

Sport Wales response to Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee inquiry into “Participation levels in sport in Wales”

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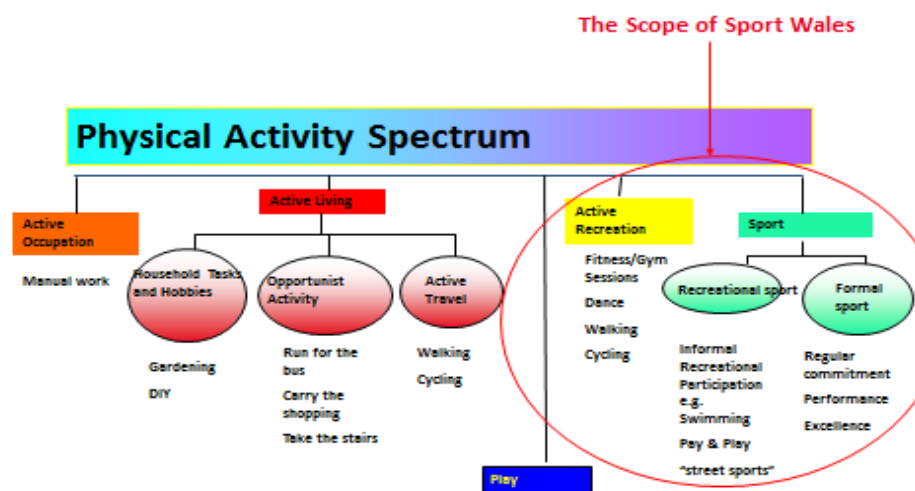
Contents

1	Overview	3
2	The extent to which the Welsh Government and Sport Wales are achieving the goals set out in the Programme for Government, the Creating an Active Wales action plan and the Vision for Sport in Wales with regard to participation levels in sport	5
3	The availability of datasets and statistics to measure participation levels in sport, particularly those disaggregated by equality strand and socio-economic groups	10
4	The opportunities and barriers to sports participation that exist for different groups of people, including by equality strand and socio-economic groups	13
5	What are the links between programmes to develop sport in Wales and other Welsh Government initiatives to increase physical activity?	24
6	The impact of the Olympic and Paralympic legacy, the Ryder Cup and other high profile Welsh sporting events and achievements on participation levels in Wales.	25
7	Conclusion	26
	Appendices	27

1.1 Overview

1.2 We welcome the opportunity to respond to this Committee inquiry. Sport Wales is the national organisation responsible for developing and promoting sport and physical recreation. Working with partner agencies, on a national and local level, we aim to increase the frequency of participation in sporting activity, as well as improving elite performance. We take a broad view of sport, from our traditional sports, such as swimming and hockey to newer activities such as zumba and dance. The figure below outlines the full Physical Activity Spectrum and the scope of Sport Wales:

Figure 1: Physical Activity Spectrum



3

1.3 We are also the main adviser on sporting matters to the Welsh Government and are responsible for distributing funds from the National Lottery to sport in Wales.

1.4 It has been a hugely successful twelve months for Welsh sport at the highest level, with promotion, medals and championships being won by a range of athletes and teams. Every single one of those sportswomen and men started at the grassroots, turning up at a club or activity and being nurtured to make the best of their talent. At Sport Wales we want everyone to have the opportunity to participate in sport and make the most of their talent. For some, this will lead them to elite success and for others it will encourage a healthier lifestyle.

1.5 Capturing the inspiration of elite Welsh sport and turning it into increased grassroots participation does not just happen, it takes dedication and planning from a range of partners within Wales. Despite the current economic climate, we are seeing progress on encouraging more people, particularly children, to participate in sport. However in order to achieve greater outcomes we need to be looking at how we offer and deliver sport to ensure we are not only maximising our investments, but also reaching and engaging the widest possible audience.

1.6 From our perspective there are three key areas that there is a need to focus on in order to secure our aspirations and even greater outcomes:

- Experience of sport in the school environment;
- Greater collaboration across partners within the sport sector;
- Fundamentally shifting the Welsh population's attitude and behaviour towards sport in order to embed participation.

1.7 Whilst there are specific challenges in engaging some of the groups identified in the Committee's terms of reference, these three points provide the basic foundations for developing skills, opportunities and confidence to participate in sport. We recognise that these are not just significant challenges for us, but for the sector as a whole. We are proactively addressing these issues with our partners and believe we can create a Wales where participation in sport is central to how we view ourselves as a nation.

2. **The extent to which the Welsh Government and Sport Wales are achieving the goals set out in the Programme for Government, the Creating an Active Wales action plan and the Vision for Sport in Wales with regard to participation levels in sport**

2.1 Sport Wales is fully signed up to the goals of the *Creating An Active Wales*, particularly the overall vision of:

“An active, healthy and inclusive Wales, where sport, physical activity and active recreation provide a common platform for participation, fun and achievement, which binds communities and the nation and where the outstanding environment of Wales is used sustainably to enhance confidence in ourselves.”¹

2.2 Obviously *Creating An Active Wales* covers a much broader range of activity than simply sport, for example active travel and opportunities for informal play. In recognition of this, in 2010, following a consultation with the sport sector, we launched *A Vision for Sport in Wales*². The *Vision* outlined the two aspirations that the sector has signed up to:

- Getting every child hooked on sport for life
- Wales being a nation of champions

2.3 These reflect our two remits to increase participation and improve performance in Welsh sport. The document itself not only identifies the key areas for focus in order to deliver on these aspirations, but also looks to change the way in which sport is delivered in Wales. The five priority areas for attention identified in the *Vision* are:

- **Sporting Innovation:** Creating a sport sector that embraces collaboration, encouraging new ways of delivering opportunities to increase participation and improve elite performance;
- **Skills for a Life in Sport:** Every child and young person is provided with the skills and confidence to be physically literate through high quality, engaging sporting experiences;
- **Sporting Communities:** We have communities with sport at the heart of them, offering joined up opportunities for every child and young person to undertake at least five hours of safe, high quality sport every week and sustaining their engagement throughout their adult life;
- **Sporting Excellence:** We are a nation that excels in nurturing sporting talent and delivers on-going success on the international stage;
- **Growing a Skilled and Passionate Workforce:** All those involved in sport, whether in a professional or voluntary capacity, are supported to pass on their skills and passion for sport to the people of Wales.

¹ Creating An Active Wales, Welsh Government, 2009

<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/phhs/publications/activewales/100121activewalesen.pdf>

² *A Vision for Sport in Wales*, Sport Wales, 2010

http://www.sportwales.org.uk/media/506916/sport_wales_english_vision_doc_reprint_all_v3.pdf

2.4 The *Vision* is clear that to achieve a step change in delivery we have to change not only what we do. In short, it requires all of us to commit to becoming high performing organisations. The Vision commits us to:

- Apply a culture of ‘high challenge, high support’ to our work with partners; moving beyond traditional liaison activity, to a relationship where we will facilitate partners to set ‘unreasonable ambitions’;
- Proactively work with those sports that can make the biggest difference; geared towards a step change from providing opportunities to not the 100s, but the 1000s, and align our investments accordingly - based on evidence and on achieving big outcomes - to ensure we maximise impact;
- Take a more innovative approach to delivery. This will involve placing greater emphasis on the need to work with those that can deliver most effectively, from the wider public, private and voluntary sectors;
- Focus on enabling a significant step change in the scale of community based activity so that anyone can take part in a range of sports locally;
- Build on our renewed commitment to growing the volunteer base through proactively addressing challenges of volunteer recruitment, training, deployment and retention. The wider sport sector too is on the path to reviewing its approach to delivery, one that represents a growing commitment to being high performing and recognising the importance of collaborating with others.

