The Culture, Media and Sport Committee

The Culture, Media and Sport Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and its associated public bodies.

Current membership

Mr John Whittingdale MP (Conservative, Maldon) (Chair)
Mr Ben Bradshaw MP (Labour, Exeter)
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Jim Sheridan MP (Labour, Paisley and Renfrewshire North)
Mr Gerry Sutcliffe MP (Labour, Bradford South)

The following members were also a member of the committee during the parliament:
David Cairns MP (Labour, Inverclyde)
Dr Thérèse Coffey MP (Conservative, Suffolk Coastal)
Damian Collins MP (Conservative, Folkestone and Hythe)
Alan Keen MP (Labour Co-operative, Feltham and Heston)
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Powers

The committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publication

The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the internet at www.parliament.uk/cmscom. A list of Reports of the Committee in the present Parliament is at the back of this volume.

The Reports of the Committee, the formal minutes relating to that report, oral evidence taken and some of the written evidence are available in a printed volume.

Additional written evidence is published on the internet only.

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Elizabeth Flood (Clerk), Grahame Danby (Second Clerk), Kevin Candy (Inquiry Manager), Hannah Wentworth (Senior Committee Assistant), Keely Bishop (Committee Assistant) and Jessica Bridges-Palmer (Media Officer).

Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Culture, Media and Sport Committee, House of Commons, 7 Millbank, London SW1P 3JA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 6188; the Committee’s email address is cmscom@parliament.uk
Second Special Report

Government Response

1  Introduction

1. The Government is grateful to the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee for carrying out its Inquiry into Women and Sport, and for publishing the results on 25 July 2014.

2. The Government welcomes the Select Committee’s contribution to the important issues surrounding women and sport.

3. The Government is highly committed to strengthening women’s sport. There are 6.84 million women playing sport every week – over a quarter of a million more than at the start of this Parliament, with a record amount of 16-25 year olds participating.

4. Sport England is investing over £1 billion into improving grassroots sport with a number of initiatives specifically targeted at women. This includes setting up girls-only after school clubs across the country, of which there are currently 400, as well as a targeted pilot programme in Bury, called I Will if You Will, delivering activities specifically designed to engage women and girls.

5. Over £450 million of ring-fenced funding across government is being invested through the primary Physical Education (PE) and sports premium into improving schools’ sports provision, teaching and facilities. Schools are encouraged to spend the premium funding in a way that supports less active pupils, and in the latest evaluation findings, 79 per cent of responding teachers believed the premium had increased participation for all children. Greater participation amongst certain groups of pupils was highlighted by some schools in response to this survey, with around a fifth of schools reporting an increase in participation amongst girls. The updated curriculum for PE is also designed to help all children develop a habit of physical activity for life.

6. The Government also recognises the wider issues surrounding women and sport, such as the lack of media coverage and commercial sponsorship, and the need to increase the number of women on the boards of sporting bodies. The Minister for Sport and Tourism chairs a Women and Sport Advisory Board which is exploring these themes and its interim report will be published later this year.

7. This response to the Committee’s Inquiry provides an opportunity for Government and its ALBs to demonstrate their effective working relationships and continue the good work to address the challenges around women and sport.

2  Government’s response to the Conclusions

8. In this section the Government sets out its response to the conclusions and recommendations in the Select Committee report. In referencing those areas, we use the conclusion numbers as noted in the section ‘Conclusions’ on page 47 of the Committee report. We have grouped the responses thematically and combined answers where appropriate.
Increasing women and girls’ participation in sport

Addressing girls’ participation through school sport (conclusions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

9. (Conclusion 1, Paragraph 29)

The Government agrees with the Committee that addressing the issue of inactivity among children is very important. We already measure children’s activity levels through research called ‘Taking Part’. This is a major, continuous survey of cultural and sport participation in England. Every year it collects information from a national representative sample of children and adults about their participation in creative activities and sport. The survey also asks about motivations and barriers to engagement and collects a large quantity of socio-demographic information. Data from the Taking Part survey is released quarterly, with annual reports published each year. According to the most recent Taking Part survey, 78 per cent of all pupils aged 5-15 played competitive sport in the last 12 months. Of those, 74 per cent did so in school.

