-The-UK/Coaching-in-the-UK-(summary)_Coaches.pdf) [accessed 17 November 2021]

Figure 10: Coaching hours in a typical week



Source: UK Coaching, *Coaching in the UK, 2019: Coach Survey, Executive Summary* (February 2020), p 6: [https://www.ukcoaching.org/getattachment/Resources/Topics/Research/Coaching-in-The-UK/Coaching-in-the-UK-\(summary\)_Coaches.pdf](https://www.ukcoaching.org/getattachment/Resources/Topics/Research/Coaching-in-The-UK/Coaching-in-the-UK-(summary)_Coaches.pdf) [accessed 17 November 2021]

Figure 11: Proportion of coaches at each level



Source: UK Coaching, *Coaching in the UK, 2019: Coach Survey, Executive Summary (February 2020)*, p 5: [https://www.ukcoaching.org/getattachment/Resources/Topics/Research/Coaching-in-The-UK/Coaching-in-the-UK-\(summary\)_Coaches.pdf](https://www.ukcoaching.org/getattachment/Resources/Topics/Research/Coaching-in-The-UK/Coaching-in-the-UK-(summary)_Coaches.pdf) [accessed 17 November 2021]

410. Sport England has set out plans to support the workforce in recent years. Following the publication of its *Towards and Active Nation* strategy in 2016, Sport England published several subsequent strategies relating to the workforce, coaching and volunteering. These are summarised in Box 6.
411. The 2021 *Uniting the Movement* strategy states: “We need to take on the challenges of now, such as the lack of diversity, falling volunteer numbers, skills shortages” and it sets out various areas that Sport England intends to focus on in the coming years.⁵⁶⁵

⁵⁶⁵ Sport England, *Uniting the Movement: A 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity*, p 37

Box 6: Sport England's workforce, coaching and volunteering strategies

Sport England published its *Coaching in an Active Nation: The Coaching Plan for England 2017–21* in 2016. It provided a broader definition of coaching: “Improving a person’s experience of sport and physical activity by providing specialised support and guidance aligned to their individual needs and aspirations.” It set five strategic approaches for the implementation of the Coaching Plan:

- Making it easier to start coaching;
- Foster an improvement culture;
- Transfer learning into practice;
- Measuring the change and communicate the impact; and
- Enhance the delivery infrastructure.⁵⁶⁶

A further Sport England plan, *Volunteering in an Active Nation*, published in 2016 set out commitments including:

- Invest £26 million into volunteering between 2017–21 and set up two funds to address the lack of diversity amongst volunteers;
- Establish the Opportunity Fund: up to £3 million to create volunteering opportunities for people from economically disadvantaged communities; and
- Establish the Potentials Fund: up to £3 million to engage 10–20-year-olds in social action using sport and physical activity.⁵⁶⁷

Sport England published its *Working in an Active Nation: the professional workforce strategy for England* in 2018. It sought to support the workforce to become more customer focused and recognised as professional. In addition to the steps taken by CIMSPA, it also set out other relevant actions to improve access to training in the sector including:

- A £1 million investment to establish partnerships with specialist organisations that are able to provide bespoke leadership and organisational development programmes;
- A Workforce Diversity Fund for organisations seeking to support individuals from diverse backgrounds to thrive in the workplace;
- A sector-wide diversity and inclusion action plan with clear aspirations for tackling under-representation of specific groups in the workforce; and
- A new framework of professional standards that better articulates the behaviours and skills required for all job roles within the sector.⁵⁶⁸

Careers in sport and recreation

412. The sport and recreation sector has a reputation for being low paid and undervalued. Kirsty Cumming, CEO of Community Leisure UK, told

566 Sport England, *Coaching in an Active Nation: The Coaching Plan for England 2017–21* (December 2016), p 7 and 21: <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/coaching-in-an-active-nation-the-coaching-plan-for-england.pdf> [accessed 18 November 2021]

567 Sport England, *Volunteering in an Active Nation: Strategy 2017–21* (December 2016), p 4: <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/volunteering-in-an-active-nation-final.pdf> [accessed 18 November 2021]

568 Sport England, *Working in an Active Nation: The Professional Workforce strategy for England* (September 2018), p 5: <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/working-in-an-active-nation-10-1.pdf> [accessed 18 November 2021]

us that the community leisure workforce is “traditionally a more low-paid sector” and that career opportunities are “not always valued in the same way” as other sectors.⁵⁶⁹ Tara Dillion, CEO of CIMSPA, told us that the sport and recreation workforce should be more highly valued given the impact that they have on improving the population’s health.⁵⁷⁰ Rusty Earnshaw, Director of the Magic Academy, a coach development organisation, told us that it is the paid workforce at the grassroots that always seem to be hit hardest when NGBs make funding cuts.⁵⁷¹

413. Tara Dillon, CEO of CIMSPA, was critical of the Government’s approach to apprenticeships in the sector. She told us that as a largely part-time self-employed sector, it can be difficult for individuals to access apprenticeships or funding and that this situation is exacerbated by “a severe lack of understanding” by the Department for Education and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education to do anything about it.⁵⁷² She also said that the proportion of people entering the workforce through apprenticeships has declined in recent years.⁵⁷³
414. She suggested that flexi-apprenticeships, which allow organisations to take on apprentices and hire them out to one or more host employers, would help the sport and recreation sector.⁵⁷⁴ Heather Douglas, Head of Policy and Impact at UK Coaching, suggested that flexible apprenticeships could increase the attractiveness of the sector to young people.⁵⁷⁵
415. Tara Dillon also told us that the sector does not hold its own T-Level qualification despite a significant level of interest shown by the sector during the Government consultation on T-levels.⁵⁷⁶
416. **The sport and recreation workforce receives inadequate recognition. The contribution of the workforce in supporting a more active and healthy nation is fundamental to the success of the national plan. We urge the Department for Education to work with CIMSPA to review the state of apprenticeships and national qualifications which can support careers in the sector. The Government should publish its findings by the spring of 2023.**

Coaching and volunteering

417. Coaching and volunteering are closely linked. Although we recognise that some coaches are paid and some are volunteers, they often need to, or can choose to, undergo training and qualifications regardless of whether they pursue coaching as a paid endeavour or remain as volunteers. The dedication of coaches and volunteers should be commended, and their enthusiasm and willingness to build a more active nation must be supported through adequate recognition and development opportunities.
418. Heather Douglas told us that the path to gaining coaching qualifications used to be “traditional, formulaic and quite time-pressured, taking a number

569 [Q 24](#) (Kirsty Cumming)

570 [Q 156](#) (Tara Dillon)

571 [Q 158](#) (Russell Earnshaw)

572 [Q 160](#) (Tara Dillon)

573 *Ibid.*

574 [Q 160](#) (Tara Dillon), see also Education and Skills Funding Agency, ‘Flexi-job apprenticeship offer’: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flexi-job-apprenticeship-offer> [accessed 18 November 2021].

575 [Q 161](#) (Heather Douglas)

576 [Q 160](#) (Tara Dillon)

of weekends out of your busy life” and could very expensive if you wanted to progress.⁵⁷⁷ However, Tara Dillon told us that “the sector has moved mountains in the last two or three years to dismantle the old-fashioned, rigid, fairly monolithic route into becoming a qualified coach” to make it accessible to volunteers and people who are part-time.⁵⁷⁸ Heather Douglas supported moving away from levels of coaching qualification. She noted that for volunteer coaches, having the correct behaviours and the correct attitude is what is important.⁵⁷⁹

419. Rebecca Donnelly, CEO of Fight 4 Change, told us that coaches do more than just teach sport and are often a “mentor and counsellor” to those they engage with and this means that they often need to undergo various training courses to be equipped for their role. She added that for small organisations like Fight4Change, this involves spending a lot of time “deciphering” and assessing the abundance of coaching courses available to find ones that are accredited and relevant.⁵⁸⁰
420. Dr Lindsay Findlay-King, Dr Geoff Nichols and Dr Fiona Reid, committee members of the UK Sport Volunteering Research Network, told us that volunteer roles have become more demanding because of regulations.⁵⁸¹ Tara Dillon agreed that there is “some evidence that there is too much red tape and bureaucracy now associated with volunteering.”⁵⁸² Utilita Energy noted the shortage of volunteers in grassroots football leads to a “single person point of failure” in which training and games do not go ahead when a single, key volunteer is unavailable.⁵⁸³ England Athletics and UK Athletics noted that more support could be provided to volunteers by NGBs or Active Partnerships.⁵⁸⁴
421. Dr Findlay-King, Dr Nichols and Dr Reid noted that the demands on volunteers coupled with a general reliance in many clubs on a core group of volunteers makes them harder to replace.⁵⁸⁵ Tara Dillon told us that “the numbers in volunteering are declining” and that we need to understand why this is the case.⁵⁸⁶
422. Henry Hazlewood, Head of Programmes at the Lord’s Taverners, told us that he would like to see more schemes that drive young people to “take the step into becoming coaches”, including volunteers. He suggested that volunteers could be incentivised through formal recognition such as a qualification which may lead to employment in the sector.⁵⁸⁷ Tara Dillon said that she would “love to see bursary schemes available to all sports” to support volunteers who would like recognition for their coaching skills to undertake a professional qualification.⁵⁸⁸
423. **We urge Sport England to consider how funding it disseminates to NGBs and other bodies can be utilised to provide training and**

577 [Q 161](#) (Heather Douglas)

578 [Q 160](#) (Tara Dillon)

579 [Q 162](#) (Heather Douglas)

580 [Q 104](#) (Rebecca Donnelly)

581 Written evidence from Dr Lindsay Findlay-King, Dr Geoff Nichols and Dr Fiona Reid ([NPS0078](#))

582 [Q 164](#) (Tara Dillon)

583 Written evidence from Utilita Energy ([NPS0143](#))

584 Written evidence from England Athletics and UK Athletics ([NPS0102](#))

585 Written evidence from Dr Lindsay Findlay-King, Dr Geoff Nichols and Dr Fiona Reid ([NPS0078](#))

586 [Q 164](#) (Tara Dillon)

587 [Notes of roundtables with community sport organisations](#)

588 [Q 164](#) (Tara Dillon)

qualifications for the workforce to support their development, recognise their skills, and to equip them to deliver high-quality sport and recreation offers.

424. **We urge the Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing to appoint a ‘sport volunteers champion’ who works with the Minister and the sector to identify and help remove barriers, burdens and disincentives that volunteers face at the grassroots.**

National register of coaches

425. Anyone can call themselves a coach even if they do not have formal qualifications.⁵⁸⁹ This situation makes it difficult for organisations to hire with confidence and raises significant safeguarding concerns. During our inquiry, we heard calls for a national register for coaches which would serve the dual purposes of providing quality assurance and a safeguarding mechanism to prevent abusers from being hired as coaches.
426. The concept of a register for coaches is not new. The CPSU told us that a national register for coaches “has been discussed for many years” and that some NGBs already keep a list of coaches covering their sport.⁵⁹⁰ The CPSU suggested that a national register could address the “significant gap and inconsistencies between sports”.⁵⁹¹ The NSPCC said that a register could “ensure consistent regulation of coaches across sports organisations”.⁵⁹²
427. Professor Hartill, Director of the Centre for Child Protection & Safeguarding in Sport at Edge Hill University, said that a national register of coaches could have “a potential deterrent effect” on those seeking opportunities to abuse in the sector.⁵⁹³ Gary Cliffe, Ambassador for the Offside Trust, strongly endorsed the concept of a national register for coaches which he believed could improve information-sharing in the sector and improve the likelihood that an abusive coach could be stopped.⁵⁹⁴
428. Kimberley Walsh, Safeguarding Adults in Sport Manager at the Ann Craft Trust, said that a national register for coaches “would certainly help to prevent abusive coaches moving across sports and to different locations.”⁵⁹⁵ Nick Pink, CEO of Hockey England, told us that there have been safeguarding incidents involving individuals who had positions of responsibility across several sports over time, with those sports unaware of the individual’s history. He suggested that better sharing of information and reporting across the sector could flag those individuals to stop them obtaining chances to abuse participants in other sports. Adrian Christy similarly noted that there is no system in place that allows the sector to flag an individual who is known to have presented a safeguarding risk in other sports.⁵⁹⁶
429. Professor Hartill said that a national register of coaches could provide “more assurances to parents” by coaches being able to demonstrate that they are registered.⁵⁹⁷ Tara Dillon noted that research conducted by CIMSPA found

589 [Q 153](#) (Professor Mike Hartill)

590 Written evidence from the NSPCC CPSU ([NPS0159](#))

591 *Ibid.*

592 Written evidence from the NSPCC ([NPS0107](#))

593 [Q 153](#) (Professor Mike Hartill)

594 [Q 153](#) (Gary Cliffe)

595 [Q 153](#) (Kimberley Walsh)

596 See Appendix 4, note on the roundtable discussion with CEOs of NGBs and experts

597 [Q 153](#) (Professor Mike Hartill)

that 81 per cent of the parents “assumed that we [the sector] were regulated and coaches were on a licence scheme.”⁵⁹⁸

430. Tara Dillon said that a national register could also facilitate portability and visibility of coaches and that many coaches would welcome a national register as a way of confirming their safeguarding credentials.⁵⁹⁹ Heather Douglas suggested that a form of register for coaches has the potential for “celebration of quality” whereby coaches can demonstrate their experience, professional qualifications and potentially have reviews or references on the system.⁶⁰⁰
431. Witnesses raised various issues that require consideration should a national register be implemented. Heather Douglas queried whether a national register for coaches would be self-regulated whereby coaches join the register and submit their evidence for sport and recreation organisations to assess, or whether the register would be monitored by an independent body.⁶⁰¹ Gary Cliffe and Professor Hartill suggested it should be a multi-agency approach in managing a register.⁶⁰²
432. The CPSU stated that there would need to be “a professional regulatory body” responsible for hearing concerns and making judgements about criteria, and monitoring and updating this register. The CPSU also stated that a national register must not lead to any additional financial burden on coaches or volunteers in addition to those that they already face, including training, DBS checks and other costs.⁶⁰³ Avoiding the imposition of additional costs or bureaucracy is vital to avoid disincentivising prospective coaches and volunteers and to ensure that coaching and volunteering opportunities are accessible to people from all backgrounds.
433. Kimberley Walsh cautioned that a national register for coaches would not account for people in roles, including those in unpaid coaches and volunteers in non-coaching roles, who can also pose a risk and warned that it may lead to complacency in other areas of safeguarding.⁶⁰⁴ She emphasised that other existing processes must remain in place such as DBS checks to ensure robust safeguarding.⁶⁰⁵
434. Tim Hollingsworth, CEO of Sport England, told us that a “common framework for accreditation of coaches is a very active discussion” with CIMSPA and NGBs are “actively involving themselves” in those discussions.⁶⁰⁶ Sport England told us that there is “a broad appetite for improvements” for a single registration process for coaches and other frontline workforce, but there are “concerns around how these might be implemented.” Sport England noted that the next step, starting in 2022, will be to co-design and consult on a process and to begin testing and piloting possible interventions.⁶⁰⁷

598 [Q 166](#) (Tara Dillon)

599 *Ibid.*

600 [Q 165](#) (Heather Douglas)

601 *Ibid.*

602 [Q 153](#) (Gary Cliffe and Professor Mike Hartill)

603 Written evidence from the NSPCC CPSU ([NPS0159](#))

604 [Q 153](#) (Kimberley Walsh)

605 *Ibid.*

606 [Q 209](#) (Tim Hollingsworth)

607 Supplementary written evidence from Sport England ([NPS0172](#))

435. We welcome the news that discussions on a national register are underway. We appreciate the complexity of achieving a rigorous system which must avoid imposing cumbersome bureaucracy and costs on the workforce, especially volunteers.