6

2.5 This new culture is about establishing a step change in the leadership of the sport sector. We believe five fundamental factors define high performing organisations. They are:

- Setting unreasonable ambitions;
- Developing strategies, informed by performance insights, to deliver the vision;
- Distributed leadership, where there are clear roles and responsibilities set out for all involved in delivering the vision, and people are encouraged to be accountable for their work;
- Providing high quality feedback to enable us to continually improve;
- Working as one.

2.6 Our Corporate and Business Plans over the next few years have the above principles as a central core. If we and our partners can embrace this culture then significant increases in sports participation are achievable. We want to get away from producing more of the same and expecting different results, our leadership of the sector is based on the desire to bring about this step change with our partners.

2.7 We have been pleased that the sector as a whole has welcomed the *Vision* document and utilised it as a guide for planning, to ensure that all aspects of a sporting community are captured. We have also engaged our partners in developing visions for their sport and communities, encouraging them that these should not only address their current provision and membership, but should address the community as a whole and how they can get everyone participating. We have been pleased with the progress a number of our partners have made in the area.

2.8 In order to deliver on the *Vision*, we have developed a series of underpinning strategies that broadly relate to the priority areas. These are:

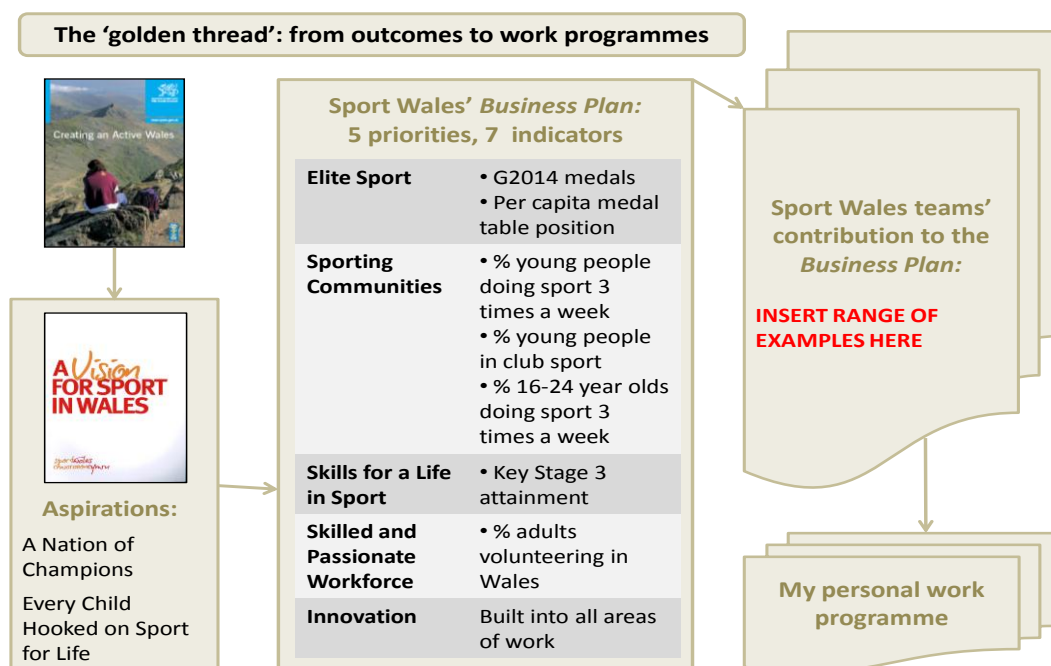
- Elite Sport Strategy 2010-16 (http://www.sportwales.org.uk/media/514091/sw-elitestrategy_eng.pdf)
- Coaching and Volunteering Strategy 2010-16 (http://www.sportwales.org.uk/media/512875/swc_coachingstrat_eng.pdf)
- Community Sport Strategy (http://www.sportwales.org.uk/media/1018674/community_sport_strategy_eng_.pdf)
- Child Poverty Strategy 2012-15 (http://www.sportwales.org.uk/media/810130/child_poverty_strategy_english_.pdf)

2.9 None of these strategies should be considered in isolation from the others, as together they reinforce the direction of travel and contribute to the sporting journey we want the people of Wales to experience. Whether it is getting 10% of the Welsh adult population volunteering or creating a better sporting experience at schools for children and young people in Wales, these strategies provide the detail for delivering on the *Vision*.

2.10 Following the development of the *Vision* we have spent time looking at performance management, both within Sport Wales and of our partners. As part of this we have led the sector in developing a Results Based Accountability (RBA) approach. This marks a fundamental shift from solely looking at outputs, e.g. number of sessions delivered, to now being more focussed on the big deliverable outcomes e.g. how frequently are young people active (measured by surveys for the whole population). As we ourselves have developed this RBA process we have supported our partners to do as well, so that we can all be clear on the outcomes we are aiming for and the most effective way of delivering them.

2.11 In adopting this approach we have identified a series of high level indicators for Sport Wales, which will identify how well we are delivering sport in Wales. The figure below outlines these indicators and how they fit into the delivery of the *Vision*:

Figure 2: Sport Wales: How we work



We have included the two scorecards that demonstrate progress in Appendix 1.

8

2.12 To achieve these outcomes we need to know what our current performance is and where we want to get to for each priority. To achieve this, we utilise our performance measures or outputs (see Appendix 2) which we use 'in year' to chart trends. These measures are subject to constant review as to whether they are the most efficient trackers of the progress we want to see. Positive examples of these outputs are:

- Coaching data for 2011-12 shows an increase of 9% in active coaches over the past 12 months. (3 year trend is up 37% for all sports; up 49% for the 10 higher focus sports);
- Very positive increases in NGB membership have been reported as a result of the post London 2012 Games. However the five year trend is also very positive (pre-dates 2012 Games);
- The long term trend in after school participation is also positive (Dragon Sport and 5x60 outputs³);
- "Learn to swim" rates have improved over the last three years.

³ For more information on trends see: <http://www.sportwales.org.uk/community-sport/education/ayp-data-reports.aspx>

- 2.13 We have recently created a much clearer set of investment principles for our partners as well, accompanied by a self-assessment tool, developed with the sector, which will enable partners to look at their strengths and areas for development. We intend for this tool to be positive, rather than a way of “inspecting” or catching partners out. We believe that open and honest self-assessment is critical if we are going to see a genuine step change in the way sport is delivered in Wales. In the coming months we will be piloting the self-assessment tool with a range of partners to ensure that it is effective in driving change.
- 2.14 The aim of all of the work relating to the *Vision*, our strategies and the way we performance manage is to ensure greater forward planning and more accountability for delivery of sport in Wales. At the heart of this work is a commitment to collaboration, namely sharing outcomes, resources and what works. Where we have seen the greatest progress is often where partners have worked together on shared outcomes. At a time when public finances are tight, collaboration is critical. We want to make sure that we are investing in those partners that will help us deliver on our outcomes, at both an elite and grassroots level, as well as ensuring that any investment is maximised.