Additionally, from December 2013, the Active People Survey has been extended to include data on young people aged 14 and upwards. This survey continually measures the number of people playing sport, and is the largest survey of sport and active recreation carried out in Europe. Data can be broken down by various factors, including age, gender, ethnicity, location and by sport, providing a thorough understanding of sport participation across the country.

Given we already have these two, very robust, research mechanisms, we believe another annual measure is unnecessary.

The Government agrees that sharing best practice is a vital way to ensure we are seeing the most progressive and innovative actions being taken by schools. Emerging school partnerships, through the primary PE and sport premium, are already enabling the sharing of excellent practice. Ofsted inspects all primary schools on the use and impact of the premium funding, and will publish a good practice report on effective use of the premium later this year.

The Government will also publish the final report of our independent evaluation of schools’ use of the premium in autumn 2015. Interim findings on how schools spent the first years’ funding were published in September 2014. 586 primary schools were interviewed between April and July 2014, with 91 per cent of schools reporting an increase in the quality of PE teaching due to the funding. 96 per cent of schools reported improvements in pupils’ physical fitness, 93 per cent saw improvements in behaviour, and 96 per cent thought the funding had contributed to healthier lifestyles for their pupils.

The Government welcomes the Committee’s point regarding the need to address specific problems, such as poor facilities. Sport England is investing considerably in sports facilities within schools. It has invested £34.6 million since 2010 – including through the Primary Spaces programme, a new £18 million fund to improve facilities within 601 primary schools – with around 100 of those schools due to benefit from improved facilities this year. A full breakdown of Sport England’s investment in school sports facilities can be found in the section ‘Provision of Sports Facilities’ (see points 20-25).
10. **(Conclusion 2, Paragraph 30)**

This Government is fully committed to a long term strategy to improve PE and sport, which is why the primary PE and sport premium has been extended to three years up to and including 2015/16, with over £450 million of ring-fenced funding committed. David Cameron has pledged that, should he remain Prime Minister, the premium will be extended to 2020. School Games funding has similarly been extended up to and including 2015/16.

In July 2014, we also announced the extension of our innovative initial teacher training programme, training graduates to be primary PE specialists. 240 primary PE specialists will be in post for the 2014/15 academic year, and every teacher training school in the country will have the opportunity to provide the course to new trainees from September 2015.

11. **(Conclusion 3, Paragraph 31)**

The Government recognises the importance of making participation in sport attractive to girls, and we encourage all schools to develop a programme of activities that are suitable for all pupils, both as part of PE lessons, and in extra-curricular time. We have also reformed the national curriculum for PE to appeal to more pupils, with activities such as dance included at key stage 3 for the first time.

We know that some schools are using the primary PE and sports premium to offer a greater range of sports to pupils, which helps increase participation amongst girls. Temple Primary School in Manchester, for example, is using the premium to offer girls-only swimming and BMX biking after school courses, and the Bishop Sutton and Stanton Drew Primary School Federation has sought to bring in female coaches in specific sports to encourage girls to try non-traditional activities. Overall, around a fifth of schools specifically noticed an increase in participation amongst girls.

Nearly 18,000 schools are voluntarily taking part in the Sainsbury’s School Games – nearly 75 per cent of all schools in England – including over 13,000 primary schools. Participating schools can choose from sports formats developed by 31 National Governing Bodies (NGBs), to appeal to all children. Over 150,000 young people participated in county festivals last year, 52 per cent of whom were girls. This is an excellent example of a youth sports programme that has a higher rate of female participation to male.

However, we know there is more to be done to get girls and women more active and Sport England is working with NGBs in making sure that girls and women can access the sports and activities they want, as well as directly investing and delivering initiatives such as Sportivate and Satellite clubs (see point 12).

12. **(Conclusion 4, Paragraph 32)**

We agree with the Committee that there are good opportunities for NGBs to reach out to young people. The Sainsbury’s School Games are supported by 450 School Games organisers across the country, which are connecting local competitions to over 3,800 community sports clubs to help ensure activity is sustained beyond school. Head teachers may use their primary PE and sports premium funding to work with local sports organisations to increase pupils’ participation in the School Games.
The Sainsbury’s School Games have a higher participation rate of girls than boys and at level 3 (county-level) 52 per cent of the competitors are girls. This is the first time we have seen this phenomenon in a major youth sports programme, and we hope to see girls continuing to participate in equal numbers to boys.

Sport England has extended the age range of its Sportivate and Satellite Club programmes, so that all secondary school children have more opportunities to participate in community sport.