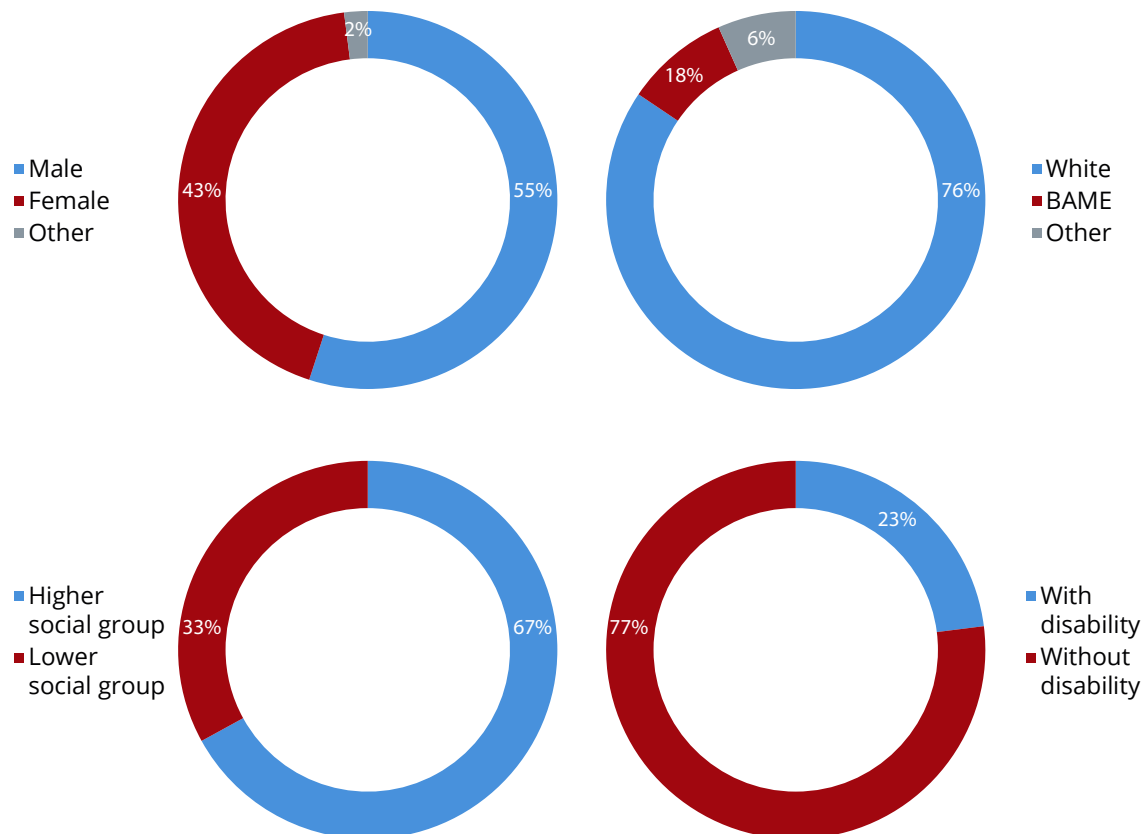
436. Sport England and UK Sport should continue to work closely with CIMSPA, UK Coaching and other relevant bodies to develop a national register of coaches to both enhance portability of qualifications and improve safeguarding, and commit to a date for its launch.

Improving diversity

437. This section looks at diversity among coaches and volunteers and in senior leadership roles. Barriers to improving diversity include recruitment processes, organisational culture, and access to support networks.

438. There is a lack of diversity among both paid and unpaid coaches at grassroots and elite level. According to Sport England, only 5 per cent of people who receive a coaching qualification each year are from an ethnic minority background. Under 2 per cent of coaches with a disability have obtained a coaching qualification. 31 per cent of the sporting population are women and only 17 per cent of qualified coaches are female.⁶⁰⁸ Figure 12 illustrates findings from UK Coaching's *Coaching in the UK, 2019* survey.

Figure 12: Demographics of coaches



Source: UK Coaching, *Coaching in the UK, 2019: Coach Survey, Executive Summary* (February 2020), p 4: [https://www.ukcoaching.org/getattachment/Resources/Topics/Research/Coaching-in-The-UK/Coaching-in-the-UK-\(summary\)_Coaches.pdf](https://www.ukcoaching.org/getattachment/Resources/Topics/Research/Coaching-in-The-UK/Coaching-in-the-UK-(summary)_Coaches.pdf) [accessed 18 November 2021]

608 Sport England, *Coaching in an Active Nation: The Coaching Plan for England 2017–21* (December 2016), p 17: https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/coaching-in-an-active-nation_the-coaching-plan-for-england.pdf [accessed 18 November 2021]

439. Heather Douglas told us that people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are less likely to coach or volunteer because of issues of access to coach development opportunities and time pressures.⁶⁰⁹ She also cautioned that some statistics on diversity may not be giving the full picture. For example, she told us that 18 per cent of coaches come from ethnically diverse communities, which may sound positive, but they are predominantly men and from higher socio-economic backgrounds.⁶¹⁰ The Sport for Development Coalition told us only 13 per cent of sport volunteers had a disability or long-term health condition despite representing 21 per cent of the population.⁶¹¹
440. Sported, a grassroots sport charity for young people, recommended that sports councils and NGBs should review representation and pathways for individuals, including for potential bias in funding streams, continually question suitability for target audiences, and generate more multi-media content and case studies to highlight best practice.⁶¹²
441. For elite coaches, Heather Douglas noted that some coaches from underrepresented backgrounds “are telling us that there is some veiled discrimination in the pathway”.⁶¹³ Stephanie Hilborne, CEO of Women in Sport, highlighted barriers for female coaches including childcare, time pressures, historic exclusion, and a work culture that may be intimidating.⁶¹⁴ Research by UK Sport highlights the barriers for women progressing in high performance coaching, including a lack of professionalism around human resources policies and the wider culture of sport which respects female coaches less than their male counterparts.⁶¹⁵
442. Speaking primarily about football, Women in Football noted that there is a lack of data collection regarding the diversity of the sport and recreation workforce, and although organisations may hold their own data they will not necessarily publish it. It recommended that the Government work with the football sector to collect and publish football workforce data.⁶¹⁶ BASES and the Veterans Athletic Club recommended that NGBs should implement more transparent and rigorous audits of diversity across their participants, workforce and leadership, and produce diversity action plans based on its findings.⁶¹⁷
443. Completing a regular staff and volunteers survey was established as a requirement by the 2016 *Code for Sports Governance* for tier 3 organisations, which are those bodies who receive funding over a period of years for continued activity and the amount is greater than £1 million. The surveys should be used to learn about employees’ experiences of working in the

609 [Q 157](#) (Heather Douglas)

610 [Q 157](#) (Heather Douglas)

611 Written evidence from the Sport for Development Coalition ([NPS0144](#))

612 Written evidence from Sported ([NPS0059](#)) see also Sported, *Tackling racism at the grassroots* (October 2020): <http://sported.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Sported-Racism-Research-Report-October-2020.pdf> [accessed 18 November 2021].

613 [Q 161](#) (Heather Douglas)

614 [Q 147](#) (Stephanie Hilborne)

615 Cabinet Office, *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation*, p 68

616 Written evidence from Women in Football ([NPS0077](#))

617 Written evidence from the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES) ([NPS0035](#)) and the Veterans Athletic Club ([NPS0132](#))

organisation, and gather insight to inform their approach to recruiting, managing and supporting employees.⁶¹⁸

444. The revised *Code for Sports Governance*, expected to be published in December 2021, will require NGBs and other relevant Sport England and UK Sport funded bodies to agree a Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) with Sport England and UK Sport. These DIAPs are intended to provide greater transparency on progress on diversity and allow NGBs and other funded bodies to set relevant benchmarks. Sport England and UK Sport intend to provide additional support to help develop and monitor DIAPs. If progress is not evident, a body may be deemed non-compliant and could face a withdrawal of funding support.⁶¹⁹

445. However, Tara Dillon emphasised the limitations of workforce surveys, noting that “75 per cent of coaching and physical activity takes place outside a traditional sport setting” which means that the reach of those surveys “would not go far enough”. She told us that improving diversity cannot only be about “ticking boxes and hitting percentages”.⁶²⁰

Diversity in senior leadership and boardroom roles

446. The *Sporting Future* strategy set out that Sport England and UK Sport would “work together to tackle the lack of diversity in senior positions across the sport sector”.⁶²¹ The 2016 *Code for Sports Governance* set out requirements to improve diversity of board membership for tier 3 organisations. Examples of these are set out in Box 7.

Box 7: 2016 Code for Sports Governance requirements for tier 3 organisations regarding diversity of board membership

- A target of a minimum of 30 per cent of each gender on boards;
- A strong public commitment to achieving gender parity and greater diversity among ethnic minorities and disabled people;
- Action plans to support greater diversity; and
- Commitment from tier 3 organisations to publish information on all aspects of diversity within its leadership and decision-making bodies.

Source: Sport England and UK Sport, *A Code for Sports Governance* (2016), p 26: https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/a_code_for_sports_governance.pdf [accessed 18 November 2021]

447. Sport England and UK Sport published a report on diversity in sport in 2019 which showed that among NGBs, Active Partnerships and funded bodies:

- 5 per cent of board members identified as BAME;
- 5 per cent of board declared or considered themselves to have a disability;

618 Sport England, *Workforce Engagement Survey Guidance Document* (June 2019): <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/workforce-engagement-survey-guidance.pdf> [accessed 18 November 2021]

619 Sport England, ‘Changes made to strengthen Code for Sports Governance’: <https://www.sportengland.org/news/changes-made-strengthen-code-sports-governance> [accessed 18 November 2021]

620 Q 157 (Tara Dillon)

621 Cabinet Office, *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation*, p 67

- 3 per cent of board members identified as LGBT+; and
- Just under half (43 per cent) of board members attended comprehensive schools.⁶²²

448. Barry Horne, CEO of the Activity Alliance, noted that decision-makers draw on their own experiences and that a lack of diversity can lead to distorted priorities.⁶²³ Martha Kelner, former Sport Correspondent at Sky News, said that diversity of people is about adding diversity of thought and bringing in people “who are brave enough and have the knowledge to make change”.⁶²⁴

449. In terms of progress, Tara Dillon told us the sector is “woefully short of a diverse workforce.”⁶²⁵ Andy Reed, Co-Founder and Director of the Sports Think Tank, told us that the sector needed to “work a lot harder” and “go faster” to improve diversity.⁶²⁶ However, Sanjay Bhandari, Chair of Kick It Out, saw some “green shoots” including a growing awareness and acceptance of the benefits of being a more diverse and inclusive organisation.⁶²⁷

450. Anna Kessel, Women’s Sports Editor at *The Telegraph*, shared the findings of an investigation by *The Telegraph Sport* in 2020 which found that a quarter of taxpayer-funded governing bodies were not meeting gender targets, including the RFU and England Hockey. She also told us:

“Three years on from those [diversity] targets being set, there have been no sanctions for those governing bodies to meet those targets. When you start to drill down into ethnicity, for example, just 3 per cent of board members at taxpayer-funded bodies are black, and 64 per cent of funded NGBs have no black or Asian board members at all. When we looked specifically at black women, just five black women out of 415 board places overall had positions on taxpayer-funded sports governing bodies”.⁶²⁸

451. Stephanie Hilborne said that even at higher levels women tend to be in roles that are based around HR and finance rather than roles that set the direction and culture of the business.⁶²⁹ Bournemouth University noted that female board members tend to be independent non-executive directors “who may have no background in sport” which does not address “the normative priority granted to men’s sport by those sitting on boards”.⁶³⁰

452. Baroness Campbell of Loughborough, Director of Women’s Football at the FA, emphasised the importance of those in senior leadership roles to inspire those at more junior levels to progress and to create barrier-free pathways.⁶³¹ Martin McElhatton, CEO of WheelPower, told us that getting more disabled people into senior leadership and board roles means providing opportunities for young disabled people and building confidence levels so that eventually

622 Sport England and UK Sport, *Diversity in Sport Governance: Annual Survey 2018/19*: <https://www.ukssport.gov.uk/-/media/files/resources/executive-summary---diversity-in-sport-governance-report-final.ashx> [accessed 18 November 2021]

623 [Q 133](#) (Barry Horne)