3. The availability of datasets and statistics to measure participation levels in sport, particularly those disaggregated by equality strand and socio-economic groups

3.1 At Sport Wales we run two major surveys every two years, our Active Adults Survey (sample size approximately 18-22,000) and our School Sport Survey (sample size approximately 40,000). These provide us with data on how well we are progressing in getting more people in Wales actively involved in sport, both as participants and volunteers.

3.2 Unfortunately the timing of this inquiry means that we are not able to provide the committee with the most up to date picture as both of our surveys are currently in the field, with a view to reporting the results this autumn. We will commit to write to the committee to draw your attention to the results of these surveys, which are particularly important as they will be the first indication of whether the Olympics and Paralympics have left a participation legacy in Wales.

3.3 Both surveys, providing the sample is large enough, can be broken down by equality strand. The only difference being the School Sport Survey does not collect information on sexual orientation, due to the age range of children that complete the survey. We have a socio-economic breakdown for the Active Adults Survey and the School Sport Survey uses percentage of pupils eligible for Free School Meals as a proxy measure.

3.4 Sport Wales is also a producer of Official Statistics. At a practical level this means we adhere to the UK Statistics Authority's *Code of Practice*; a set of principles and protocols that ensure the statistics are fit for purpose, methodologically sound and transparently produced. An important aspect of this, and in line with the Government's Open Data initiative, is that we make sure that our data is accessible via our website, easy to find and understand.

3.5 Our last School Sport Survey in 2011 was completed by around 40,000 children and young people in Wales. This made it the largest survey of children and young people in Wales. The headline results of the survey were:

- **CURRICULAR PARTICIPATION:** Physical Education is part of the National Curriculum from Key Stages 1 to 4. 98% of primary school pupils and 97% of secondary school pupils said they took part in curricular Physical Education (PE).
- **EXTRACURRICULAR PARTICIPATION:** Extracurricular participation levels for primary school pupils are identical to levels recorded in the 2009 survey - 78% overall took part in extracurricular sport in the previous year. In secondary schools, the overall level of extracurricular participation has dropped compared with previous survey findings, although over two thirds (65%) of pupils took part in the previous year. Older pupils in Years 9 and 10 are less likely to take part.
- **CLUB PARTICIPATION:** Club participation levels for primary school pupils are at the highest recorded level since 2000, with 85% of pupils taking part in sport with a club during the previous year. For secondary school pupils, levels of club participation have dropped, although club participation is slightly higher than extracurricular participation –

68% of pupils took part in sport with a club during the previous year. Participation levels are lower among older pupils.

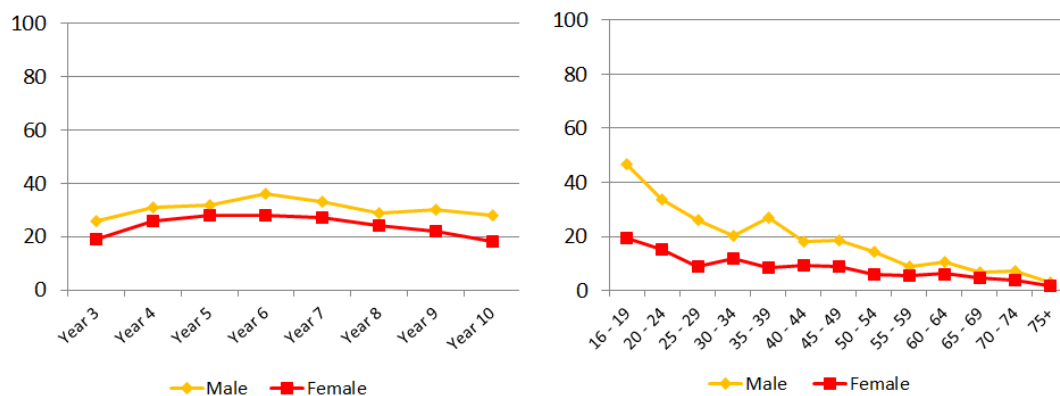
- **FREQUENCY OF PARTICIPATION:** For the first time, the 2011 survey has captured a detailed picture of frequency of participation, allowing us to explore the number of occasions per week pupils take part in organised sport and recreation, outside of the curriculum. Just over a quarter of pupils (26% of secondary pupils and 28% of primary pupils) take part in organised activity (other than in curriculum time) on three or more occasions per week.
- **GENDER DIFFERENCES:** There is virtually no gender gap in extracurricular or club sport participation levels among primary school pupils. At secondary school, gender differences become more noticeable, and increase as pupils get older. Whilst there isn't a large difference in terms of overall participation levels, the main difference is in the frequency of female participation in organised sport. Relatively equal numbers of boys and girls take part in organised activity at least once a week outside of curricular time, but girls are less likely to take part three or more times a week. This pattern is the same for every year group.
- **SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS AND PARTICIPATION:** 'Receipt of a free school meal' is used as a proxy measure to look at levels of deprivation of children and young people in Wales. Each school in the survey is placed into a Free School Meal (FSM) quartile – based on the percentage of pupils at that school in receipt of a free school meal. Pupils in schools with a higher percentage of FSM take up are less likely to be frequent participants, they are less likely to participate in regular sport at a club, and they are less likely to visit a leisure centre.⁴

- 3.6 The trends in adult participation have remained steady over the past 25 years, with between 35% and 40% of adults aged 15 and above taking part in sport (excluding billiards, snooker and walking) at least once a month. Including walking, 56% of adults participated at least once in the previous four weeks. Throughout this period, men have been more likely to participate than women, and remain significantly more likely than women to take part in traditional, formal club sport. Men and women are equally likely, however, to visit leisure and fitness centres, an indication of the activities offered by different types of clubs and centres.
- 3.7 Adults in households of 'higher social grade' are also more likely to participate. Sports participation is also linked to age, with younger adults more likely to play sport than older adults, as the graph below demonstrates:

⁴ School Sport Survey 2011: State of the Nation, Sport Wales, 2011
<http://www.sportwales.org.uk/media/958929/sss2011sotncy.pdf>

Figure 3: Hooked on sport

Hooked on Sport: Percentage participating in sport on average three or more times per week



Source: School Sports Survey 2011 and 2008-09 SCW Active Adults Survey

3.8 We have used our Active Adults data to produce a series of People Segmentation snapshots⁵, producing generic snapshots of different sections of society and their habits. We developed these in order to improve the way our partners focus on their target audiences. Where these have been used alongside partner information and intelligence we have seen some promising progress.

12

3.9 Alongside the data we manage through our surveys we have also made an investment into our Governing Bodies to encourage them to identify the data and evidence they hold and use it effectively to make decisions. We have provided funding for a series of shared research posts, in order to embed the use of evidence in the development of their sport. Whilst our surveys do provide a national picture, partners should also be identifying their own data sets, including equality breakdowns, so that they can be responding to the needs of their membership.

⁵ More information on people segmentation can be found here: <http://www.sportwales.org.uk/research-policy/tools-and-resources/people-segmentation.aspx>

4. The opportunities and barriers to sports participation that exist for different groups of people, including by equality strand and socio-economic groups

4.1 Before looking at specific barriers for different groups, there are three more general points that we would want to make around areas for continuing development. If we get these areas right, we believe that it could take participation and provision of sport in Wales to the next level.

