

CULTURE COMMITTEE

**POLICY REVIEW OF PARTICIPATION IN SPORT AND
PHYSICAL EXERCISE**

CONTENTS

Chair's Foreword

Section One – Introduction and Overview

- 1.1 The review
- 1.2 Key themes
- 1.3 Our approach

Section Two – Areas For Action

- 2.1 Priorities
- 2.2 Increasing the appeal of sport and physical exercise
- 2.3 Children and young people
- 2.4 Women and girls
- 2.5 Older people
- 2.6 Ethnic minority communities
- 2.7 Disabled people
- 2.8 Socially disadvantaged groups
- 2.9 Factors affecting all target groups
- 2.10 Other issues

Section Three – Summary of Recommendations

Annexes

- 1. List of committee papers
- 2. List of oral presentations
- 3. List of written submissions received
- 4. Assembly Minister's statement
- 5. Organisational structure chart
- 6. PE and School Sports Task Force recommendations

CHAIR'S FOREWORD

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This report sets out the priority areas which the Committee believes the Welsh Assembly Government should focus on in its forthcoming sports strategy. Encouraging people to get involved in sport and take more exercise is important because of the significant health benefits it brings. However we heard that there is a range of barriers to increased participation in sport and exercise, many of which are personal to individuals - such as time constraints, lack of confidence or low motivation. To be successful the Welsh Assembly Government's strategy will require a thorough understanding of the issues and sustained effort over a broad range of policy areas.

We believe that a key success factor will be to persuade people to take up sport and exercise, not just because it is "good for them", but because it is fun and can provide an active and enjoyable social life. Encouraging young people to get into the habit of taking part in sport and exercise will be vital. This means providing variety and choice, and encouraging the less able youngsters to take part, not just those who play in the school team.

While sports and exercise for young people must be the cornerstone of any strategy to promote greater activity levels, we also believe that a high priority must be given to removing the barriers facing those groups which are less likely to participate in sport and exercise – women, older people, ethnic minorities, disabled people, and socially disadvantaged groups. Again it will be important to avoid focusing only on a limited range of traditional sports which may be unappealing to many groups. Supporting a broad range of sports and activities to enable people of all abilities and interests to participate will be vital.

This report is the starting point for more detailed work across a number of policy areas in addition to sport – education, local government, health, transport. We would urge the Assembly committees responsible for these policy areas in the future regularly to examine the work Ministers have in hand and the progress made in creating a healthier, more active nation.

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to give my thanks to the Sports Council for Wales and all those who contributed to our review.

(insert signature)

Rhodri Glyn Thomas

CULTURE COMMITTEE : POLICY REVIEW OF PARTICIPATION IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL EXERCISE

SECTION ONE - INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 THE REVIEW

1.1.1 The Culture Committee began its review of participation in sport in July 2002. The terms of reference for the review were:

To review the levels of participation in sport in Wales and how they might be increased, looking in particular at:

Barriers to Access

- The obstacles which result in lower levels of participation in sport in Wales than other comparable countries
- Opportunities for women and girls, including in the voluntary sector
- Opportunities for older people, disabled people, and ethnic minority groups

Infrastructure and Facilities

- The role of local authorities, taking account in particular of the Audit Commission report “Sport and Recreation: Learning from audit, inspection and research”
- The impact of major events on participation levels. Provision for major sporting events in Wales, including lessons to be learned from the 2002 Commonwealth Games

Elite Sports

- The impact of elite sports on participation levels. Whether the process of identifying, developing and sustaining elite athletes in individual and team sports can be improved.

1.1.2 As the review developed the Committee agreed that its focus should not be limited to participation in sport but include other relevant forms of physical exercise (such as dance).

1.1.3 During the course of review the Committee invited written submissions on the following questions:

1. What are the barriers to participation in sport for the following groups: women and girls; young people; ethnic minorities; disabled people; older people; socially disadvantaged groups?
2. How can access to sports, and participation levels, be improved generally, and for these groups?
3. What contribution do volunteers make to improving participation levels? What can be done to promote and support the role of volunteers?
4. What impact do the following have on participation levels: infrastructure and facilities; major events; elite sports?