624 [Q 39](#) (Martha Kelner)

625 [Q 157](#) (Tara Dillon)

626 [Q 17](#) (Andy Reed)

627 [Q 142](#) (Sanjay Bhandari)

628 [Q 45](#) (Anna Kessel)

629 [Q 147](#) (Stephanie Hilborne)

630 Written evidence from Bournemouth University ([NPS0044](#))

631 [Q 147](#) (Baroness Campbell of Loughborough)

there is a bigger pool of qualified and confident people to take on these roles.⁶³²

453. Sahiba Majeed, Development Manager of the Muslim Sports Foundation, told us that more support is needed for those at the grassroots to help them on their journey into positions of power.⁶³³ Samir Sawhney of Laureus Sport for Good said that football organisations make the “mistake time and time again” of recruiting ex-professional players onto their boards and ignoring grassroots coaches or volunteers who could genuinely bring about a “sea-change”.⁶³⁴
454. Lisa Wainwright, CEO of the Sport and Recreation Alliance, welcomed the progress in gender parity and saw scope to make similar progress in improving the diversity of ethnic minorities.⁶³⁵ Arun Kang, CEO of Sporting Equals, highlighted the success of gender targets and called for these to be applied to underrepresented demographics including ethnic minorities and disabled people.⁶³⁶
455. The APPG on Sport, Modern Slavery and Human Rights recommended that the *Code for Sports Governance* should go beyond gender quotas on boards and consider other underrepresented groups.⁶³⁷ This was also suggested by other witnesses including England Athletics and UK Athletics.⁶³⁸ Mark Winder, CEO of Goalball UK, suggested that diversity targets for boards should include those from lower socio-economic backgrounds and disabled people.⁶³⁹
456. However, Sanjay Bhandari cautioned against an over-emphasis on board representation, noting that parachuting in diversity on boards can create “doughnut organisations” where representation is high at the grassroots and on the board but there is no pathway to senior leadership and executive roles from the grassroots.⁶⁴⁰
457. **Workforce diversity surveys should be mandatory for tier 2 organisations, as well as tier 3 organisations as set out in the *Code for Sports Governance*. Data for each organisation should be made publicly available on a regular basis so that organisations are accountable. Larger NGBs and other bodies funded by Sport England and UK Sport should support their grassroots clubs in surveying its workforce, both paid and volunteers, to better understand those who help facilitate grassroots sport and recreation opportunities.**
458. **Whilst we welcome new requirements announced for the revised *Code for Sports Governance*, including Diversity and Inclusion Action Plans, Sport England and UK Sport should be more ambitious and set targets to improve board diversity for other underrepresented groups including ethnic minorities and disabled people. Failure to make progress with the targets should be met with financial sanctions.**

632 [Q 133](#) (Martin McElhatton)

633 [Q 147](#) (Sahiba Majeed)

634 [Notes of roundtables with community sport organisations](#)

635 [Q 17](#) (Lisa Wainwright)

636 [Q 142](#) (Arun Kang)

637 Written evidence from All-Party Parliamentary Group on Sport, Modern Slavery and Human Rights ([NPS0076](#))

638 Written evidence from England Athletics and UK Athletics ([NPS0102](#))

639 See Appendix 4, note on the roundtable discussion with CEOs of NGBs and experts

640 [Q 142](#) (Sanjay Bhandari)

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A national plan for sport, health and wellbeing

The case for a national plan for sport, health and wellbeing

1. We are calling for the development of a long-term cross-government national plan for sport, health and wellbeing. The national plan would form an overarching framework document which would set out the Government's vision, aims and objectives over a multi-year period and would bring together disparate strategies covering physical activity, health promotion, planning, housing, education, transport and more. This will mean that some existing strategies such as *Sporting Future* will need to be incorporated into the national plan and refreshed to reflect the new way of working, but not abandoned. (Paragraph 58)

A new delivery and funding structure

2. Delivery of sport and recreation is uncoordinated and fragmented from the top down and delivery and funding structures are not fit for purpose. There needs to be a new architecture to embed genuine cross-departmental working and to reset delivery and funding. (Paragraph 76)
3. The establishment of the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities represents a timely opportunity to make ambitious changes within Government to match the ambitions of the national plan. As a first step the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities should be renamed the Office for Health Promotion and it must be placed on a statutory footing to give it the surety of purpose and authority to truly deliver cross-departmental working, and ensure that all departments are prioritising physical activity, health and wellbeing. (Paragraph 77)
4. We also propose the establishment of a new ministerial post for Sport, Health and Wellbeing. This role will sit within DHSC and will have responsibility for sport, which will be moved from DCMS to DHSC. The role will have joint responsibility with the Office for Health Promotion to develop and oversee implementation of the national plan. (Paragraph 78)
5. The Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing will chair a regular Strategic Forum of central and local government and other key stakeholders to discuss the formation and implementation of the national plan. The national plan must have buy-in and support from local government, metro mayors and Active Partnerships, and it must incorporate the views of the broad range of stakeholders involved in delivering sport and recreation on the ground including grassroots organisations and NGBs. (Paragraph 79)
6. To establish consistent Parliamentary scrutiny of progress of the national plan, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care must coordinate and submit an annual report to Parliament setting out the Government's performance against the national plan and table a motion in both Houses to debate the annual report. (Paragraph 80)
7. Funding needs to coalesce around the national plan. The Government should look to New Zealand's wellbeing budget model for inspiration on how to coordinate departmental agendas and budgets around delivering a shared programme of work. The Treasury should review the tax environment for the sector, including for sports clubs, to create a more favourable tax regime

that encourages self-sufficiency and reduces dependency on public funding. The Government must also introduce a statutory requirement on local authorities to provide and maintain adequate facilities for sport and physical activity. This will need to be backed up with adequate financial support from the Treasury. (Paragraph 81)

8. To deliver the national plan to the grassroots effectively, Sport England should improve its funding and support for organisations delivering to underrepresented groups by implementing bespoke funding timelines for targeted interventions to allow programmes to become embedded and sustainable. Sport England should also provide ringfenced financial support for local authorities and metro mayors to implement concessions for access to facilities. (Paragraph 82)

Monitoring and evaluation

9. We do not have full confidence in data currently collected and do not believe there is a suitable evidence base for effective monitoring and evaluation. While we recommend keeping the five priority outcomes from *Sporting Future* for the national plan, we agree with BASES on the need for a Physical Activity Observatory to act as a single point for independent analysis of data, evidence and practice related to physical activity for the sector. The Observatory would be responsible for developing objective and robust measures in collaboration with public and private sector partners, and collecting and analysing non-sensitive data from public and private sector. (Paragraph 101)
10. The new Physical Activity Observatory should seek to collect data consistently and regularly from publicly funded organisations. To do this, it should develop a standard approach for collecting non-personalised data that will provide a clearer picture of how and when people exercise and support efforts to improve access to facilities. Sport England should make funding to organisations contingent on them providing information for the Open Data initiative. (Paragraph 102)

Principles underpinning the national plan

Physical literacy

11. Improving physical literacy must be a key principle at the heart of a national plan. Although the focus on teaching physical literacy must be directed toward children and young people through PE and school sport, it will also be crucial to ensure that opportunities to develop confidence and a love of movement are available to people of all ages and backgrounds. (Paragraph 108)

A welcoming and inclusive environment

12. Inactivity rates among some groups remain stubbornly high and progress to tackle this problem has been disappointing. The Government must utilise the new funding and delivery mechanisms developed through the national plan to tackle these stubborn inequalities. This must include assuring and ensuring that disabled people will not be penalised for being active by the benefits system. (Paragraph 136)
13. The Government must also conduct an audit and develop a clear, fully costed national facilities strategy for pitches, leisure facilities, swimming pools, parks and outdoor spaces. This strategy should be created jointly with local authorities. The strategy need not duplicate the Football Foundation's

facilities plan for football and artificial football pitches. Instead, it will complete the picture of what each local authority needs to ensure that a full range of high-quality facilities and spaces are available and easily accessible for everyone. (Paragraph 137)

14. Local communities, leisure trusts, local clubs, schools, colleges and other higher education institutions with sport and leisure facilities, charities, and social and voluntary enterprises delivering sport and recreation will need to be consulted on the audit and plans resulting from the facilities strategy that pertain to their local area. This includes design and planning of future facilities to ensure that they are accessible to local communities and provide a welcoming and inclusive environment. (Paragraph 138)
15. Discrimination comes in many forms and it is always unacceptable. As part of the national plan the Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing will need to take steps, together with Sport England and UK Sport funded bodies and other key stakeholders, to ensure there is a safe environment for participants in sport and recreation and to raise awareness of the channels through which complaints can be made and how participants can seek support. (Paragraph 148)
16. To tackle abuse on social media platforms the Government must hold social media companies to account for harmful content online. The forthcoming Online Safety Bill should ensure that social media platforms are regulated to prevent such harm with robust enforcement and significant sanctions. (Paragraph 149)

Behaviour change and motivation

17. We support the positive role that public health campaigns like *This Girl Can* and *We are Undefeatable* play. We recommend that Sport England seeks robust evidence to better understand their impact and to learn lessons on how public health messaging can be made more effective, especially for underrepresented groups. This is the type of task that could be led by the Physical Activity Observatory. (Paragraph 156)

Tackling inequalities

18. To improve social prescribing, local authorities, working with its health and wellbeing boards, local NHS Trusts and Clinical Commissioning Groups, must ensure that coordination and quality of social prescribing is enhanced. This must include monitoring and evaluating interventions to ensure that social prescribing is reaching those in need and achieving positive health and wellbeing outcomes. Local clinical commissioning groups should consider the development of a local register of organisations suitable for social prescribing to provide assurance to medical practitioners. (Paragraph 165)

Sport for development

19. Sport for development can turn people's lives around. In formulating the national plan, the Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing must work with the Ministry of Justice to review the role of sport for development in communities and criminal justice settings. It should consider how sport and physical activity opportunities can best be resourced and deployed to improve outcomes for those who stand to benefit most from sport for development programmes in our communities and those serving custodial sentences, and how these outcomes can best be measured. (Paragraph 182)

Instilling a life-long habit of sport and physical activity

Making sport and physical activity fun and enjoyable

20. Sport and physical activity, both inside school and outside school settings, need to be fun and engaging. Where possible schools should allow children the choice of what sort of activity they would like to take part in including the option to take part in non-competitive activities. (Paragraph 190)

PE and school sport

21. We believe that the physical literacy of children should be valued as highly as their literacy and numeracy. To this end, the Department for Education must designate PE as a core subject across all key stages to ensure that it receives adequate time and resource. The Department for Education must establish expected standards for the delivery of PE and school sport. The quality and delivery of PE and school sport must be assessed during Ofsted inspections of schools. (Paragraph 222)
22. We are disappointed and alarmed to hear that some primary school teachers are entering the profession with only a few hours' training in delivering PE lessons and physical activity. The Government must work with teacher training providers to ensure adequate time is allocated in teacher training courses to build knowledge and confidence in the delivery of PE, and to assess trainee teachers' understanding of physical literacy. (Paragraph 223)
23. Schools should always provide pupils from all backgrounds and abilities with a safe environment where they can feel comfortable and free from judgement or criticism when exploring sport and recreation activities. When reviewing *School Sport and Activity Action Plan*, the Department for Education should include guidance for schools to ensure that all pupils can try a wide range of sports and activities. Guidance should also be provided to schools to support the participation of children and young disabled people. (Paragraph 224)

PE and Sport Premium

24. The Department for Education must guarantee funding for the PESP for the long-term, ensuring that it is maintained at least at the current amount of £320 million each year, and ensure that schools are aware of their allocated funding well in advance of the forthcoming academic year to ensure that they can plan for effective use of the funding. (Paragraph 246)
25. The Department for Education must provide schools with adequate guidance for finding qualified external providers of sports coaching and how to utilise them effectively to build teacher confidence in delivering sport offers. The Department for Education must develop an accreditation scheme for external providers who deliver sport in schools to improve accountability of external provision and ensure that the highest safeguarding standards are maintained. (Paragraph 247)
26. The Department for Education needs to monitor PESP spending and outcomes better to ensure it is getting value for money. Failures by schools to publish their PESP spending and outcomes must be investigated by Department for Education. (Paragraph 248)
27. The Department for Education must review the untapped potential for physical activity to be embedded in the school day, including incorporating physical activity into lessons beyond PE. (Paragraph 255)

28. To support children to be active, the Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing must work with the Department for Education to launch a campaign to encourage and inspire parents to be active with their children outside of school. (Paragraph 256)

Linking schools, clubs and communities

29. Some sports and local clubs have established positive partnerships with schools, but there is considerably more potential for schools and local sports clubs to connect and work together to encourage more participation in grassroots sport. (Paragraph 273)
30. The Department for Education must work with NGBs to support the delivery of tuition and sport offers by local clubs. This can establish links between schools and wider community and grassroots sport and physical activity opportunities for children and young people. (Paragraph 274)
31. We are encouraged by the efforts made to support the opening of school sport facilities to their communities. However, we do not believe that progress is being made swiftly enough in this area and there remains significant untapped potential which restricts the availability of sport facilities to community sport clubs and the wider population. (Paragraph 275)
32. We believe that with the right support, schools can open their facilities to local communities. The Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing will need to work closely with the Department for Education, local authorities and Active Partnerships, including through the Strategic Forum, to identify, engage with and support schools and other educational institutions, such as colleges, to open their facilities to local clubs and their communities. (Paragraph 276)

Enabling active lifestyles

Developing a whole system, place-based approach

33. A national plan must take a broad, whole system approach so that activity can be embedded in all aspects of our everyday life including work, leisure time, health and travel. At the same time, a one-size fits all approach will not work. Funding needs to be distributed to the local, grassroots level with power residing in local authorities, metro mayors and communities to develop place-based approaches. (Paragraph 284)