4.2 The school experience

The first experience of sport is absolutely crucial for planting the seeds for a lifelong participation and schools are absolutely central to this. We believe that a good school is one that values sport as part of a rounded curriculum, rather than simply seeing it as an add on. We welcome the commitment in the Programme for Government to make physical literacy as important a skill as reading and writing. This is an important principle in ensuring young people leave school with a range of skills.

4.3 Our School Sport Survey in 2011 highlighted that at primary school there were many positives, with the primary school experience perceived as being inclusive, regardless of ability. Unfortunately among secondary school pupils the survey shows a decline with age in participation and enjoyment. This is particularly concerning as participants reported that their experience of PE and school sports clubs in secondary school had a strong influence on whether they continued taking part, with the early years at secondary school being a key point for some in terms of disengagement. In many cases the issues affecting participation in sport are the same regardless of gender, but the result is particularly marked amongst female pupils, highlighted in the 'Women and Girls' section below.

4.4 From the survey it is quite clear that a significant number of children and young people are being put off from participation in sport from their school experience. This then makes it highly unlikely that we will be successful in bringing them back to sport in their later life. We have to get the offer in and around school right in order to build a nation where every child is participating.

4.5 In creating this environment we need to be ensuring that we are providing children and young people with the skills to participate in sport. Just like reading and writing, learning and practising the basic skills will open up a world of opportunity for children. Previously the focus has probably been too much on undertaking an activity, rather than learning the skills to participate. If children do not feel confident in their skills then they are much less likely to participate in sport, both in school and in the community.

4.6 We started to change that with the launch of our Play to Learn pack, which complements the Foundation Phase, and have developed this further with the launch of Dragon Sport and Multi-Skills last year. We believe that this will create a generation of children with the competence, confidence and motivation to take part in sport, all of which meets the Programme for Government commitment to making physical literacy as important as reading and writing.

- 4.7 Further to getting the offer right, we have to make sure that the delivery of sport in school is inclusive. Sport in schools needs to cater for the widest range of skills and talents. Those that demonstrate potential need to be stretched and challenged appropriately in order to develop. Those pupils who are struggling should be supported to improve their skill levels and confidence to participate. All of this needs to be delivered by teachers who have the confidence and appropriate training to work with children with varying abilities. Head teachers also play a critical role in setting the right ethos for the school, one that values sport and sees that it has an important role to play in the overall educational offer. Where we have seen this commitment from the very top of the school, we have seen school sport flourish.
- 4.8 We are pleased that Ministers have established a task and finish group on physical activity and school sport, Chaired by Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson. We believe that this is a real opportunity to look at a unique Welsh approach to school sport and could be a significant point on the road to encouraging greater participation in sport. We would want to see the profile and quality of both PE and school sport being raised through the recommendations of the group, recognising the need to improve the training and support those professionals delivering PE and school sport.
- 4.9 We need to ensure that every child is encouraged and has a positive experience of sport in school if they are to develop a lifelong passion. If we get this right it will not only impact on participation rates, but would also make a significant contribution to creating a healthier Wales and helping with the fight against obesity.

4.10 **Collaboration across the sport sector**

The Vision for Sport in Wales and *Sport Wales' Community Sport Strategy* both place the principles of collaboration, or joint working, at their heart. We know that by working together we can achieve more than if we work in isolation. In the current economic climate there is an added urgency to ensuring that we are looking at ways in which we can maximise resources, both human and financial. We believe that collaboration should always be for a clear purpose, namely to improve outcomes for the end user, rather than just for the sake of it.

- 4.11 Understandably so far most of the debates around collaboration have been focussed around health, education and social care. At Sport Wales we have instigated a number of discussions with Welsh Government and particularly our local authority partners around the "Simpson agenda". We have also seen some progress in this area with the Chief Officers of Recreation and Leisure (CORL) agreeing outcome based indicators for their work and now a National Peer Group is being set up to add scrutiny to this work. In doing this CORL produced a National Outcomes (RBA) Report Card. These proposals were agreed by the Organisational Development Simpson Implementation Board (ODSI).
- 4.12 In addition to this, potential areas for collaboration have been developed especially within North Wales and Gwent CORL which has developed a regional RBA scorecard and will be focusing on four areas: swimming, physical literacy, workforce, and systems and data. Despite this, progress has probably been slower than we would have liked. Whilst leisure

services are not a priority area for collaboration in the local government sector, we often hear that these are the services under threat if the cuts become more severe. Some of our local authority partners have viewed this as an opportunity for doing things differently and working more collectively, but this is not common across Wales. We believe that by thinking and working collectively we could come up with some exciting new delivery models. To this end we have started to investigate potential alternative models of regional delivery to discuss with partners to see whether they would add value to the way in which sport is delivered in Wales. We also need to have an open and honest debate about the provision of facilities and how sport should be organised to deliver the maximum results. There can be no escaping that tough decisions will need to be made going forward, but these should be made utilising all the evidence available and looking at different delivery models.

4.13 In raising this it is important to note that it is not just our local authority partners we are encouraging to work together more, we make the same challenge to our governing bodies to work across sports and with local authorities. This becomes particularly important when we consider planning and use of facilities going forward. With resources being so tight, we need to make sure that future facilities are multi-purpose and usage is maximised. We are encouraged that some governing bodies have started working together on this issue and we have agreed in principle, depending on certain criteria being met, to an investment of up to £3,000,000 over 4 years towards a collaborative approach by Hockey Wales, the Football Association of Wales (FAW) and the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) to develop 3G pitches. This will also require working in partnership with local government.

15
4.14 We are also encouraging our governing bodies to take a more business-like approach to their development, so that they are leveraging private finance as well as support from Sport Wales. In the long term we would envisage this making the sports more sustainable. Collaboration should not be solely between the public and voluntary sectors though. The private sector has a degree of expertise and finance that can be used to support the development of sport in Wales.

4.15 Greater collaboration across the sport sector would be something we would want to see develop over the coming years.

4.16 **Creating behaviour change**

Increasingly we are seeing the need to shift the Welsh culture about participating in sport. We are known as a nation that really gets behind our athletes and teams, but that then does not translate into participation and volunteering. Sport is one of the defining characteristics of Welsh life, with most villages having some form of sport club at their heart. This means that we are not looking to sell the importance of sport to communities, but more the benefits of active participation.

4.17 We want to see a Wales where participating in sport, in its broadest sense, is instinctive. The sporting activity becomes the centre of the community, with all helping out and taking part. We know behaviour change is not easy. To suddenly expect a culture change in what has become people's sedentary behaviour will not happen overnight. In order to achieve behaviour change, sophisticated marketing and innovative programmes will be required.

Continuing to use our traditional approaches to this issue will only result in more of the same, rather than engaging a wider section of the population in participating in sport.

4.18 Whether we are considering indoor sport, outdoor games or outdoor pursuits the challenges of changing people's behaviour are the same. Most potential participants have little, if any, technical knowledge of their chosen sport. For most, it will be the first time that they had an opportunity to try that activity. In simple terms, providers have to overcome three specific challenges faced by participants:

4.19 Lack of knowledge about what is available and where

The first issue to overcome is the provision of information in order to address the challenge of lack of knowledge. A range of media tend to be used including:

- word of mouth;
- printed material;
- electronic based information – newsletters; websites; increasingly social media;
- signage.