Sportivate is a £56 million Olympic Legacy Project, which gives 14-25 year olds, who are not particularly sporty, access to six to eight weeks of free or subsidised coaching in a range of sports. At the end of the third year of the programme, 424,508 young people had taken part in Sportivate. Of these, 84 per cent have successfully completed their coached sessions.

Further to this, 25 NGBs have targets agreed with Sport England to deliver Satellite Clubs. There are currently over 3,000 Satellite Clubs up and running, of which over 400 are specifically for girls. Sport England estimates that over 11,000 girls are now playing sport in girls-only Satellite Clubs.

By 2017, every secondary school in England will have been offered a Satellite Club on its site. Each club will have a direct link to one or more NGBs, depending on the clubs in its area.

The latest figures from the Active People Survey are positive; the number of women and girls over 16 playing sport regularly has risen to 6.84 million. This is 588,800 more than in 2005 when we won the bid to host the 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Games. Since 2013, Sport England has also recorded the number of people aged 14+ playing sport. There are currently 7.23 million women aged 14+ playing sport regularly. The graph below represents this positive long term trend:
13. **(Conclusion 5, Paragraph 33)**

Schools are already captured by the Public Sector Equality Duty, which requires them to eliminate discrimination, provide equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different groups. The Government believes the current legislation is sufficient and does not agree that a change to the Public Sector Equality Duty is necessary.

14. **(Conclusion 6, Paragraph 35)**

The Government recognises the Committee’s concern but believes PE and school sport is an excellent example of Departments working together. Officials and Ministers from DCMS, DfE and DH, as well as key external partners, meet regularly to discuss progress on a range of joint policies, including the primary PE and sport premium, the School Games, Primary Spaces and Change4Life. We note the Committee’s recommendation but do not believe an additional annual report to Parliament is necessary.

*Increasing participation for women and girls through targeted initiatives (conclusions, 7, 9, 23, 24, 25)*

15. **(Conclusion 7, Paragraph 51)**

We are continuing to see a yearly rise in sport participation rates of women and girls. 6.84 million women take part in sport at least once a week, and over half a million more women play regular sport than when we won the Olympic and Paralympic bid in 2005. This trend has continued as evidenced by the most recent Active People Survey figures (June 2014). The DCMS will produce a report on its Women and Sport Programme later this year, consulting with relevant other government departments, such as DH, in the process.

Sport England’s Active People Survey data is released every six months and the complete results, along with summary sheets, comment and analysis from Sport England, are published on its website. The next set of Active People Survey data will be released in December 2014.

16. **(Conclusion 9, Paragraph 49)**

There are some significant results coming out of the Bury ‘I Will If You Will’ Pilot. The programme aims to discover what really drives behaviour change. The full measurement and evaluation data to see how the programme has progressed will be carried out in the autumn, and is likely to be released in early 2015. Insight from the Bury pilot will be used to inform strategies to get more women active, and will be shared across Government and with NGBs and other delivery bodies, to support them in getting more women playing sport regularly.

17. **(Conclusion 23, Paragraph 150)**

We thank the committee for their praise for those NGBs that are succeeding in meeting Sport England’s criteria for increasing participation.

18. **(Conclusion 24, Paragraph 151)**
The Government recognises that there is more to be done to design and market girls’ and women’s sport in a way that is attractive to them, in order to get more girls and women active.

Sport England is investing in NGBs through the Whole Sport Plans as part of this work. Whole Sport Plans were submitted by NGBs in 2012, and detailed how they would use Sport England funding to help them increase the number of people playing their sport. The Whole Sport Plans run from 2013 to 2017 and NGBs are regularly assessed to ensure they are making progress. Sport England is also directly investing in a range of programmes designed specifically for women using the latest insight. These are delivered by Sport England’s national partners (e.g. StreetGames) and local partners (e.g. Bury Council) with the aim of getting more women and girls playing sport.

It is important that any target to get more women playing sport recognises the different challenges that individual sports face when trying to attract new female players to the game. A single or universal target is unlikely to achieve the desired result.

Analysis of the Active People Survey data shows there are certain sports, such as swimming, tennis, dance, running, cycling and football, where there is clear demand from women to take up these sports. We are already seeing some of these NGBs really focusing on designing and marketing their sports in a way to appeal to women and girls, for example, the Lawn Tennis Association’s Tennis Tuesday initiative.