Planning and design

34. The Government's 'levelling up' agenda provides an opportunity to invest in active travel infrastructure and improve the planning and design of our buildings, houses and public spaces to increase physical activity. We must move away from disconnected systems that result in car dependency and which make it less convenient for people to be active in their everyday life. This also includes improving access to parks, rights of way, rivers and lakes, coastal paths and national parks. (Paragraph 303)
35. The Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing will need to work with Defra, local authorities and other stakeholders, including private landowners, to improve public access to the countryside, using opportunities such as the Environment Land Management Schemes to incentivise and improve maintenance, signage, facilities, parking and public transport options. (Paragraph 304)

Technology

36. Technology has the potential to transform the way people stay active and how they access facilities and physical activity opportunities. Although it has limitations, including in reaching underrepresented groups, it has the potential to incentivise physical activity at scale through methods including gamification. (Paragraph 325)
37. As part of the national plan, relevant Government departments must reach out to and work with the private sector and academia to develop, trial and roll out new evidence-based apps and use open data better. The priority must be finding new ways to engage and target underrepresented groups and to bring new audiences to physical activity. (Paragraph 326)

Duty of care and safeguarding

Creating a robust duty of care and safeguarding system from grassroots to elite sport

38. We are unimpressed by the Government's assertion that progress on implementing recommendations from the independent review on Duty of Care in Sport was de-prioritised to redirect efforts to the Government pandemic response. Issues raised in the independent review have not gone away. The lack of progress on the implementation of an independent sports ombudsman, which pre-dates the outbreak of COVID-19, is unacceptable. (Paragraph 360)
39. We strongly recommend that the Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing proceeds with implementing the remaining recommendations in the independent review on Duty of Care in Sport, prioritising the establishment of an independent sports ombudsman with a remit to cover all bodies delivering sport regardless of whether they receive public funding. (Paragraph 361)
40. The Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing must work with Sport England and UK Sport to ensure that publicly funded bodies are dedicating sufficient resources and attention to uphold duty of care and safeguarding standards at all levels of their sports. (Paragraph 362)
41. We welcome the additional requirements in the revised *Code for Sports Governance* including for publicly funded bodies to appoint a Director responsible for welfare and sport safety. However, we are not convinced that this will be enough to shift the culture within publicly funded bodies that do not prioritise duty of care and safeguarding standards. We recommend that Sport England and UK Sport conduct and publish a review after 18 months which evaluates the impact of the revised Code to ensure that the ambitions for the updated Code are being delivered by funded bodies and NGBs, and that it is making a difference on the ground. (Paragraph 363)
42. We would like to see stronger links and communication between bodies delivering sport, and the police and local authority children's and adult safeguarding boards to ensure that crucial information is shared. There should be a representative from the sector, potentially from the local Active Partnership, who will act as a contact for safeguarding boards and the police to help them liaise with the sector. (Paragraph 373)
43. Given the potential for abuse in sport and recreation settings, we recommend that the Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing consult and work with the

sector to introduce mandatory reporting in sport and recreation settings. (Paragraph 374)

Duty of care and safeguarding of adults, elite athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers

44. The independent sports ombudsman should provide an avenue for grassroots and elite sportspeople to report mistreatment in their sport. NGBs must promote the independent sports ombudsman's functions and how elite athletes can contact them once it has been established. (Paragraph 396)
45. Safeguarding policies for adults and children in sport must be extended and made consistent across all sports to include conduct online, including social media, to ensure that participants in sport and recreation can be better protected. (Paragraph 397)
46. Monitoring of what works for duty of care and safeguarding in the sector is insufficient. Monitoring and sharing good practice should form part of the role of the independent sports ombudsman. (Paragraph 405)
47. The credibility of Sport England and UK Sport is undermined if the threat of financial sanctions is raised but not implemented. Sport England and UK Sport must follow through and remove funding from NGBs and other funded bodies which fail to meet required duty of care and safeguarding standards. (Paragraph 406)

Workforce

Careers in sport and recreation

48. The sport and recreation workforce receives inadequate recognition. The contribution of the workforce in supporting a more active and healthy nation is fundamental to the success of the national plan. We urge the Department for Education to work with CIMSPA to review the state of apprenticeships and national qualifications which can support careers in the sector. The Government should publish its findings by the spring of 2023. (Paragraph 416)

Coaching and volunteering

49. We urge Sport England to consider how funding it disseminates to NGBs and other bodies can be utilised to provide training and qualifications for the workforce to support their development, recognise their skills, and to equip them to deliver high-quality sport and recreation offers. (Paragraph 423)
50. We urge the Minister for Sport, Health and Wellbeing to appoint a 'sport volunteers champion' who works with the Minister and the sector to identify and help remove barriers, burdens and disincentives that volunteers face at the grassroots. (Paragraph 424)

National register of coaches

51. We welcome the news that discussions on a national register are underway. We appreciate the complexity of achieving a rigorous system which must avoid imposing cumbersome bureaucracy and costs on the workforce, especially volunteers. (Paragraph 435)
52. Sport England and UK Sport should continue to work closely with CIMSPA, UK Coaching and other relevant bodies to develop a national

register of coaches to both enhance portability of qualifications and improve safeguarding, and commit to a date for its launch. (Paragraph 436)

Improving diversity

53. Workforce diversity surveys should be mandatory for tier 2 organisations, as well as tier 3 organisations as set out in the *Code for Sports Governance*. Data for each organisation should be made publicly available on a regular basis so that organisations are accountable. Larger NGBs and other bodies funded by Sport England and UK Sport should support their grassroots clubs in surveying its workforce, both paid and volunteers, to better understand those who help facilitate grassroots sport and recreation opportunities. (Paragraph 457)
54. Whilst we welcome new requirements announced for the revised *Code for Sports Governance*, including Diversity and Inclusion Action Plans, Sport England and UK Sport should be more ambitious and set targets to improve board diversity for other underrepresented groups including ethnic minorities and disabled people. Failure to make progress with the targets should be met with financial sanctions. (Paragraph 458)

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF MEMBERS AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members

Lord Addington
Baroness Blower
Baroness Brady
Earl of Devon (from 28 January 2021)
Baroness Grey-Thompson
Lord Hayward
Lord Knight of Weymouth
Lord Krebs (until 28 January 2021)
Baroness Morris of Yardley
Lord Moynihan
Baroness Sater
Lord Snape
Lord Willis of Knaresborough (Chair)

Declarations of interest

Lord Addington
Director and Trustee, The Atlas Foundation
Vice President, UK Sports Association
Former Vice President, Lakenham Hewitt Rugby Club
Vice Chair, Basketball APPG
Vice Chair, Commonwealth Games APPG
Vice Chair, Football APPG
Vice Chair, Olympic and Paralympic APPG
Member, Rowing APPG
Secretary and player, Rugby Union Football Club APPG
Vice Chair, Sport APPG

Baroness Blower
Vice President, Show Racism the Red Card
Vice Chair, Showing Racism the Red Card APPG
Son-in-law, Assistant Headteacher and Head of PE, and involved in local football team Pitshanger Dynamo

Baroness Brady
Vice Chairman and shareholder, West Ham United Football Club
Secretarial and other support is received from staff employed by West Ham United Football Club
Director, WH Holding Limited (professional football)
Trustee, Twinning Project
Patron, National Citizen Service
Former Managing Director, Birmingham City Football Club (1993–2009)
Husband, Retired professional football player and sport commentator

The Earl of Devon
Patron, Exeter City FC Community Trust
Patron, Devon Gardens Trust
Patron, Devon Wildfowlers Association
Patron, Starcross Yacht Club
Member, Liveable Exeter Place Board, and Chair, Visitor Economy Recovery Sub-Group

Member, Rural Powerhouse APPG

Member, People Places and Conservation APPG

Owner, Powderham Castle and Estate (venue for sports, recreation and community wellbeing, which has academic partnerships with the Universities of Exeter, Plymouth, Oxford and Pennsylvania involving heritage, recreation and wellbeing)

Member, London Scottish Football Club

Member, St Moritz Tobogganing Club

Member, CU Hawks Club

Member, BASC

Fan and former player of Harlequins, Exeter and Santa Monica Rugby Clubs

Member, Parliamentary Cricket team

Employed barrister at Michelmores' Solicitor (whose clients/previous clients include companies and individuals active in sport and recreation.)

Devon Committee member, Country Land and Business Association (CLA)

Baroness Grey-Thompson DBE

Chair, ukactive

Non-executive Director, BBC

Occasional TV work, including for BBC, Sky and other channels

Fee received from BBC and Channel 4 as part of team covering 2021 Tokyo Paralympics, 19 August - 6 September 2021; hotel accommodation and flights were paid for by television companies

Speaking engagement, 29 January 2021, online speech for Lincolnshire Teaching Schools Together

Speaking engagement, 15 April 2021, virtual talk for Health Foundation

Payment received from Channel 4 television as part of presentation team for 2021 European Para Athletics Championships, Leeds, 5 June 2021

Speaking engagement, 12 July 2021, online speech for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT)

Speaking engagement, 13 September 2021, online interviews for National Lottery Awards: Paralympian of the Year

Speaking engagement, 15 October 2021, Sports Award presentation for Everyone active, Crewe; overnight accommodation provided

Speaking engagement, 24 July 2020, virtual event for International Olympic Committee and International Paralympic Committee in partnership with AirBnB

Speaking engagement, 9 October 2019, APMP, London

Visit to Berlin, Germany, 15–18 February 2020, to attend Laureus World Sports Awards; gift of Mont Blanc medium suitcase and Laureus bracelet; business class flights and accommodation costs for member and guest paid by organisers

Vice President, National Paralympic Heritage Trust

Member and former Chair, British Wheelchair Racing Association

Officer, Adult Social Care APPG

Member, Basketball APPG

Member, Boxing APPG

Member, Commonwealth Games APPG

Member, Disability APPG

Vice Chair, Inclusive Entrepreneurship APPG

Vice Chair, Olympic and Paralympic APPG

Vice Chair, Sport APPG

Advisory Board Member, Amaechi Performance
Director, National Academy for Social Prescribing
Member, Advisory Board, Equida
Chancellor of the University of Northumbria at Newcastle
President, Local Government Association (from July 2021, formerly Vice-President)
Ambassador, Fields of Trust
Associate Member, British Wheelchair Sports Foundation
Chair (formerly Trustee), Duke of Edinburgh Awards
Council Member, Winston Churchill Memorial Trust
President, Sports Leaders UK
President, Welsh Association for Cricketers with a Disability
Trustee, Global Foundation, Laureus Sport for Good Foundation
Trustee, SportsAid (interest ceased 29 January 2020)
Trustee, Stadium of Light Foundation
Trustee, Wembley National Stadium Trust
Vice Chair and Academy Member, Laureus World Sports Academy
President, New Marske Harriers (appointed May 2021, formerly Vice President)
Member, UK IWG Secretariat and Conference Bid Steering Group
Ambassador, Sport Relief
Interim Chair, English Federation of Disability Sport (now known as Activity Alliance) (2011–2012)
Trustee, Commonwealth Sport Foundation (appointed October 2020)
Board Member, London Legacy Development Corporation (interest ceased 14 October 2021)
Former Co-Chair, All-Party Commission on Physical Activity (2013–2014)
Former Chair, Duty of Care in Sport Review, Independent Report (2015–2017)
Former Trustee, Jane Tomlinson Trust
Former Trustee, Tony Blair Sports Foundation
Former Trustee, Tennis Foundation
Former Director, London Marathon Ltd
Member for the Sports Council for Wales (1994–2002), including Elite Cymru Panel Member (1996–2003)
Member of the English Sports Council Lottery Awards Panel (1995–1999)
Deputy Chair of the United Kingdom Lottery Awards Panel and Member of the UK Sports Council (1998–2002)
Member of the 2002 Manchester Commonwealth Games Organising Council
Member of the North East Sports Board (2006–2008)
Member of the European Paralympic Committee (2005–2009)
Non-Executive Director UK Athletics (2008–2012)
Women’s Sport and Fitness Foundation, chair of the Commission on the Future of Women’s Sport (2008–2013)
LOCOG, Vice Chair of Athlete’s Panel (2009–2012) and other roles
UK Sport Mission 2012, Panel Member (2007–2012)
Pro Vice-Chancellor, Staffordshire University (until 2013)
Mentor, Women’s Sport Trust programme (2019–present)

Husband, has contract with British Triathlon to deliver coaching on elite Pathway, and is an occasional race organiser for the British Wheelchair Racing Association (under the auspices of WheelPower)

Daughter, Member of British Canoeing and was on Talent Pathway programme (until December 2019)

Lord Hayward OBE

Vice President, Kings Cross Steelers Rugby Football Club

Former paid Adviser, Community Leisure UK (2010–2016)

The Rt. Hon. the Lord Knight of Weymouth

Director, Suklaa Ltd (educational consultancy)

Chair, Trustee and Director, E-ACT (from September 2021)

Non-executive Director, GoBubble Ltd (from September 2021)

Chief Education and External Officer (formerly Chief Education Adviser), TES Global Ltd (interest ceased 31 August 2020)

Shareholder, TES Global Ltd (interest ceased 31 August 2020)

Director, Whole Education Limited (private company limited by guarantee without share capital) and Trustee of associated charity (interest ceased 30 June 2021)

Brother-in-law, Co-owner, Azalea Ltd (Sports marketing company)

Member, Arsenal Football Club

Lord Krebs

No relevant interests declared

The Rt. Hon. the Baroness Morris of Yardley

Chair, Birmingham Education Partnership

Adviser, Birmingham Education Partnership

Trustee and Vice Chair, Sunderland Football Club Foundation

Advisory Board Member, Globeducate (from September 2021)

Adviser, Institute of Effective Education (funded by Bowland Trust) (interest ceased June 2021)

Chair of Strategy Board, Institute of Effective Education (interest ceased June 2021)

Lord Moynihan

Advisory Board Member, Sports 12 Education Limited (trading as InSport Education, providing sport business education courses)

Member, International Olympic Committee (IOC) Public Affairs and Social Development through Sport Commission

Senior Adviser, InSport Intelligence (sport publications)

Director, CMA Sport Ltd. (sports marketing and advisory company, registered October 2021)

Life Member, British Rowing

President, British Water Ski

President, Welsh Amateur Rowing Association

Patron, Disability Snowsport UK

Member, Leander Club

Member, London Rowing Club

Member, Vincents Club

Chair-elect, Haberdashers' Monmouth Schools

Member, Stewards' Enclosure, Henley Royal Regatta

Member, Kandahar Club

Vice Chair, Boxing APPG

Member, Commonwealth Games APPG

Vice Chair, Esports APPG
Vice Chair, Golf APPG
Co-Chair, Olympic and Paralympic Games APPG
Member, Rowing APPG
Vice Chair, Sport APPG
Vice Chair, Sport, Modern Slavery and Human Rights APPG
Co-Chair, Ticketing Abuse APPG
Former Member, London Community Sports Board (2009–2013)
Former Minister for Sport (1987–1990)
Former Chair, British Olympic Association (2005–2012)
Former Member, Olympic Board and Former Director, London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (2005–2012)
Son, Member of GB Snowsport and member of the British Senior Alpine Ski Squad (until April 2019)

Baroness Sater

Chair and Trustee, The Queen's Club Foundation
Chair, Taskforce on Physical Activity & Sport in the Criminal Justice System, Alliance of Sport (appointed November 2021)
President, Tennis Wales (appointed July 2021)
Member, National Taskforce to address the future of Physical Education, Association for Physical Education (interest ceased 15 July 2021)
Vice Chair, Sport APPG
Co-Chair, Sport and Physical Activity in the Criminal Justice System APPG
Member, The Hurlingham Club
Member, Salcombe Yacht Club
Former Vice Chairman and Trustee, The Queen's Club (2009–2015)
Former Chairman and Trustee, StreetGames (2015–2018)
Former Patron, StreetGames (interest ceased in January 2021)

Lord Snape

No relevant interests declared.