4.20 Invariably, all of these are needed to make a sustained impact but in the first instance, 'word of mouth' is crucial. A theme constantly running through research is the importance of the social element which the activity itself engenders. People want to do activities with their friends or their peer group. Few people are prepared to go along to a session without knowing someone. With the growth of social media this has become considerably easier as experiences can be shared with a wide variety of people in an instant.

4.21 This does not mean that printed material should be relegated to a level of insignificance. Pamphlets, posters and papers provide basic information about activities. The date and time they are due to take place; venue; what the session will comprise and contact details. These should be clear and concise with surrounding images reflecting the particular target group. We also need to think beyond traditional locations for displaying this material. Marketing materials in leisure centres will be seen by those already engaged in some way, so more thought needs to be given to target audiences and where they get their information from. Our people segmentation tool has been used for this purpose by partners.

4.22 Consideration also needs to be given to on-going provision of information about future activities; location; dates etc. so that people can plan in advance. As will be discussed later, it is also important to ensure that long term development and sustainability of participation occurs. Keeping in touch with participants and making them feel valued through personal contact, provision of newsletters (whether printed or electronic) and the development of web based information is also important. The establishment of the latter is particularly important when targeting the younger age groups.

4.23 Lack of understanding or skill to participate in an activity

Not having the skills to participate, or almost more importantly perceiving that you do not, is a common theme in sports development. Giving people the confidence and skills to enable them to participate is fundamental. Consequently, the recruitment of session leaders with

the right technical skills is a prerequisite. Having empathy with participants and being able to develop good relationships with them whilst teaching them appropriate skills is fundamental to establishing successful projects.

4.24 Many leadership/instructor courses tend to focus on organisational and technical skills. Increasingly, 'soft' skills are seen to be of crucial importance. Successful projects have the following characteristics in relation to group leaders, a person who:

- Welcomes all participants at the very outset;
- Empathises with both the group and individuals;
- Puts people at their ease;
- Assesses individual needs and is able to deliver the required response;
- Ensures that all participants have a full involvement in the group's activities, not just a particular clique;
- Considers how to ensure that participants will come to the following next session not just hopes that they will turn up.

4.25 Access to appropriate equipment to participate.

Research has shown that the lack of suitable equipment is a barrier for non-participants to engage in activities. Having a badminton racket to play badminton or a canoe to paddle down a river are obvious examples. Loan schemes have been used initially to attract people to the activity. This can be done either by the activity provider purchasing the equipment on behalf of the scheme or forming links with an existing provider such as a leisure centre/ outdoor activity centre. The latter partnership approach has worked very well in areas where centres have been an integral part of promoting outdoor activities.

4.26 We are also aware that certain groups of people are also concerned about the clothing and footwear required to undertake various physical activities whether indoors or in the outdoors. For some, venturing into what they perceive as the unknown can be a daunting challenge. Consequently, being clear what is required and what is not required is essential if a programme is going to be successful from the outset.

4.27 Essentially we need to make it as easy as possible for people to get involved in sport, addressing the three areas above and allaying any concerns or preconceptions people have. Clubs need to be welcoming and there needs to be a balance between recreational and structured competitive offers in order to cater for the casual participant as well as the more competitive.

4.28 **Women and Girls**

Increasing participation among women and girls has been a prominent issue for all the home sport councils for a number of years. Trends across the nations broadly look the same, with participation peaking around 10-11 years old and then tailing off, quite dramatically around 14-16, and never recovering. The two graphs from our 2011 School Sport Survey below demonstrate the dramatic tail off in enjoyment of school sport from female pupils.

Figure 4: Enjoyment of PE 'How much do you enjoy PE lessons?'

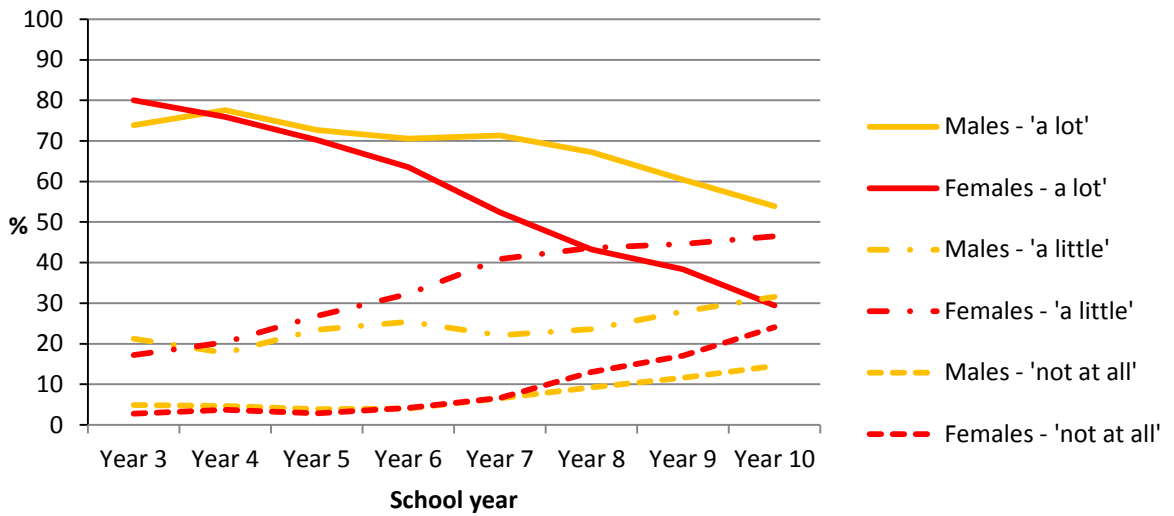
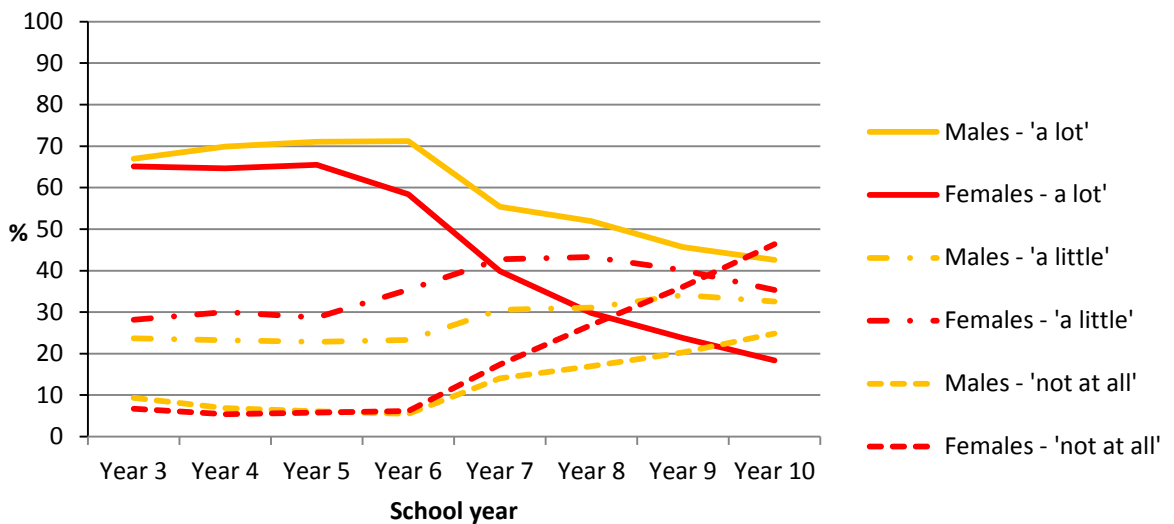
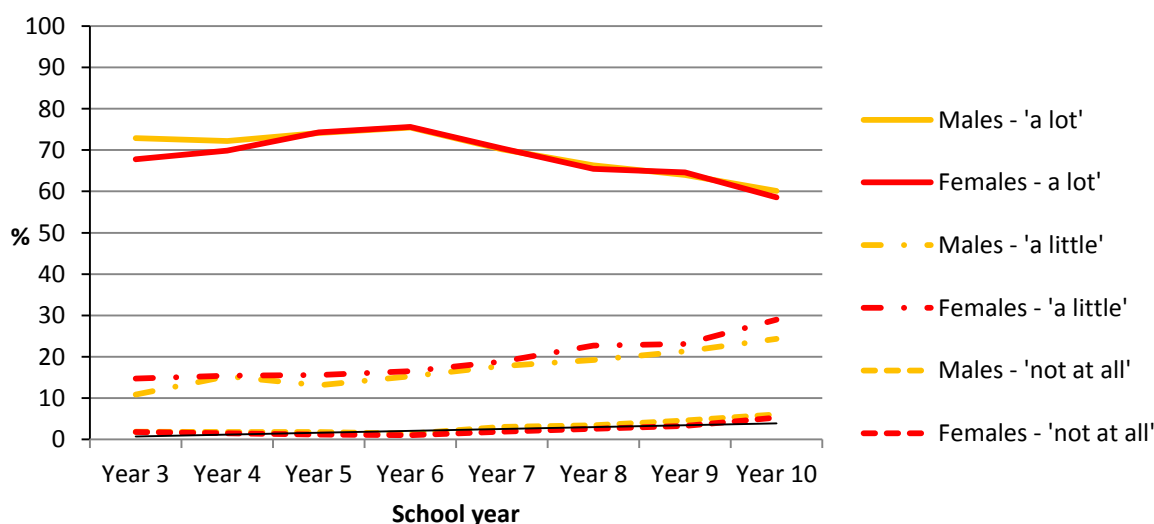