Sport England continually monitors the impact of its strategy as a whole (i.e. not just its NGB investment) on participation by women and girls.

19. (Conclusion 25, Paragraph 152)

We agree with the Committee’s conclusion that there are further opportunities to work with NGBs and other groups to reach and engage people locally. As part of Sport England’s tough new approach for NGBs, it is challenging them to get more people playing their sport by understanding their markets and developing products which are attractive and appealing. Where an NGB fails to get more people taking part in community sport, Sport England will work with other providers, who have a strong track record of local delivery.

Sport England’s City of Football is an example of where it has taken funding from an NGB and reinvested into an innovative new programme, working with a diverse audience and a range of equality partners including the Women’s Sport and Fitness Foundation (WSFF). However, where an NGB is getting significantly more people playing sport and using innovative new ideas to get people active, Sport England will use its Reward and Incentive Fund to support these initiatives. The payment-for-results tool is one of a range of approaches Sport England has to effectively manage its investments.

Provision of sports facilities (conclusions 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14)

20. (Conclusion 8, Paragraph 50)

We recognise that there continues to be challenges in meeting women’s needs for more flexible and fun sporting activity. Sport England is working to address the way sporting
offers for women are designed and marketed and is investing in innovative programmes to do just that. For example as part of the Bury ‘I Will if You Will’ pilot, Sport England has invested in a re-locatable pool which is currently situated at Broad Oak School. The school is in a community with a high proportion of people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds (23.4 per cent of the total population of Bury East, more than double the 11.8 per cent proportion for the rest of Bury). The programme and delivery of activities has been designed specifically to break down the barriers which prevent women and girls from BME communities swimming. For example, there are women-only sessions, women instructors, and the pool and changing area are shielded from public view.

21. (Conclusion 10, Paragraph 58)

The Government acknowledges the importance of the number of facilities to easily enable people to participate in sport. As part of the Primary Spaces fund, £18 million has been awarded to 601 primary schools to transform their PE and sport facilities. The new funding will help primary schools with little or no outside space that can currently be used for PE and sport, to get more young people active. Approximately 100 projects have been installed this summer with a roll out of further installations over the 2014/15 academic year.

22. (Conclusion 11, Paragraph 29)

The Government notes and welcomes the Committee’s recommendation to review programmes, such as DCLG’s Community Right to Bid. This programme gives communities a better chance to buy a local asset that they cherish. They can nominate buildings and land as an asset of community value. The Local Authority must decide whether it is an Asset of Community Value, based on the definition set out in the legislation - the definition includes sporting and recreational interests of the community.

To date 1,500 assets have been listed as assets of community value, and over 100 of these have been sport facilities including football stadiums, cricket grounds, recreation grounds and sport centres.

Communities are also bringing key assets into community ownership and are raising finance from within their communities in order to progress community buyout. The Government is providing £19 million worth of support for communities to help them to utilise the Right to Bid, and to acquire and manage community assets.

The Government is also funding the Community Shares Unit, to provide support that enables more community groups to utilise this approach of raising finance from within their communities to purchase and acquire important assets. A good example of this is the FC United of Manchester, which raised over £1.7 million from over 3000 members to purchase and develop their grounds.

23. (Conclusion 12, Paragraph 60)

We encourage all schools to open up facilities to the local community, where appropriate for them – but believe that adding an additional bureaucratic reporting requirement is not the best way to achieve this. Schools need the freedom to find solutions that work best for them and there are already a number of excellent examples of schools taking the lead in this, such as St Luke’s Sport and Science College in Exeter and Broadway Academy in
Birmingham. Through a flexible approach which allows almost any area of the school to be made available for community use, with charges kept to a minimum, Broadway Academy has been very successful in attracting a range of community groups to use their state-of-the-art facilities.

Sport England’s national mapping and reporting tool, Active Places Power, can also provide part of a solution for capturing the facilities on school sites and their availability to the community.

24. (Conclusion 13, Paragraph 72)

Sport England’s Facility Guidance Notes ensure that the needs of women are catered for in the design of any new sports facilities. Its Facility Planning Model supports Local Authorities in adopting a strategic view of facilities. It enables different scenarios (e.g. what facilities could be built where) to be simulated based on observed behaviour. Input into the scenarios includes the number of women taking part in sport in an area broken down by age.