Lord Willis of Knaresborough

Member, Leeds United Football Club
Chair, National Institute for Health Research Applied Research Collaboration, Yorkshire and Humberside
Former Chair, National Institute for Health Research Collaboration of Leadership of Health Research, Yorkshire and Humber

A full list of Member's interests can be found in the Register of Lords Interests: <https://members.parliament.uk/members/lords/interests/register-of-lords-interests>

Dr Chris Mackintosh BSc MA PhD FHEA (Specialist Adviser)

PhD Research studentship (Manchester Metropolitan University), Sport England and Greater Sport 'Moving Forces' (until September 2021)
Research Studentship and ad hoc advisory work (Manchester Metropolitan University), Research Studentship and ad hoc advisory work (Manchester Metropolitan University), England Golf PhD (until January 2021)
PhD research supervisor to a study of community rugby union coaches (Manchester Metropolitan University) (until May 2021)
PhD research supervisor to a study of British Universities HE sport development (Manchester Metropolitan University)

PhD research supervisor to study of governance of community badminton in England (Manchester Metropolitan University)

PhD research supervisor to a study of the FA equality charter standard (with University of Wolverhampton) (until March 2021)

Founder and Chair, UK Sport Development Network

External Examiner to MA Sport development, Leeds Beckett University

Trustee, Active Communities Network (2021–2023)

Associate Consultant, Counsel Ltd for Sport Scotland Project (completed December 2020)

COVID-19 community impact on sport provision and participation research project supported by Sport England (completed December 2020)

Paid reviewer of grass roots sports research awards, Prince Faisal Bin Fahad Award for Sports Research (appointed December 2021)

Ad-hoc advisory role, Greater Sport Euro 2022 community women's football pilot, Wigan, Greater Manchester

Senior lecturer on community sport degree in partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University 2016 and Manchester City Football Club

Oversight of a student's internship and research project with British Cycling (July–October 2021)

Research project lead working with the Street Soccer League (July–October 2021)

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF WITNESSES

Evidence is published online at <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/482/national-plan-for-sport-and-recreation-committee/publications/> and available for inspection at the Parliamentary Archives (020 7219 3074).

Evidence received by the Committee is listed below in chronological order of oral evidence session and in alphabetical order. Those witnesses marked with ** gave both oral evidence and written evidence. Those marked with * gave oral evidence and did not submit any written evidence. All other witnesses submitted written evidence only.

Oral evidence in chronological order

- | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|
| ** | Ben Dean, Director for Sport and Gambling,
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport | QQ 1–11 |
| * | Mark Davies, former Director for Population Health,
Department of Health and Social Care | |
| * | Graham Archer, Director for Qualifications,
Curriculum and Extracurricular, Department for
Education | |
| ** | Huw Edwards, Chief Executive Officer, ukactive | QQ 12–19 |
| * | Andy Reed OBE, Co-Founder and Director, Sports
Think Tank | |
| ** | Lisa Wainwright MBE, Chief Executive Officer,
Sport and Recreation Alliance | |
| ** | Kirsty Cumming, Chief Executive Officer,
Community Leisure UK | QQ 20–25 |
| ** | Nigel Harrison, Chief Executive Officer, Yorkshire
Sport Foundation | |
| ** | Lee Mason, former Chief Executive Officer, Active
Partnerships | |
| ** | Ian Brooke, Past Chair, Chief Cultural and Leisure
Officers Association | QQ 26–31 |
| ** | Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE, Chair,
Culture, Tourism and Sport Board, Local
Government Association | |
| * | Martha Kelner, former Sports Correspondent, Sky
News | QQ 32–39 |
| * | Ed Malyon, Managing Director, The Athletic | |
| * | Matt Hughes, Chief Sports Reporter, The Daily Mail | QQ 40–46 |
| * | Jordan Jarrett-Bryan, Sports Reporter, Channel 4
News | |
| * | Anna Kessel, Women’s Sports Editor, The Telegraph | |
| * | Dr Kathryn Atherton, Adviser, Behavioural Insights
Team | QQ 47–54 |

- * Professor Kim Edwards, Professor of Sport, Exercise and Nutrition Education, University of Nottingham
- * Professor Dame Theresa Marteau, Director of Behaviour and Health Research Unit, University of Cambridge
- ** Hayley Jarvis, Head of Physical Activity, Mind [QQ 55–62](#)
- * Paul Owen OBE, Sporting Ambassador, Sport in Mind
- * Chris Wilkins, Co-founder, Sporting Memories
- ** Robert Sullivan OBE, Chief Executive Officer, Football Foundation [QQ 63–69](#)
- ** Chrissie Wellington OBE, Global Head of Health and Wellbeing, parkrun
- * Yusra Uney, Engagement Lead, GoodGym
- * Andrew Denton, Chief Executive, Outdoor Industries Association [QQ 70–78](#)
- * Gemma Cantelo, former Head of Policy and Advocacy, The Ramblers
- ** Sarah Mitchell, Chief Executive, Cycling UK
- * Mads Andreassen, Head of Activity Development, Norwegian Sports Confederation [QQ 79–89](#)
- * Dr Josef Fahlén, (former Associate) Professor at Umeå University, Sweden and Visiting Professor, Norwegian School of Sport Sciences, Norway
- * Dr Eivind Å Skille, Professor of Sport Sociology, Faculty of Social and Health Sciences, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway
- * Justin Coleman, Co-Founder and Chief Operations Officer, Alliance of Sport in Criminal Justice [QQ 90–96](#)
- ** Barry Jones MBE, Secretary and Founder, The Police Community Clubs of Great Britain
- ** Professor Rosie Meek, Professor of Criminological Psychology, Royal Holloway, University of London
- * Rebecca Donnelly MBE, Chief Executive Officer, Fight 4 Change [QQ 97–105](#)
- ** Ollie Dudfield, Executive Director, Sport for Development Coalition
- ** Mark Lawrie, Chief Executive Officer, StreetGames
- ** Hon Grant Robertson, Deputy Prime Minister of New Zealand, Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister of Finance [QQ 106–117](#)
- ** Dr Alice Hume, former Policy Manager, Sport New Zealand

- ** Dr Liz Durden-Myers, Past Chair, International Physical Literacy Association, and Senior Lecturer in Physical Education, Bath Spa University and University of Gloucestershire [QQ 118–124](#)
- ** Ali Oliver MBE, Chief Executive Officer, Youth Sport Trust
- ** Sue Wilkinson MBE, Chief Executive Officer, Association for Physical Education
- ** Laura Cordingley, Chief Executive Officer, Chance to Shine [QQ 125–129](#)
- * Mark Hardie, former Chief Executive Officer, Access Sport
- ** Oliver Scadgell, Participation Director, Lawn Tennis Association (LTA)
- ** Barry Horne, Chief Executive, Activity Alliance [QQ 130–135](#)
- ** Matthew Maguire, National Sport Manager, Mencap
- * Martin McElhatton OBE, Chief Executive, WheelPower
- ** Sanjay Bhandari, Chair, Kick It Out [QQ 136–143](#)
- * Arun Kang, Chief Executive Officer, Sporting Equals
- * Janett Walker, Professional Mentor of the Founder, Black Girls Hike
- * Baroness Campbell of Loughborough, Director of Women’s Football, the Football Association [QQ 144–149](#)
- ** Stephanie Hilborne, Chief Executive Officer, Women in Sport
- * Sahiba Majeed, Development Manager, Muslim Sports Foundation
- * Gary Cliffe, Ambassador, Offside Trust [QQ 150–155](#)
- * Professor Mike Hartill, Director, Centre for Child Protection & Safeguarding in Sport, Edge Hill University
- * Kimberley Walsh, Safeguarding Adults in Sport Manager, Ann Craft Trust
- * Tara Dillon, Chief Executive Officer, Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) [QQ 156–166](#)
- ** Heather Douglas, Head of Policy and Impact, UK Coaching
- * Russell ‘Rusty’ Earnshaw, Coach and Director, Magic Academy

- ** Anton Derlyatka, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Sweatcoin [QQ 167–171](#)
- ** Professor Chris Todd, Professor of Primary Care and Community Health, University of Manchester, Director, National Institute for Health Research, Older People and Frailty Policy Research Unit, and Lead, National Institute for Health Research, Applied Research Collaboration, Greater Manchester Healthy Ageing Theme
- ** Dr Alex Fenton, Founder, FanFit, and Lecturer, Digital Business, Salford Business School, University of Salford [QQ 172–176](#)
- ** Jamie Foale, Chief Executive Officer, Playfinder
- * Paul Foster, Chief Executive, The Great Run Company
- * Gordon Banks, Chief Community Officer, Saracens Sport Foundation [QQ 177–189](#)
- * Martin Fearon, Chief Executive Officer, Accrington Stanley Community Trust
- * Steve Johnson, Disability Manager, Everton in the Community
- ** Clive Copeland, Head of Participation, Angling Trust [QQ 190–195](#)
- ** Marcus Kingwell, Chief Executive Officer, EMD UK
- * Gillian Osborne, Vice Chair, British Wheel of Yoga
- ** Tim Hollingsworth OBE, Chief Executive Officer, Sport England [QQ 196–215](#)
- ** Sally Munday OBE, Chief Executive Officer, UK Sport
- * Jo Churchill MP, former Minister for Prevention, Public Health and Primary Care, Department of Health and Social Care [QQ 216–245](#)
- ** The Rt. Hon. Nick Gibb MP, former Minister for School Standards, Department for Education
- * Nigel Huddleston MP, Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

Alphabetical list of all witnesses

- * Access Sport ([QQ 125–129](#))
- * Accrington Stanley Community Trust ([QQ 177–189](#))
- Active Communities Network [NPS0113](#)
- Active Lancashire [NPS0105](#)

**	Active Partnerships (QQ 20–25)	NPS0098
**	Activity Alliance (QQ 130–135)	NPS0073
	Katie Allen	NPS0020
*	Alliance of Sport in Criminal Justice (QQ 90–96)	
	Martyn Allison	NPS0169
	Wayne Allsopp	NPS0001
	Professor Eric Anderson	NPS0020
*	Ann Craft Trust (QQ 150–155)	
	Anonymous NPS1	NPS0019
	Anonymous NPS2	NPS0033
	Anonymous NPS3	NPS0082
	Anonymous NPS4	NPS0118
	Anonymous NPS5	NPS0058
*	Mads Andreassen (QQ 79–89)	
**	Angling Trust (QQ 190–195)	NPS0156
	Christopher Antoniou	NPS0131
	AoC Sport	NPS0117
	All-Party Parliamentary Group on Sport, Modern Slavery and Human Rights	NPS0076
*	Graham Archer (QQ 1–11)	
**	Association for Physical Education (QQ 118–124)	NPS0154
*	Dr Kathryn Atherton (QQ 47–54)	
	Shaun Azam	NPS0037
	Richard Baldwin MBE	NPS0010
*	Gordon Banks (QQ 177–189)	
	Dr Alexander Beaumont	NPS0085
	Peta Bee	NPS0014
**	Sanjay Bhandari (QQ 136–143)	NPS0126
	The Bikeability Trust	NPS0158
	Chris Birch	NPS0069
	Dr Kay Biscomb	NPS0084
*	Black Girls Hike (QQ 136–143)	
	Bournemouth University	NPS0044
	Bristol Sport Foundation	NPS0149
	British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES)	NPS0035
	British Canoeing	NPS0090

	British Cycling Federation	NPS0083
		NPS0165
	British Horse Society	NPS0156
	British Masters Athletic Federation	NPS0062
	The British Mountaineering Council	NPS0103
*	British Wheel of Yoga (QQ 190–195)	
**	Ian Brooke (QQ 26–31)	NPS0016
	Dr Nicola Brown	NPS0038
	Dave Bush	NPS0036
*	Baroness Campbell of Loughborough (QQ 144–149)	
*	Gemma Cantelo (QQ 70–78)	
	Centre for Ageing Better	NPS0049
	Centre for Movement and Occupational Rehabilitation Sciences (MOReS), Oxford Brookes University	NPS0106
**	Chance to Shine (QQ 125–129)	NPS0110
**	Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association (QQ 26–31)	NPS0016
*	Jo Churchill MP (QQ 216–245)	
	Francesca Clarke	NPS0048
*	Gary Cliffe, Ambassador, Offside Trust (QQ 150–155)	
**	Community Leisure UK (QQ 20–25)	NPS0112
	Conservatives for Women	NPS0068
*	Justin Coleman (QQ 90–96)	
**	Clive Copeland (QQ 190–195)	NPS0156
**	Laura Cordingley (QQ 125–129)	NPS0110
	Country Land and Business Association	NPS0151
	Countryside Alliance	NPS0156
	Professor Anna Cox	NPS0045
	Cricket Wales	NPS0031
	Croquet Association	NPS0066
**	Kirsty Cumming (QQ 20–25)	NPS0112
**	Cycling UK (QQ 70–78)	NPS0129
*	Mark Davies (QQ 1–11)	
**	Ben Dean (QQ 1–11)	NPS0030
	Olly Deasy	NPS0048
*	Andrew Denton (QQ 70–78)	