Figure 5: Enjoyment of extracurricular sport 'How much do you enjoy taking part in sport in school (at lunchtime or after-school)?'



4.29 This lack of enjoyment in later school years is obviously having a major impact on whether these young women decide to carry on with sport for the rest of their lives. The graph below though does highlight that there is, in general, a positive view of the importance of sport in having a healthy lifestyle.

Figure 6: Percentage of pupils in Wales who said that sport contributes ‘a lot’, ‘a little’ or ‘not at all’ to a balanced healthy lifestyle



4.30 This seems to suggest that sporting activity is valued, but is not meeting the needs of these female pupils as they get older.

4.31 In order to get a better understanding of this we commissioned some qualitative research to look at why both boys and girls drop out of sport. The findings from the report included:

Non-sporty girls of all ages reported that a big factor in them dropping out of sport was that it was no longer fun for them, for a number of reasons:

- *having fewer sports available to them, so they became repetitive and boring*
- *less of an emphasis on enjoyment and more on technical skills*
- *competitiveness went against their preferences for enjoyment and sociability⁶*

4.32 What was particularly interesting was the number of young women we spoke to in their early twenties who indicated that they now regretted drifting away from sport and wished they could get more involved, but didn't feel they had the fitness to go back to sport.

4.33 The findings indicate that there are those women and girls who have been brought up around sport, or who have always participated and they clearly see the benefits, not just for health but also in terms of community and mutual support. Then there are a wider range of women and girls who enjoyed sport, mainly at primary school, but gradually drifted away as they perceived it becoming more competitive and “serious”. It is this second group that we need to focus on, firstly not losing from sport and secondly ensuring that there is an offer that enables them to return if they do drift away for a time.

⁶ Sports participation amongst 14-21 year olds: How do we encourage young people to stay involved in sport?, Brightpurpose, 2012 <http://www.sportwales.org.uk/research--policy/tools-and-resources/publications.aspx>

- 4.34 To this end, 'Women and Girls' has been made Sport Wales corporate priority theme for the next twelve months and a task group is in the process of being established by our Board to scrutinise our work in this area. Alongside this we have been working with our governing bodies to encourage them to adapt the offers of their sport, in order to encourage more people to get involved in the sport, as well as working with a number of our local authority partners to identify what more can be done to make sport an attractive option for this particular group.
- 4.35 We have some outstanding high profile role models for women and girls, but our research also identified that one of the most effective ways of encouraging greater participation is through peer influence. We have seen this directly with our Young Ambassadors programme, where young people have played a critical role in inspiring their peers to get involved.
- 4.36 Disability
- Sport Wales provides funding to Disability Sport Wales to grow community opportunities for disabled people across Wales, as well as ensuring that we continue to deliver Paralympic success. We initiated the Community Sport Programme, which has been developed and is now delivered by Disability Sport Wales. This is seen globally as one of the best examples of how to engage disabled people in sport. This forms part of our £1 million investment into disability sport in Wales.
- 4.37 In 2002 there were just 30 clubs with a handful of members getting the chance to play sport in Wales. There are now 331 disability sport clubs, growing by 20% from 269 in the last twelve months.
- 4.38 The number of participation opportunities delivered in 2012 rose from 927,000 opportunities to 1,012,000. There has also been an increase in the number of active coaches working on the programme, from 1,621 to 1,766, while volunteers have increased from 2,130 to 2,390.
- 4.39 Disability Sport Wales has since developed their "inSport" programme, which aims to work with a range of partners, including local authorities and governing bodies, to encourage inclusive activities for disabled people in their communities.
- 4.40 Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender (LGBT)
- Sport Wales has been a Stonewall Diversity Champion since 2011, working internally to ensure that we are an attractive employer to the LGBT community and that we are supporting LGBT members of staff. In the summer of 2012, in partnership with Stonewall Cymru, we invited lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals living in Wales to share their views about sport by taking part in some qualitative research⁷.
- 4.41 This ground-breaking research revealed that whilst many lesbian, gay and bisexual people are interested in sport (94% of those who responded), they have also been put off by

⁷ Full report and materials can be downloaded via: <http://www.sportwales.org.uk/lgbreport>

negative experiences or the perception that it is an unpleasant and unsafe environment for gay people. It is recognised that there needs to be a mixed offer of both encouraging clubs to become more LGBT friendly as well as the creation of more LGBT specific clubs where there was demand.

4.42 The report made a number of recommendations, including the creation of the Sport Charter and the establishment of an LGBT sport forum, which could act as a platform for discussion and action on issues relating to sexuality in sport. We are delighted that the Charter will be launched in the coming months and that the forum has been established, with representation from most of the major sports in Wales. We see this element of work as a learning curve for ourselves and the sector as a whole. The process of completing the report has also created stronger links between Sport Wales and Stonewall Cymru. This year, for the first time, Sport Wales along with various governing bodies will have a presence at Mardi Gras in order promote sport as an activity for all.