Aligned to the National Planning Policy Framework, Sport England produces a range of tools and guidance, to help those responsible for the design and building of sport facilities. Sport England’s work in this area has resulted in the sustainable new builds of new sports facilities, which require zero subsidy from the Local Authority.

Sport England also invests directly in sport facilities. For example, £1.5 million was invested in Portway Lifestyle Centre, which opened to the public in September 2013. The new centre replaced an ageing leisure centre with new sport and leisure facilities including: a four-court sports hall, climbing wall, hydrotherapy pool, 100 station fitness suite, dance studio, multi-purpose hall, changing facilities and a full-size artificial grass pitch. The GP surgery co-located to the centre to transform the delivery of health services in the area.

25. (Conclusion 14, Paragraph 73)

We thank the Committee for their recommendation that further advice is given to enterprising people offering cheap and accessible sport as alternatives to traditional facilities.

As well as the £18 million Primary Spaces Fund, Sport England’s other funds have also invested in improving facilities in schools (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Sport England National Lottery investment in sports facilities in schools since 2011:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SE investment programme</th>
<th>Number of facilities projects in schools</th>
<th>Total amount invested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Spaces</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>£18.0m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspired Facilities</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>£8.4m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iconic Facilities</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>£3.3m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement Fund</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>£3.8m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting Playing Fields</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>£1.1m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>726</strong></td>
<td><strong>£34.6m</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sport England has worked with 80 Local Authorities since 2012, providing strategic advice on facilities planning for their local area. Although schools are able to apply for Sport England funding, it has been recognised that schools need extra guidance. This advice will be part of a wider interactive online resource for schools. This resource will share best practice, provide examples of different business models, templates and case studies as well as key top-tips for schools wishing to open up their facilities.

**Media profile and commercial sponsorship (conclusions, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20)**

26. (Conclusion 15, Paragraph 83)

There have been positive improvements in the profile and reporting of women’s elite sport since London 2012. Broadcasters especially are increasingly recognising the value of showcasing high quality women’s events, such as the Women’s Cycling Tour of Britain and the FA Women’s Super League. Online coverage of women’s sport is also improving.

The Minister for Sport and Tourism’s Women and Sport Advisory Board recently wrote to the main national newspapers for their support in this area.

However, we do agree with the Committee’s conclusion that there is still more that can be done on this area. The Government will continue to work with the media industry to ensure progress continues.

27. (Conclusions 16, 17, Paragraph 89, 90, 94)

The Government agrees that some sports have done a fantastic job in marketing their sport in a media-friendly way. For example, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has invested in building media relationships and marketed women’s cricket in a way that is attractive to viewers. In the case of the ECB, this has also been backed up with commercial investment, via the recent sponsorship deal with KIA motors.

The Government welcomes efforts made by NGBs and other sporting organisations to market their women’s product to the media in new and innovative ways. The factors that make sporting events more attractive to the media are now better understood, and we are keen to see the sharing of best practice among sporting bodies. We hope media outlets and NGBs will continue to work together constructively to maximise coverage of women’s sport.

28. (Conclusion 18, Paragraph 101)

The Government agrees with the Committee’s point that the number and prominence of women journalists and broadcasters should be irrelevant to the issue of how women’s sport is promoted. The Olympics and Paralympics in particular really show-cased the quality of women journalists, covering both men’s and women’s sport, but this needs to be normalised outside of major events.

29. (Conclusion 19, Paragraph 128)

We agree with the Committee’s conclusion that fans of women’s sport are a comparatively underexploited market by commercial sponsors. There is a huge commercial opportunity
for businesses around women’s sport and we have seen some companies really seize that opportunity, for example, Newton Investment Management sponsoring the Women’s Boat Race and ZEO sponsoring the Netball Super League.

In consultation with the Minister for Sport and Tourism’s Women and Sport Advisory Board, Sport England undertook a review of commercial investment in women’s sport to better understand the market and the opportunities for greater investment. In conjunction with this review, Sport England is now developing a ‘sponsorship toolkit’ which will include specific advice to help NGBs identify and engage with potential sponsors. The toolkit will be available later in 2014.

30. (Conclusion 20, Paragraph 129)

We support the Committee’s statement that the gap between the support and rewards received by men and almost all professional/elite sportswomen is vast, and that women should be better supported financially. This is why commercial investment in women’s sport is so crucial. We are delighted that the positive media coverage following the Women’s Rugby World Cup, and the emphasis on the need to professionalise women’s sports, has resulted in the RFU issuing 20 central contracts to female players.