**	Anton Derlyatka (QQ 167–171)	NPS0163
**	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (QQ 1–11) (QQ 216–245)	NPS0030
*	Tara Dillon (QQ 156–166)	
	Dr Caroline Dodd-Reynolds	NPS0111
	Professor Aiden Doherty	NPS0096
*	Rebecca Donnelly MBE (QQ 97–105)	
**	Heather Douglas (QQ 156–166)	NPS0054
		NPS0071
**	Ollie Dudfield (QQ 97–105)	NPS0144
	Mark Dudley	NPS0024
**	Dr Liz Durden-Myers (QQ 118–124)	NPS0028
		NPS0150
	Ealing Hockey Club	NPS0047
*	Russell Earnshaw (QQ 156–166)	
	Eastcote Hockey Club	NPS0108
**	Huw Edwards (QQ 12–19)	NPS0124
*	Professor Kim Edwards (QQ 47–54)	
	Dr Mark T. Elliott	NPS0037
**	EMD UK (QQ 190–195)	NPS0065
	England and Wales Cricket Board	NPS0177
	England Athletics	NPS0102
	English Football League Trust	NPS0097
*	Everton in the Community (QQ 177–189)	
*	The FA	NPS0135
*	Dr Josef Fahlén (QQ 79–89)	
*	Martin Fearon (QQ 177–189)	
**	Dr Alex Fenton (QQ 172–176)	NPS0005
	Dr Kyle Ferguson	NPS0025
	fibodo	NPS0128
*	Fight 4 Change (QQ 97–105)	
	Dr Lindsay Findlay-King	NPS0078
	Fitmedia	NPS0039
**	Jamie Foale (QQ 172–176)	NPS0015
		NPS0167
**	Football Foundation (QQ 63–69)	NPS0136
*	Paul Foster (QQ 172–176)	

	FYI	NPS0140
	Tim Garfield	NPS0169
	Gendered Intelligence	NPS0120
	Generating Older Active Lives Digitally, University Plymouth (GOALD)	NPS0164
**	The Rt. Hon. Nick Gibb MP (QQ 216–245)	NPS0176
	Girlguiding	NPS0074
	Goalball UK	NPS0075
*	GoodGym (QQ 63–69)	
	Terry Graves	NPS0162
*	The Great Run Company (QQ 172–176)	
	Nick Griffin	NPS0018
	Ian Halliday	NPS0040
*	Mark Hardie (QQ 125–129)	
**	Nigel Harrison (QQ 20–25)	NPS0027
	Stacy Hart	NPS0020
*	Professor Mike Hartill (QQ 150–155)	
	Healthy Ageing Research Group, University of Manchester	NPS0064
	Hamid Hejazi	NPS0095
	Martin Hicks	NPS0133
**	Stephanie Hilborne (QQ 144–149)	NPS0093
	HM Government	NPS0134
	Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS)	NPS0155
**	Tim Hollingsworth OBE (QQ 196–215)	NPS0071
		NPS0100
		NPS0172
**	Barry Horne (QQ 130–135)	NPS0073
	Dr Kristy Howells	NPS0072
*	Nigel Huddleston MP (QQ 216–245)	
*	Matt Hughes (QQ 40–46)	
**	Dr Alice Hume (QQ 106–117)	NPS0153
*	Jordan Jarrett-Bryan (QQ 40–46)	
**	Hayley Jarvis (QQ 55–62)	NPS0109
	Professor Heidi Johansen-Berg	NPS0096
*	Steve Johnson (QQ 177–189)	

**	Barry Jones MBE (QQ 90–96)	NPS0043
		NPS0148
*	Arun Kang (QQ 136–143)	
*	Martha Kelner (QQ 32–39)	
*	Anna Kessel (QQ 40–46)	
**	Kick It Out (QQ 136–143)	NPS0126
**	Marcus Kingwell (QQ 190–195)	NPS0065
**	Mark Lawrie (QQ 97–105)	NPS0091
		NPS0147
	Professor David Lavallee	NPS0085
**	Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) (QQ 125–129)	NPS0142
		NPS0157
	Alberto Lazari	NPS0096
	The Leisure Database Company	NPS0053
	Hayley Lever	NPS0137
	Dr Iain Lindsey	NPS0111
**	Local Government Association (QQ 26–31)	NPS0050
	London Academy of Gymnastics and Dance	NPS0009
	London South Bank University	NPS0116
	Lord’s Taverners	NPS0174
	Lily MaCaulay-Hick	NPS0048
**	Matthew Maguire (QQ 130–135)	NPS0130
*	Sahiba Majeed (QQ 144–149)	
*	Ed Malyon (QQ 32–39)	
	Mandate Now	NPS0161
	Dr Karen Mansfield	NPS0096
*	Professor Dame Theresa Marteau (QQ 47–54)	
	Lauren Martin	NPS0007
	Phil Martin	NPS0092
**	Lee Mason (QQ 20–25)	NPS0098
	McDonald’s UK	NPS0080
*	Martin McElhatton OBE (QQ 130–135)	
	Tessa McInnes	NPS0121
**	Professor Rosie Meek (QQ 90–96)	NPS0152
	Mermaids	NPS0123
	Dr Cristina Steliana Mihailovici	NPS0008

**	Mind (QQ 55–62)	NPS0109
**	Sarah Mitchell (QQ 70–78)	NPS0129
	MRC Epidemiology Unit, University of Cambridge	NPS0051
**	Sally Munday OBE (QQ 196–215)	NPS0171
*	Muslim Sports Foundation (QQ 144–149)	
	National Futsal League	NPS0003
	National Lottery Community Fund	NPS0086
	News Media Corporation	NPS0145
	National Farmers Union (NFU)	NPS0173
	Dr Geoff Nichols	NPS0078
*	Norwegian Sports Confederation (QQ 79–89)	
	NSPCC	NPS0107
	NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit	NPS0159
	David O’Brien	NPS0032
*	Offside Trust (QQ 150–155)	
**	Ali Oliver MBE (QQ 118–124)	NPS0115
	Dr Emily Oliver	NPS0111
*	Gillian Osborne (QQ 190–195)	
*	Outdoor Industries Association (QQ 70–78)	
*	Paul Owen OBE (QQ 55–62)	
**	parkrun (QQ 63–69)	NPS0139
	Dr Seema Patel	NPS0041
	Alex Pierce	NPS0029
	Playing Out	NPS0052
**	The Police Community Clubs of Great Britain (QQ 90–96)	NPS0043 NPS0148
	Pony Club	NPS0156
	Kate Porter	NPS0034
	Pride in Tennis	NPS0104
	Public Health England	NPS0125
	Pupils 2 Parliament	NPS0070
	Rebecca Quinlan	NPS0023
*	The Ramblers (QQ 70–78)	
	Steve Raven	NPS0081
*	Andy Reed OBE (QQ 12–19)	
	Dr Fiona Reid	NPS0078

	Rethink Mental Illness	NPS0094
	The Richmond Group of Charities	NPS0141
	Benjamin Rigby	NPS0111
**	Hon Grant Robertson (QQ 106–117)	NPS0153
	Alice Robson	NPS0089
**	Royal Mencap Society (QQ 130–135)	NPS0130
	Royal Yachting Association	NPS0127
	Rugby Football Union	NPS0146
*	Saracens Sport Foundation (QQ 177–189)	
**	Oliver Scadgell (QQ 125–129)	NPS0142
		NPS0157
	Dr Stephen Shannon	NPS0006
*	Dr Eivind Å Skille (QQ 79–89)	
	Sky Kids	NPS0140
	Professor Brett Smith	NPS0111
	Dr Jenny Smith	NPS0038
	Dr Graeme Sorbie	NPS0085
**	Sport and Recreation Alliance (QQ 12–19)	NPS0138
**	Sport England (QQ 196–215)	NPS0071
		NPS0100
		NPS0172
*	Sporting Equals (QQ 136–143)	
**	Sport for Development Coalition (QQ 97–105)	NPS0144
	Sported	NPS0059
	Sporting Communities, Community Interest Company	NPS0012
*	Sport in Mind (QQ 55–62)	
*	Sporting Memories (QQ 55–62)	
**	Sport New Zealand (QQ 106–117)	NPS0153
	Sportsgroup	NPS0056
*	Sports Think Tank (QQ 12–19)	
	Julian Starkey	NPS0067
	Stonewall	NPS0123
**	StreetGames (QQ 97–105)	NPS0091
		NPS0147
**	Robert Sullivan OBE (QQ 63–69)	NPS0136
	Surbiton Hockey Club	NPS0119

*	Sweatcoin (QQ 167–171)	
	Swim England	NPS0060
**	Professor Chris Todd (QQ 167–171)	NPS0064
**	ukactive (QQ 12–19)	NPS0124
	UK Athletics	NPS0102
	UK Cheerleading Association	NPS0061
**	UK Coaching (QQ 156–166)	NPS0054
		NPS0071
**	UK Sport (QQ 196–215)	NPS0171
	UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability	NPS0122
	UK Anti-Doping (UKAD)	NPS0166
*	Yusra Uney (QQ 63–69)	
**	University of Salford (QQ 172–176)	NPS0005
	University of York Management School	NPS0022
	Utilita Energy	NPS0143
	Dr Gemma van Vuuren Cassar	NPS0087
**	Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE (QQ 26–31)	NPS0050
	Versus Arthritis	NPS0042
	Veterans Athletic Club	NPS0132
	Chris Vine	NPS0099
**	Lisa Wainwright MBE (QQ 12–19)	NPS0138
	Professor Joanna Wakefield-Scurr	NPS0038
*	Janett Walker (QQ 136–143)	
	Malcolm Wallace	NPS0114
*	Kimberley Walsh (QQ 150–155)	
	Thomas Wassenaar	NPS0096
	Dr Tom Webb	NPS0011
**	Chrissie Wellington OBE (QQ 63–69)	NPS0139
	Welsh Institute of Physical Activity, Health and Sport	NPS0101
	Dr Catherine Wheatley	NPS0096
*	WheelPower (QQ 130–135)	
*	Chris Wilkins (QQ 55–62)	
**	Sue Wilkinson MBE (QQ 118–124)	NPS0154
	Wilson’s Endowed CE School	NPS0017
	Women in Football	NPS0077

**	Women in Sport (QQ 144–149)	NPS0093
**	Yorkshire Sport Foundation (QQ 20–25)	NPS0027
	Youth Charter	NPS0079
**	Youth Sport Trust (QQ 118–124)	NPS0115

APPENDIX 3: CALL FOR EVIDENCE

The House of Lords Select Committee on a National Plan for Sport and Recreation was appointed by the House on 15 October 2020. The remit of the Committee is “to consider the effectiveness of current sport and recreation policies and initiatives, and the case for a national plan for sport and recreation, and to make recommendations”. The Committee is required to agree its final report by end of November 2021.

This inquiry comes at a particularly opportune moment when the coronavirus pandemic has led to renewed focus on sport and recreation, and the importance of maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle.

The Committee on a National Plan for Sport and Recreation is issuing this public call for evidence to hear from as many individuals and organisations as possible with an interest, experience or expertise in sport and recreation policy and practice. The Committee is taking a broad view of ‘sport and recreation’ and is interested in hearing about all activities that support an active lifestyle. It hopes to learn about success stories and opportunities, challenges, and how things could be improved going forward.

Diversity comes in many forms, and hearing a range of different perspectives means that committees are better informed and can more effectively scrutinise public policy and legislation. Committees can undertake their role most effectively when they hear from a wide range of individuals, sectors or groups in society. We encourage anyone with experience of or expertise in an issue we are investigating to share their views with the Committee, with the full knowledge that their views have value and are welcome. If you think someone you know would have views to contribute, please do pass this on to them.

A list of questions is set out below, covering subjects that the Committee particularly wants to learn more about. Respondents are welcome to answer all questions should they choose, although there is no obligation to answer every question. The Committee welcomes evidence that addresses any of the subjects raised, even if you only feel able to respond to one of the questions on the list below.

This is a public call for written evidence to be submitted to the Committee. The deadline is 4pm on Friday 29 January 2021.

Questions

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?
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.
3. How can adults of all ages and backgrounds, particularly those from under-represented groups, including women and girls, ethnic minorities, disabled people, older people, and those from less affluent backgrounds, be encouraged

to lead more active lifestyles? If possible, share examples of success stories and good practice, and challenges faced.

4. *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?
5. Is government capturing an accurate picture of how people participate in sport and recreation activities in its data collection? How could this be improved?
6. How can racism, homophobia, transphobia, misogyny and ableism in sport be tackled?
7. What can be done to improve and implement effective duty of care and safeguarding standards for sports and recreation actives at all levels?
8. What are the opportunities and challenges facing elite sports in the UK and what can be done to make national sports governing bodies more accountable? For example, accountability for representing and protecting their membership, promoting their sport and maximising participation.
9. What successful policy interventions have other countries used to encourage people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to participate in sport and recreation, and lead more active lifestyles?
10. Should there be a national plan for sport and recreation? Why/why not?

APPENDIX 4: ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION WITH CEOS OF NGBS AND EXPERTS

On 9 June 2021 we held an online roundtable with CEOs of sports national governing bodies (NGBs) and sector experts. The meeting was intended to be wide-ranging and included topics such as funding and support available to NGBs, the governance and accountability of NGBs, duty of care and safeguarding responsibilities, diversity and inclusion, and promoting grassroots participation.