4.43 Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)

Participation statistics on the BME population in Wales have always been difficult to obtain through the Active Adult Survey, due to the small sample sizes in Wales. In saying this in 2009 we commissioned a short piece of research to look at the barriers facing the BME community in accessing sporting opportunities. The research identified factors such as:

- Many leisure and youth settings were perceived as male friendly places or having unsuitable facilities for women of certain faiths, for example mixed changing areas in swimming pools were a “no go” for some groups;
- Family responsibilities and childcare were both potential barriers for women’s participation;
- Discrimination continues to be an issue for some in participating
- Need to develop more family based activities in order to raise the participation level

4.44 At Sport Wales, working with StreetGames, we have recently set up a BME forum in South East Wales. The purpose is to bring together partners delivering sport to BME communities to look at ways in which we can share what works as well as supporting access to funding to make the activities sustainable.

4.50 Child Poverty

Alongside the launch of our Community Sport Strategy in 2012, we also launched our Child Poverty Strategy, covering the period 2012-15. Our surveys have indicated that:

- Patterns of sport participation differ by socioeconomic group;
- Young people and adults living in deprived areas are less likely to participate in sport than their peers. For young people this is particularly in reference to club sport;
- Levels of latent demand for sport tend to be lower for young people living in areas of relative deprivation.

4.51 We do not believe that lower participation levels in deprived areas are inevitable or that any of the barriers to greater participation are insurmountable.

- 4.52 Our first Child Poverty Strategy has the following aims:
- To see an increase in participation amongst children and young people living in poverty, contributing to our wider aspiration of all children and young people being hooked on sport for life;
 - To see an increase in volunteering amongst adults in lower social grades, contributing to our target of getting 10% of the adult population in Wales volunteering in sport by 2016;
 - For sport to be considered a key partner in the effort to tackle poverty in Wales, with poverty and participation targets being shared across partners.
- 4.53 We recognise that whilst some of our partners will be well versed in working with deprived communities, e.g. local authorities, other will have had less experience. In saying this we view poverty as not solely an economic issue, but relating to poverty of opportunity.
- 4.54 In the coming months we will be publishing research we have undertaken looking at the barriers to participation in formal club activity in deprived communities. The emerging findings include the role of parents in facilitating sport and the critical role that schools play in providing sport to this group of young people. We will ensure the committee receives copies of the final report.
- 4.55 We are fully committed to working with organisations in Wales' most deprived areas and we are improving our links with the reorganised Community First areas. Alongside this we have increased our funding to StreetGames to £150,000 per year for the next two years, to support the work they are undertaking in delivering doorstep opportunities to some of the most deprived children and young people in Wales. The outcomes of this partnership in the last twelve months include:
- StreetGames are now active in 98 of 200 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs), starting point was 62
 - 664 generic volunteers have been deployed, providing over 9,000 volunteering hours to StreetGames – average 13.5 hours per person
 - 840 delegates have engaged with the Training Academy; 292 candidates have accessed sports specific entry level qualifications
 - An estimated 10,000 participants have engaged with StreetGames
 - Positive engagement with a wide range of governing bodies
- 4.56 We are also in some very early discussions with colleagues in Welsh Government about undertaking some focussed work with a couple of Community First areas looking at changing behaviour and approach to sport. Finally we work closely with Sported, a charity that seeks to provide funding for sporting activities in deprived communities, in order to ensure that we are making the best of our investments.
- 4.57 Age
- 4.58 Our primary focus is on getting more children and young people engaged in sport from the earliest age, ensuring that their rights to leisure activities are met. We believe that if we can

create a generation of adults who are physically competent from the earliest age, then we are much more likely to see that participation continue throughout their lives. Obviously changing perception and behaviour is much easier at an earlier age.

- 4.59 This is not to say we are not interested in ensuring that there is provision for adults, our aspiration is to get “every child hooked on sport *for life*”, not just for childhood and adolescence. We have been encouraging our partners to look at ways in which they can adapt their sports to encourage adults to return to the sport, for example “back to netball” schemes. We have to make sport more accessible and relevant to people’s lives as well. Not everyone has the time to take part in a full eleven-a-side football, but we have seen how smaller five and seven-a-side centres have developed through provided recreational competitive opportunities.
- 4.60 It is important to remember as well that it is not just about active participation in sport, we are always looking for new skills and new people to get involved with coaching, general volunteering and governance. Just because someone’s playing career has come to an end, their participation in creating opportunities for the community is only just beginning. Retaining and adding to the army of volunteers who keep sport running in our communities is vital.

5 What are the links between programmes to develop sport in Wales and other Welsh Government initiatives to increase physical activity?

- 5.1 As indicated earlier we are committed to supporting *Creating An Active Wales* and the Programme for Government. We have also recently been asked to develop a joint programme of work with Public Health Wales, which has been submitted to Welsh Government. We believe that this is a significant step in placing participation in sport firmly in the category of a preventative solution to the well documented health problems that are facing the Welsh nation.
- 5.2 Through the Physical Activity and School Sport Task Group we have further strengthened our links with colleagues in education, which had been formed through the development of the PE and School Sport (PESS) programme⁸. Education plays such a crucial role in ensuring those first experiences of sport encourage a lifelong interest that we have seen these relationships as particularly important.
- 5.3 We are developing our links with the Welsh Government's Community First Programme and have built a positive relationship through our joint funding of StreetGames, referred to in the previous section.
- 5.4 We have also led on developing links with Business Wales' regional centres, linking them with governing body and club activity. This has enabled the sport sector to receive support and advice on how to develop business plans and sustainable models.
- 5.5 We intend to continue developing these relationships over the coming years, not only to increase participation in sport, but also to ensure that sport is maximised to impact on other areas of the Programme for Government.

⁸ More information about PESS can be found via: <http://www.sportwales.org.uk/community-sport/education/pe--school-sport/about-pess.aspx>

6 The impact of the Olympic and Paralympic legacy, the Ryder Cup and other high profile Welsh sporting events and achievements on participation levels in Wales.

- 6.1 We will have more complete evidence of the impact of the Games when our surveys report in the autumn. So far we have some positive anecdotal evidence of clubs that have seen an increase.
- 6.2 Sports such as gymnastics (25%), hockey (32% of clubs), swimming (39%), cycling (24%), boxing (33%) and athletics (12%) have all reported significant increases in participation, whilst canoeing have set up 30 new clubs to cope with the surge in demand spurred by the Games. Some of this may be down to an Olympic and Paralympic effect.
- 6.3 The Young Ambassadors scheme was established as part of the Games legacy programme and has gone from strength to strength in Wales with now around 1800 signed up in Wales. Increasingly we are seeing our partners using the enthusiasm of these young people to inspire their peers and directly deliver sporting opportunities. These young people are a very tangible legacy from the Games and we are working with the Youth Sport Trust to continue to develop this programme in Wales.
- 6.4 It is important to remember that legacy is not just what happens a few months or even a year after a major event, but in the sustained increase in participation. There can be no doubt that major sporting events play a role in bringing sport to the public at large, but increasing participation in sport takes more than a single major event.
- 6.5 Since the 2010 Communities and Culture Committee report *Making the Most of Major Sporting Events* we have developed a stronger relationship with the Welsh Government's Major Events Unit, building a dialogue around what sporting events would create good development opportunities for our elite athletes and what events we would view as more of an economic driver, with little participation legacy.
- 6.6 Throughout this the media play a crucial role in enabling people to access coverage across a wide range of sports. Part of what the Olympics and Paralympics provides us with is the opportunity to become immersed in sports that we only tend to see on television every four years. Sadly it was not long before the triumphs of our Olympians and Paralympians were replaced on our back pages with the regular diet of football and rugby. How can we expect to see a legacy from events, if the media are not following up the public's interest? We congratulate BBC and Channel 4 on their high quality and extensive coverage of both the Games last summer, but we need to keep that going if we are to inspire the next generation to get involved.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 The sports sector in Wales has gone through a significant change in the last three years, starting with the launch of *The Vision for Sport in Wales* in 2010. We now have a clear direction, know the areas we need to focus on and have strategies to provide us with the actions that need to be taken. There are some areas where we are starting to see positive progress, such as the concerted efforts our partners have made to work in a different way. For others we have significantly more work to do to fundamentally shift behaviour.
- 7.2 Overall we believe that the sector is moving in the right direction to increase participation in sport, recognising the barriers and challenges along the way. At Sport Wales we are enthusiastic about tackling these challenges with our partners in order to achieve our aspirations for Wales and its communities.