Leadership, workforce and coaching (conclusions 21, 22)

Women on sports’ boards (conclusion 21)

31. (Conclusion 21, Paragraph 135)

We thank the Committee for welcoming the progress already made in opening up leadership positions in sport to women. Consistent efforts are being made to encourage NGBs and other sporting bodies, to recruit more women onto their boards as part of an overall drive to encourage greater diversity in governance structures.

There is an expectation included in NGB funding agreements that they will have at least 25 per cent women on their Boards by 2017.

Additionally, at least 25 per cent of board members must be independent in order to qualify for Sport England and UK Sport funding. UK Sport and Sport England worked with British Cycling to change their constitution, to allow for independent non-executive members on their board, as evidence showed that this was a particular sticking point for getting women onto their boards. This has enabled them to proactively advertise to women’s networks and increase both the independence and the diversity of their board. British Cycling now has two women on their board.

Through their websites, UK Sport and Sport England offer NGBs and other sporting bodies the opportunity to advertise their open positions to people from within and outside the sports industry. There are a number of organisations that are helping NGBs target women for board positions such as the WSFF and Women on Boards. Moreover, UK Sport and Sport England have mailing lists people can sign up to, to receive direct emails about job postings, further widening the field. Sport England has also provided financial support to some NGBs to allow them to use high-quality specialist recruitment firms where this is considered helpful.
Furthermore a £5 million funding pot is available from Sport England to help sports bodies improve their governance and leadership over the 2013 – 2017 period.

The Government wants to see those NGBs who are getting it right, share best practice of how diversity on boards will ultimately benefit multiple aspects of the sport’s governance and success, and set the example for other sports to follow.

**Women and coaching (conclusion 22)**

32. (Conclusion 22, Paragraph 142)

As one of its national partners, Sport England is investing £5 million into sports coach UK to help ensure that the standard and availability of sports coaching continues to improve.

Sports coach UK has initiated a project to encourage more women into coaching. Since April last year Project 500 has supported well over 250 women through scholarships investing almost £20,000. This has led to an increased number of qualified coaches.

Since 2008 the figures for female coaches has tended to sit within the 25 per cent - 31 per cent range, while the percentage of those gaining a qualification that are female has increased from 14 per cent to 17 per cent. There has also been an increase in the percentage of level 1 qualifications awarded to female coaches (a proxy for entry into coaching) from 14 per cent in 2008/9 to 17 per cent in 2013/14.

Sport England wants to see more women getting involved in coaching. Its research shows that women are more likely than men to use coaching (30 per cent in comparison to 25 per cent), however only 31 per cent of coaches are women. The proportion varies among sports, with gymnastics, swimming, equestrian, netball and tennis having higher proportions of women coaches than average. Currently there are almost 60,000 women coaches in equestrian, over 43,000 in netball and over 30,000 in swimming.

The need for more women coaches is explicit within the UK Coaching Framework, which has recently been adopted by all five sports councils. In partnership with the WSFF, sports coach UK has completed a number of research projects including the experiences of coaching among high performing female athletes and also women and informal sport participation, which is available on their website.

More recently sports coach UK has also completed a Female Coaches and Qualifications research paper, published earlier in 2014.

3 Summary

33. The Government is determined to get more girls and women playing sport. London 2012 was a triumph for women’s sport, showcasing positive role models such as Jessica Ennis-Hill, Nicola Adams and Ellie Simmonds. It is vital that we build on that success as part of our Olympic legacy.

34. We are making good progress. There are 6.84 million women playing sport every week – over a quarter of a million more than at the start of this Parliament, with a record amount of 16-25 year olds participating.
35. The Government believes that the Select Committee’s report sets out a package of conclusions and recommendations that offer opportunities for continued progress for the future of women and sport.

36. The Government believes that the immediate priorities are: to continue to encourage greater participation in sport among girls and women using the most up to date research insight and designing activities that appeal to girls and women; to continue to ensure women are represented at all levels in sporting bodies; to upskill NGBs in marketing their sport to commercial investors; and work with the media to increase their commitment to raising the profile of the women’s game.

37. The Government is fully committed to ensuring that the changes implemented make a lasting and substantive difference for women’s sport.