The attendees at the meeting were:

National governing bodies

- Adrian Christy, former CEO, Badminton England
- Joanna Coates, former CEO, UK Athletics
- Jon Cockcroft, CEO, Bowls England
- Natalie Justice-Dearn, CEO, Rounders England
- Jane Nickerson, CEO, Swim England
- Ralf Rimmer, CEO, Rugby Football League (RFL)
- Nick Pink, CEO, England Hockey
- Mark Winder, CEO, Goalball UK

Sector experts

- Martyn Allison, Director, Management Improvement Services and Former National Advisor for Culture and Sport, the Improvement and Development Agency for local government (IDeA)
- Tim Garfield, Lead Director for the Wallace Group; Former Director of Sports Development at Loughborough University; and Former Regional/ Executive Director, Sport England

Breakout group discussions

The meeting began with participants split into two breakout groups for one hour. These breakout group discussions focused on the work of NGBs promoting grassroots participation and issues relating to diversity and inclusion.

The participants in breakout group one were Martyn Allison, Adrian Christy, Natalie Justice-Dearn, and Ralf Rimmer. The participants in breakout group two were Joanna Coates, Jon Cockcroft, Tim Garfield, Nick Pink and Mark Winder.

Balance between attracting those already physically active and encouraging those who are inactive to sport

Breakout group one

Martyn Allison told the Committee that there are three core challenges in tackling physical inactivity. Firstly, there is a lot of tribalism in the sector and this means that competition often overturns collaboration. Secondly, he said, there is a lack of empathy around understanding why people do not participate. Thirdly, he told the Committee there is a leadership deficit to challenge the norms and make the case for change. Martyn said he struggled to understand why over his 40 years in the sector the participatory gap between demographic groups has failed to be tackled, despite money, strategies, plans and goals. He noted during this time the

country has hosted an Olympic and Paralympic Games, had audit commission inspections and best value national performance indicators. He said there have been all the normal drivers of change during this time, but there have only been marginal shifts in the equity in participation.

Ralph Rimmer from the Rugby Football League (RFL) disagreed and told the Committee that the world has changed in that time and continues to evolve. He noted that NGBs must find ways of adapting to increase participation numbers. He also explained that though the RFL retains its focus on traditional rugby league, they also provide physical disability, learning disability, touch, tag and masters rugby league. He told the Committee that these offers make the sport more accessible and brings down barriers to engagement with the sport. He noted the importance of going out and finding your audience, often digitally, and understanding them through the digital systems that can be established. Ralph explained how the RFL set up Our League Live, which enables it to communicate directly with audiences, understand the offers they want and then work to put the offers in place.

Ralph Rimmer told the Committee that the RFL receives a commercial income at the higher end of the sport, but the funding provided by government is critical to the work they do. He told the Committee the RFL are audited on a quarterly basis through Sport England on what they have achieved, and the result of these audits may affect the next set of funding they receive.

Jane Nickerson told the Committee that Swim England's goal is that everybody goes swimming. She noted that Swim England's biggest challenge is facilities. Most swimming facilities are local authority facilities or privately owned and many are approaching the end of their lifespan. She said that having the right facilities within easy travelling distance with the right programmes in place is the answer to breaking down some of the barriers to people swimming. Jane noted that if people do not learn to swim when they are younger, it is unlikely they will start swimming when they are older. Jane explained that although swimming is part of the curriculum and children should leave key stage two being able to swim 25 meters, 47 per cent of children from the least affluent families leave primary school unable to. Jane told the Committee that Swim England know access to facilities and finance are barriers to participation, but Swim England are committed to better understanding the barriers of people from ethnic minorities. She told the Committee Swim England are working with their partners and holding focus groups to identify the barriers and remove them.

Natalie Justice-Dearn from Rounders England told the Committee that rounders is very much a recreational sport. Natalie noted that Rounders England does have a pathway and an England team, but that is through self-funding by athletes. She noted that most people who have been through the British education system have played rounders. Natalie told the Committee that there has been change in the last 20 years for NGBs to concentrate on keeping people active. She said that funding is typically short lived over 2–3 years, whereas behaviour change from inactive to active is a longer-term goal. She told the Committee that long-term behaviour change requires NGBs to be key players alongside the health and education departments and other organisations. Natalie also said it is also about taking time to get to know communities and to think about place-based projects. She noted that collaboration between NGBs is positive in terms of sports working together to encourage talent and support participation across sports.

Adrian Christy, former CEO of Badminton England, told the Committee that badminton is a well-funded participation sport and amongst the top 5 or 6 most

participated in sports in the country. He noted that Badminton England has had a difficult time with funding after the Rio Olympics but has since had funding reinstated for their world class programme. Adrian suggested that NGBs had been slow to catch up to the digital age but are now catching up fast. He told the Committee there are a variety of examples across NGBs where the traditional rules of their sports have been adapted to attract more participants and have been able to retain them. He also noted that there are about a quarter of a million people who volunteer in this country across several sports who enable participation.

Breakout group two

Jon Cockcroft of Bowls England told the Committee that bowls is in a state of steady decline due to an ageing membership and failure to modernise to meet emerging demands on how people like to exercise. He said the priority is to preserve the sport, look after existing members and stem the decline. On reaching out to a wider audience he told the Committee about the Big Bowls Weekend which targets younger people and those new to bowls. He said that Bowls England would be interested in doing more events like that. He also noted that given the average age of a bowls players is 65–70 and that by 2030 there will be 20 million people in England over the age of 60, more resources should be directed towards keeping older people active. Jon said that there are a lot of bowls players who, when younger, were playing much more active sports but turned to bowls after they turned 40 or 50. He noted that transitioning to different activities is part of the lifelong journey through sport and that there are opportunities for governing bodies to collaborate more to support this.

Nick Pink from England Hockey noted that since the women’s hockey medal successes in the 2012 and 2016 Olympic Games there has been a steady interest in playing hockey but, like bowls, a lot of their focus has been around retention of players. He noted that England Hockey is targeting new audiences, particularly people from wider socio-economic groups and has made diversity and inclusion a key focus for the next 4–5 years. He told the Committee that work around diversity and inclusion can help challenge perceptions that the sport is elitist and highlighted upcoming initiatives to encourage community participation, particularly in Birmingham ahead of the 2022 Commonwealth Games. Nick noted that this work will result in greater diversity in talent pathways and ultimately into the national team.

Joanna Coates, former CEO of UK Athletics, agreed that governing bodies have a responsibility to support sport journeys and to help young people transition into clubs and find the activity that is right for them. She noted that governing bodies are well placed to create new products in their sport that can appeal to new people and drive participation.

Mark Winder from Goalball UK told the Committee that young people who are visually impaired often have a poor experience of PE and that many do not get to join in PE at all, or do not have access to specialist equipment that could help them to take part, such as audible balls. He noted that Goalball UK is often attracting people who have previously been inactive and that a key element of Goalball’s success has been its ability to create a peer network for people around the country. Mark called the closure of blind schools a case of “exclusion through inclusion” because often it has meant that a visually impaired person goes from a blind school, where they might be excluded from society, into mainstream education where they may have to be taxied to and from the school which is often further away while also becoming separated from friends. He noted that this isolation can continue

into adulthood and that part of what Goalball does is provide a new opportunity for blind and visually impaired people.

Tim Garfield cautioned against looking at governing bodies as if they are a homogenous group. He suggested a greater focus on the needs of end users. He noted that affordable sports that are accessible in inner city and deprived areas are likely to be very different to those available in, for example, market towns where asset-owning clubs in sports like football, cricket, rugby union and tennis can offer participation opportunities at marginal extra cost. He also noted that without governing bodies organised sport evaporates as they facilitate the structures needed for sustainable leagues and competition, coaching and officiating. He said the benefits of getting children and young people into organised sport to aid their personal development in so many ways far outweighs the costs involved. He added that NGBs are crucial to providing pathways for young people to progress as players, coaches, leaders, and volunteers.

Joanna Coates responded that the approach to retaining people may depend on where a person is in the development pathway. She noted that there is quite a bit of movement between sports for talented sportspeople and this is encouraged. She also noted that if someone is in a talent pathway and it looks like they will not reach their goal in that sport they should be signposted elsewhere and supported to transition to another sport. However, she noted at the grassroots level NGBs rely on participation rates and membership fees which creates an incentive to retain people in their sport.

Jon Cockcroft said that Bowls England has a culture of collaboration with other sports but agreed that the funding structure that distributes finite money between governing bodies creates intrinsic competition. He suggested that it would be preferable to work together to attract inactive people. He told the Committee that it is imperative that sport be part of the solution to addressing public health and tackling the associated costs of being inactive.

Prevalence of discrimination at the grassroots level and NGB actions to tackle abuse

Breakout group one

Jane Nickerson told the Committee that there is not a systemic issue with racism in swimming, either at the top end of the sport or at the grassroots level, although there is an issue with inclusivity, particularly regarding participants from ethnically diverse communities.

Jane noted barriers for underrepresented ethnic minority groups including not seeing someone who looks like you, not having the right method of getting to the pool, or cultural barriers such as not feeling comfortable in the clothes you would normally see people wearing when swimming. Jane suggested these issues need to be tackled to make swimming more inclusive and accessible. She told of the Committee these are the things Swim England are learning about and dealing with.

Ralph Rimmer of the RLF explained rugby league is not free of racism. He told the Committee that the Black Lives Matter movement accelerated the work the RFL were doing on this issue. He informed the Committee about the focus groups the RFL held with their professional players and asked them about their experiences of racism throughout their careers and how they viewed the situation now. He said they shared “horrific” stories and that it was a humbling process. This work prompted the RFL’s Tackle It campaign which includes all protected

characteristics. The RFL also established a diversity and inclusion board which maps out the actions they can take across their activity offers, and this will be audited quarterly. Ralph said racism is something to be aware of at all levels of the sport. He told the Committee that the important thing is to identify the barriers to make the sport as accessible as possible.

Adrian Christy told the Committee that he would not say that badminton does not have racism, but it is not evident to him that it does. He said Badminton England was not complacent in anyway regarding racism and noted that equality is an ongoing issue in badminton.

Natalie Justice-Dearn told the Committee that rounders is very accessible and inclusive, and Rounders England intends to build on that. She said that rounders characteristics of being cheap and not requiring a sports kit makes it more accessible. Natalie acknowledged that this does not mean that it is diverse or that everyone is playing that wants to. She highlighted the importance of looking through the lens of the communities NGBs are trying to reach. She told the Committee that Rounders England have carried out targeted work to get wider representation across their sport.

Martyn Allison said the debate on how to remove racism from sport has been ongoing for many years. Martyn told the Committee about the *Sport for All* policy introduced 40 years ago to tackle inclusion, but he felt this has not worked. He told the Committee about his paper, *40 years of failure: can sport and leisure bridge the empathy gap?* and believes that racism is the extreme end of an empathy gap.⁶⁴¹ He said he suspects that “very few organisations could honestly say there is no racism somewhere in their organisation”.

Ralph Rimmer disagreed with Martyn and explained that the communities NGBs are currently trying to reach are harder to reach than those 40 years ago and the world is very different today. He said that problems existed then, but they have become more sophisticated and complex. He told the Committee that the RFL carried out a report called the *Rugby League Dividend* which reviewed the social impact of the sport, how they reach those people and what the sport gives to underrepresented communities.⁶⁴²

Breakout group two

Joanna Coates told the Committee she was aware of racism in athletics and UK Athletics were seeking to address it. UK Athletics ran a ‘let’s talk about race’ initiative to open the discussion of race and racism in the athletics, and this had been a positive experience. She supported more diversity on boards, committees and working groups and suggested that NGBs need to be looking at what is happening at region and county level.

Nick Pink agreed about the need to pay attention to what is happening at the county level, and told the Committee that England Hockey is developing a plan for a diversity and inclusion working group and looking into how effective the grievance procedures is at handling complaints of behavioural issues. He said it is incumbent on NGBs to make sure that the system works at every level and that people feel supported.

641 Martyn Allison, ‘40 years of failure: can sport and leisure bridge the empathy gap?’, *The Leisure Review* (September 2018): http://www.theleisurereview.co.uk/articles18/allison_empathy.html

642 Rugby Football League and Manchester Metropolitan University, *The Rugby League Dividend* (July 2019): http://secure.rugby-league.com/ign_docs/Economic%20and%20Social%20Impact%20Report%20v2%20OUTPUT.pdf [accessed 18 November 2021]

Tim Garfield noted that racism and other ‘ism’s’ are endemic in society so it should not be a surprise that that it is also present in sport. He suggested that sport has massive potential to be a vehicle for tackling racism citing sports support to the Black Lives Matter movement as an example of how sport can respond and widen the debate.

Joanna Coates told the Committee that tackling racism and other forms of abuse also means working at regional and county level and working with volunteers to help them. She noted that volunteers tend to be white and middle-class and suggested that incentives and different mechanisms are needed to attract those who cannot afford to give up their time for free. Nick Pink suggested that if you get the structure and governance right you can do a lot to tackle racism and other forms of abuse.

Mark Winder noted that Goalball focuses on developing talent from within the sport for future leadership, including people who are visually impaired. He said that being a relatively new sport, Goalball has been able to develop the sport in a way that is fit and proper for society today.

Jon Cockcroft noted that improving diversity is a significant challenge for bowls. He also noted that, for disabled people, there are barriers such as the cost of specialist wheelchairs that can go on the green.

Balance between development pathways and medal success, and increasing grassroots participation

Breakout group one

Ralph Rimmer noted that the RFL receives government support to develop grassroots sport. He told the Committee the RFL engages with people at a level of the sport that suits them, and every new format of the sport helps them reach new audiences. Ralph added that the RFL have a Whole Game Board, which has representatives from all parts of the sport and aims to develop sympathetic pathways so all participants can reach the level they want to, including up to the elite level. He highlighted that this is not an easy equation and it hinges upon the quality of pathways that a sport can offer and how it can reach new participants. Ralph said the RFL is making good progress at a grassroots level with the youngest age groups and with its social offer.