Nation of Champions

POPULATION: All people in Wales

1. OUR PRIORITIES /APPROACH

- a) Drawing a distinction between those sports and events where Sport Wales investment of support and resources can have a direct impact, and those where the effect / impact will be less direct;
- b) Continuing a system of categorisation through which Sport Wales can apply different levels of support to sports in the fulfilment of its overall objectives;
- c) Focus support and resources on a smaller number of sports, in order to maximise their potential to achieve consistent and sustainable high-level success;
- d) Deliver and refine a more flexible model of support and delivery which allows Sport Wales to:
 - i. Support world-class athletes, regardless of the overall strength of the sport in which they compete
 - ii. Invest purposefully in bespoke performance projects which have the potential to deliver high-level success
 - iii. Recognise and respond to the complex structures in place for elite sport within disability sport
 - iv. Develop partnership working with the major professional sports in Wales which adds value to their performance pathways where appropriate
- e) Redefine the relationship between the delivery of elite sport and the underpinning structures, recognising how the performance pathway runs between the two.
- f) Through pursuing this approach we recognise that we are a small nation of limited resource. Therefore, our focus must be on getting the very best out of the resources available. It's about raising the bar and creating accountability from everyone involved. It's about ensuring that the success that Wales produces on the world stage is systemic, deliberate and can be sustained.
- g) If we can do all of these things, we are confident that the result will be more medals won at Olympic, Paralympic, Commonwealth, World and European levels between 2010 and 2016, fulfilling the Welsh Government's vision that:

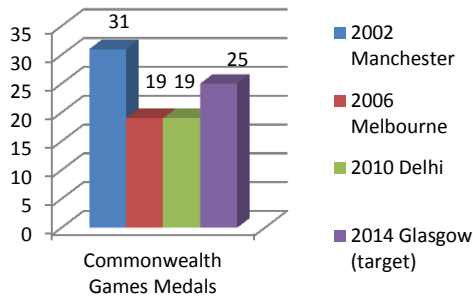
"We want to be the best we can be and we want to be known across the world for our sporting achievements."

Institute feedback Survey data:

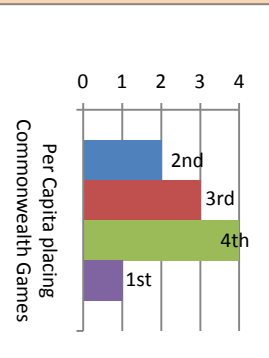
Athletes - 58% response rate
Coaches - 90% response rate
PD's - 70% response rate

The headline statistic was that the quality and effectiveness of the services delivered was generally rated as either very good or excellent by 86% of respondents.

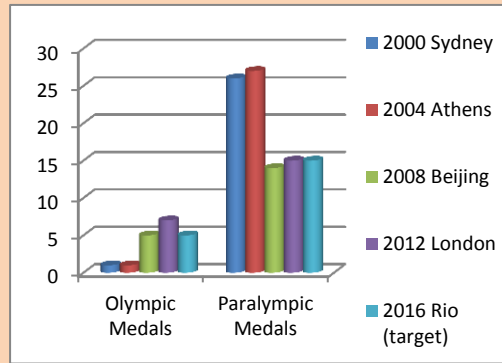
2. HOW WELL ARE WE DOING? Figures 1: Commonwealth, Olympic and Paralympic Results



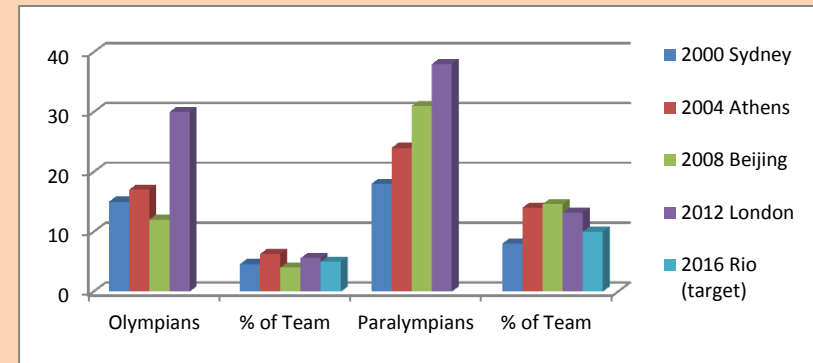
(Fig. 1B)



(Fig. 1A)



(Fig. 1C)



(Fig. 1D)

STORY BEHIND THE GRAPHS – Games Graphs: The Commonwealth and Olympic medal graphs (figs 1B and 1C) are only representative of the state of health at the time of the Games, up to 2010 Commonwealth and 2012 Olympic. Figure 1A identifies the fact that Wales continues to be the best performing Home Country in medals per capita, performance against the entire Commonwealth has started to erode slightly, 2nd (2002) to 4th (2010). There are a number of contributory factors, foremost being the improved competitive nature of some countries such as Malaysia and Cyprus, plus the fact that Sport Wales has spread its elite support service too thinly across a high number of sports. The Elite Sport Strategy has been developed to counter this, focussing strategically on a fewer number of medal winning sports. Welsh athlete performance at the Olympic and Paralympic level continues to improve in terms of medals won (fig 1C) although has increased in Olympic terms for numbers on the team and also for the Paralympics (fig 1D)

Appendix 2: KEY (OUTPUT) TARGETS FOR 2013-4

Dragon Registrations			5x60 attendance			5x60 frequency 20		
Actual 10/11	Actual 11/12	Target	Actual 10/11	Actual 11/12	Target	Actual 10/11	Actual 11/12	Target
209804	223755	250066	1071360	1258615	1202128	16885	20326	25653
All Swims per 1000 population			Learn to swim rates at age 11			No. Schools Active Marc		
Actual 10/11	Actual 11/12	Target	Actual 10/11	Actual 11/12	Target	Actual 10/11	Actual 11/12	Target
1303	1460	1920	69%	75%	91%	199	220	322
Number of active Coaches and officials			Adult membership Senior Men			Adult membership Senior Women		
Actual		Target	Actual		Target	Actual		Target
35861	43008	50074	249352	254578	262868	39924	45865	52264
Junior Club membership boys			Junior club membership girls			Number of clubs		
Actual		Target	Actual		Target	Actual		Target
139437	141954	158721	43001	44413	52189	5624	5596	5682