Jane Nickerson told the Committee there is significant grassroots participation in aquatics, and around 300 participants are on the elite level talent pathways. She said that it is about providing opportunities so “some will achieve ‘greatness’ and others will achieve their greatness by having fun and enjoying activity”.

Adrian Christy told the Committee that medal success does not happen without grassroots participation. He noted that the more people participating in sport, the greater the chances of developing young athletes and producing medallists. He said that “by delivering medallists it becomes a virtuous circle as more people talk about the sport, more people become engaged with your sport and more people want to try your sport”. Adrian told the Committee that following the 2016 Rio Olympics, in London alone there was a 245 per cent increase in the number of people that played badminton. He said that Badminton England has 25 players on their world class programme and 1 million people play badminton regularly. He said he did not “think it is a case of either or, one absolutely needs the other to thrive”.

Role of top athletes as influencers to boost grassroots participation

Breakout group one

Adrian Christy told the Committee that he thought elite athletes can have an impact, but Badminton England has some way to go in utilising them. He said their top athletes do large amounts of work in local communities, schools and sports centres, helping to reward and thank volunteers and coaches. Adrian thinks this role is part of the responsibility of being an athlete. He told the Committee that Badminton England's athletes are travelling for 40 weeks of the year and therefore is it a matter of resources to utilise elite athletes to boost participation.

Ralph Rimmer noted that the RFL has an ambassadors programme which applies to their men's, women's, wheelchair and physical disability rugby league. The ambassadors are well known names in the sport, and athletes receive media training to support them. Ralph said the goal was to engage new audiences and show the values of the sport.

Jane Nickerson told the Committee that elite athletes can make a difference when used in the right way, but boosting grassroots participation is a blend of different approaches. Jane shared several examples of how different influencers can affect different age groups:

- When Adam Peaty talked about how scared he was to learn to swim, this resonated with younger children wanting to learn to swim;
- When Rebecca Adlington's mum showed Rebecca's first swimming badges, that resonated with mums; and
- For older people elite athletes were not what inspired them to get back into the pool, but instead images of ordinary people who looked like them.

Natalie Justice-Dearn told the Committee the use of elite athletes works and it is key to choose the right athletes. She noted it is important to give athletes the right support and training. She highlighted that elite athletes are away training, so it goes beyond physical appearances to digital platforms. Natalie told the Committee that the Lionesses and the Youth Sport Trust do this successfully.

Breakout group 2

Nick Pink of England Hockey noted that elite athletes can make great role models and advocates for sport and they also have the ability to reach a large audience on wider social issues.

Mark Winder noted that in Goalball the higher performers are very accessible as role models. He noted that the elite players celebrate disability and show others what can be achieved for people who are blind or visually impaired.

Tim Garfield noted that things have changed over the last 10 years and it is right that much more attention is given to developing athletes in the round and not only their sport performance, and that athletes themselves are becoming much more aware of their wider social responsibilities.

Joanna Coates, former CEO of UK Athletics, told the Committee that all NGBs are passionate about getting the maximum number of people involved in sport and that there is increasing recognition that having only a certain demographic running sport is not the best way to achieve that. Nick Pink added that members, volunteers and others are demanding change and that NGBs need to be responsive.

He also noted that this shift is evidence in the new strategies published by Sports England and UK Sport.

Plenary discussion

Following the breakout group discussions, a plenary discussion with all participants took place covering topics including collaboration between NGBs and schools, the sport and recreation landscape, funding and support available to NGBs, and duty of care and safeguarding.

Collaboration between schools and NGBs

Ralf Rimmer of the RFL explained that he had put forward the case for an extension of the school day in a meeting with Government Ministers, with this additional time dedicated to school sport. Ralf Rimmer said that this would provide a further opportunity for school pupils to utilise school sports facilities and increase the chances of embedding habits around physical activity.

Adrian Christy, former CEO of Badminton England, said that “we are reaping what we are sowing” with children leaving school unable to swim or properly coordinate themselves, leading to disengagement with sport and physical activity in adulthood. Joanna Coates, former CEO of UK Athletics, said that increasing physical activity rates in schools is critical to the success of any national sport policy framework. She also said that this includes ensuring that young people have a positive experience in school sport and they have opportunities to take part in various sports within the school setting, avoiding sport opportunities becoming exclusive to those children who can rely on parents or guardians to facilitate sport opportunities outside of school.

Nick Pink of England Hockey noted that “a clear, coherent national plan for school sport is absolutely fundamental”. He told the Committee that England Hockey “knew how to interact” with primary and secondary schools through the School Sport Partnership network in the early 2000s but it had become more difficult for NGBs to forge links with schools since the decline of School Sport Partnerships since 2011. Nick said there is an opportunity in the post-COVID recovery to galvanise physical activity through a national plan for sport and recreation underpinned by a school sports strategy which should include better training for primary school teachers to deliver sport and recreation lessons and physical literacy, and making PE a core subject. The strategy could also embed opportunities for NGBs to work with schools to provide talent pathways for children.

Role of local authorities

Martyn Allison noted that the provision of public facilities had become increasingly commercialised, particularly over the last decade, and this has had the effect of “increasing efficiency but squeezing some people out” with the most deprived unable to afford the use of public facilities. Martyn Allison noted that if local government is to play a successful role in health improvement and tackle health inequalities, this issue will need to be addressed. Adrian Christy noted the decline in affordable opportunities for young people to discover sport due to the decline in public leisure facilities. Adrian Christy added that access to “good facilities, good coaches, great volunteers, and a healthy sustainable club network” is required for a successful national plan for sport.

Martyn Allison said that making leisure statutory would “not make a great deal of difference” and spending priorities remain a political choice for local authorities.

Martyn Allison said that if the sport and recreation sector is to promote health, national government need to ensure that physical activity can be embedded within integrated care systems at the local level and there should be new partnerships around health and wellbeing at a local level. Martyn Allison added that these are policy areas where many councils will want to invest because health outcomes remain a priority for communities and local government but the sector will need to consider how it can better tackle health inequalities amongst the most deprived communities which the sector is not currently reaching.

Role of sport in promoting healthy lifestyles

Tim Garfield highlighted the importance of understanding the distinction between physical activity and sport in public policy, noting that less is spent on sport each year from central government than by the NHS in one day. Tim Garfield said that as a result, sport currently plays an understated role in tackling broader health inequalities. Tim Garfield also argued that money is being re-directed away from mainstream sport “to shore up” the lack of money invested in encouraging physical activity as a preventative measure within the overall healthcare system. Tim Garfield further argued that it does not make economic sense to redirect and refocus sport investment towards health outcomes whilst weakening the role of sport in facilitating regular and sustained physical activity levels. Tim argued that the current approach increases the risk of higher levels of inactivity within the overall population given the evidence of serious decline of physical education and sport within schools.

Jane Nickerson of Swim England stated that swimming saves the NHS £357 million each year across six health conditions. She suggested that there should be established mechanisms within the health sector to refer people to use swimming pools routinely to support health conditions. Jane Nickerson noted that this requires work across various departments including DHSC and DfE, and the maintenance of existing swimming facilities.

Central and Sport England funding for NGBs

Natalie Justice-Dearn of Rounders England suggested better collaboration across different sectors, including the health sector and education sector, so that the sectors are not in competition with one another for funding whilst attempting to achieve the same outcomes. This could lead to better delivery of sport and recreation opportunities and increase physical activity rates.

Nick Pink of England Hockey noted that there is significant competition between NGBs to get funding. He suggested that measures including social impact, retention and economic impact could be used to allocate funding across sports as opposed to the current key consideration of participation rates. He also suggested other considerations alongside participation rates for the allocation of funding, including the demographics of those taking part in particular sports and community impact.

Jon Cockcroft questioned whether funding is directed to sports which are attractive and easily accessible to the public. He also questioned why sports that generate significant commercial revenues and could potentially be self-sufficient receive public funding. Joanna Coates cautioned that this could lead to sports without leagues to increase their membership fees, making some sports more financially exclusive.

Adrian Christy noted that the sector has been “bounced between different short-term initiatives” that have destabilised the way sports are funded. However, he noted that “we are seeing a much better and much fairer system” in regard to the UK Sport strategy, with more sports and athletes receiving more funding. Adrian also noted that some of that funding is filtering down to the grassroots.

Governance and accountability of NGBs

Adrian Christy said that the introduction of the *Code for Sports Governance* in 2016 had been “hugely valuable to modernizing the governance of governing bodies”. Adrian Christy noted that Badminton England have changed their articles of governance twice to “reflect the journey that we [Badminton England] have been on” in recent years. However, Adrian warned against complacency and noted that there are still sports that could do more to reflect the diversity of those who play their sports on senior boards and in senior management teams.

Ralf Rimmer similarly noted that the sector had “moved on a great deal” since the introduction of the *Code for Sports Governance*. He noted that the RFL is ensuring that it is pushing for standards set by the 2016 Code to be adopted across all levels of the sport. In regard to its 36 professional clubs, Ralf said that the RFL can use its distribution of its funding so that if some clubs are not prepared to implement standards established by the RFL and the *Code for Sports Governance*, it could withhold funding to those clubs.

Jane Nickerson said the *Code for Sports Governance* was “incredibly helpful” and Swim England used the Code as an opportunity to make changes within the organisation including increasing diversity of its board. Jane said that if an NGB is not working towards achieving standards set out in the Code then they should be financially penalised. However, Jane Nickerson said that if an NGB is making demonstrable efforts in attempting to meet the standards of the Code, then it may require further support or guidance rather than financial sanctions.

Mark Winder of Goalball UK noted that it took “an awful lot of work with a small team” for Goalball UK to meet the standards set out in the *Code for Sports Governance*. Mark suggested that diversity targets on boards should include those from lower socio-economic backgrounds and those with disabilities.

Duty of care and safeguarding

Joanna Coates noted that because of increasing diversity resulting from the targets set by the *Code for Sports Governance* and improving governance standards, athletes are more willing to come forward to raise duty of care and safeguarding issues than in the past. She added that it may be positive sign that more cases are emerging and this may reflect the increased willingness and confidence of athletes to raise concerns.

Similarly, Jane Nickerson told the Committee that she felt athletes are more confident in coming forward to report bullying and safeguarding issues today as established procedures are in place. She said these processes demonstrate that Swim England “will listen and try and do something about it”. Natalie Justice-Dearn also said that having procedures and processes in place will provide athletes confidence that they will be listened to.

Jane Nickerson noted that there are cases that do not meet the threshold for a full internal investigation or do not fit within the internal complaints system but remain of concern. She provided the example of what some athletes may see as

“tough coaching” but others see as bullying and noted that these cases are more difficult to adjudicate. Jane Nickerson said centralised support including resources would be helpful in dealing with such cases.

Nick Pink and Ralf Rimmer suggested that the distinction between safeguarding children and vulnerable adults should be made clearer as it requires different skillsets within NGBs to uphold safeguarding standards for these groups.

Adrian Christy argued that currently the sector cares “more about what someone sticks in their arm than we do about someone protecting a child” and described safeguarding mechanisms across the sector as “a mess”, adding that the sector should be “ashamed”. Adrian Christy said that he believed there should be a UKAD-style central body for safeguarding which can ensure that the sector implements consistent standards and can report safeguarding incidents which are then properly investigated by an independent body. Adrian Christy suggested that NGBs should report known safeguarding issues to this body in the same way that doping allegations currently are to UKAD.

Joanna Coates suggested that there should be an independent body that investigates reports relating to duty of care and safeguarding, and this body should investigate reports across all ages. She said that NGBs have a role to play and an independent body could triage cases, with cases that do not meet a certain threshold referred back to the NGBs for investigation whilst the most serious cases are investigated by the independent body. Joanna Coates also recommended an independent hotline which could be used by athletes and participants to report concerns.

Nick Pink noted that there have been cases of safeguarding incidents involving individuals who had positions of responsibility across a number of sports, and suggested that better sharing of information and reporting across the sector could flag those individuals to stop them obtaining opportunities to abuse participants in other sports. Adrian Christy similarly noted that there is no system in place that allows the sector to flag an individual who is known to have presented a safeguarding risk in other sports.

Resourcing in relation to safeguarding

Joanna Coates highlighted that some NGBs are not sufficiently resourced to deal with all safeguarding complaints and noted high legal costs that NGBs can face in relation to complaints. Joanna Coates suggested that cases which may end up in the courts should be investigated by the proposed independent body.

Nick Pink noted that resourcing duty of care and safeguarding within NGBs can be challenging as they are not granted public funding for this purpose and therefore NGBs have to find funding through membership fees and commercial activity. He recommended that central funding be made available to NGBs for safeguarding purposes.

Ralf Rimmer of the RFL, Natalie Justice-Dearn of Rounders England and Adrian Christy of Badminton England also noted the lack of resources some NGBs have to uphold safeguarding standards and consistently deal with incidents. Natalie Justice-Dearn said that additional resources could be made available to raise awareness of good practice at club level and to raise standards of coaching and volunteering. Natalie added that support and guidance could be provided by an independent body that was responsible for upholding safeguarding standards.

APPENDIX 5: ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AoC	Association of Colleges
APPG	All-Party Parliamentary Group
BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
BASES	British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIMSPA	Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity
Code	Code for Sports Governance
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CPSU	NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit
CWIS	Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy
DCMS	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DfE	Department for Education
DfT	Department for Transport
DHSC	Department of Health and Social Care
DIAP	Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan
DLUHC	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EFL	English Football League
FA	Football Association
GP	General Practitioner
HMPPS	Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LGA	Local Government Association
LGBT+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
LTA	Lawn Tennis Association
MOReS	The Centre for Movement and Occupational Rehabilitation Sciences
NFU	National Farmers Union
NGB	National Governing Body
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
PE	Physical Education
PESP	PE and Sport Premium
PHE	Public Health England
PLPS	Physical Literacy Programme for Schools

RFL	Rugby Football League
RFU	Rugby Football Union
SEND	Special Education Needs and Disabilities
SSP	School Sport Partnership