1.1.4 The formal committee papers considered by the Committee are listed at annex 1. The Committee received oral presentations from the organisations and individuals listed in annex 2. A list of the written responses received to the consultation exercise is at annex 3. The Committee also consulted on the review via the Assembly's regional committees. Extracts from the minutes of the regional committee meetings are available on the Assembly's website. A copy of the position statement on sport in Wales provided by the Assembly Minister is at annex 4.

1.1.5 During the course of the review we learned of the following recent developments, having a bearing on the subject area, which were announced or ongoing while the review was in progress:-

- the Assembly Minister for Health and Social Services consulted on the Wellbeing in Wales strategy; the Health Active Lifestyles Action Plan; and the Strategy for Older People (which was subsequently launched);
- the Cabinet Office published their sports strategy "Game Plan";
- the quinquennial review of the Sports Council for Wales was in progress; and
- the Assembly Minister for Culture and Sport has secured research assistance from the University of Glamorgan to aid her officials in developing a sports strategy for the Welsh Assembly Government.

1.2 KEY THEMES

1.2.1 A number of key themes quickly emerged from the review:-

Benefits

- The serious risks to people's health of inactivity / the important health benefits of regular physical activity;
- The potential social benefits of sports participation (crime reduction, social inclusion, educational attainment) when part of a package of other social measures.

Participation rates

- The lower levels of regular participation in sport and physical activity in Wales than in the UK and compared to other countries;
- The gap between male and female participation in sport and physical activity;
- The drop-off in sports participation and physical activity after leaving school and continued decline with age.

Barriers

- The wide range of factors affecting participation in sports and physical exercise.

Structures

- The importance of access to appropriate facilities and of provision suited to specific groups' needs;
- The different sectors and groups involved in sports provision, including the private and voluntary sectors, and its links to other areas (health, education, local government and even transport);
- The number of initiatives (as noted above) already in place or planned to encourage sports participation and physical activity.

The Benefits

1.2.2 There is firm evidence of the health benefits of sport and physical activity. The Healthy Active Lifestyles Action Plan indicates that a more active population would experience significantly lower rates of obesity, cardiovascular disease and type two diabetes, as well as reductions in the incidence of some cancers, greater mobility and fewer injuries associated with ageing in the elderly and fewer mental health problems. Evidence suggests that the potential health benefits in adults can be achieved through a total of 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity (brisk walking, cycling, swimming, dancing) at least five days per week. For children and young people up to the age of 18 the recommended rates are 60 minutes of moderate intensity activity on most days. The evidence suggests that greater health benefits arise from encouraging non-active people to take up exercise than from active people taking more strenuous exercise. For some people, the goal of five 30 minute sessions of moderate exercise each week may seem ambitious and even discouraging. It is important to emphasise two things: first, that even less frequent exercise, say once a week, is better than no exercise at all; and secondly that activity built into day to day life (walking to work) can be just as valuable as exercise classes.

1.2.3 There are some indications that there are social benefits of sport in terms of providing an alternative to anti-social behaviour for disengaged young people. However, the Cabinet Office strategy "Game Plan" reports that the evidence seems to suggest that sport can be a positive element within a package of social measures but will not necessarily, by itself, deliver social benefits such as crime reduction and social inclusion.

Participation Levels

1.2.4 Various surveys indicate that both sports participation and physical activity levels are:-

- below the recommended levels to promote good health for 70% of adults;
- lower in Wales than in the rest of the UK and than in other countries;
- lower among women than men;
- lower among certain ethnic minority groups (asian women);
- lower among socially disadvantaged groups than among economically advantaged groups;
- and decrease with age.

Sports participation (any activity other than walking in previous month)

	Male	Female	All
Wales	44%	31%	38%
GB	54%	39%	46%

[Source: Wales - Sports Council for Wales, Adult Sports Participation and Club Membership in Wales 2000/01 and GB - General Household Survey 1996]

30 minutes of moderate activity five times per week

	Male	Female	All
Wales	36%	19%	28%
England	37%	25%	31%
Australia	58%	56%	57%

[Source: Wales - Health Promotion Wales, Barriers to Participation Survey 1998, England - Health Survey for England 1998 and Australia - National Public Health Partnership 2002]

Sports Participation by Age

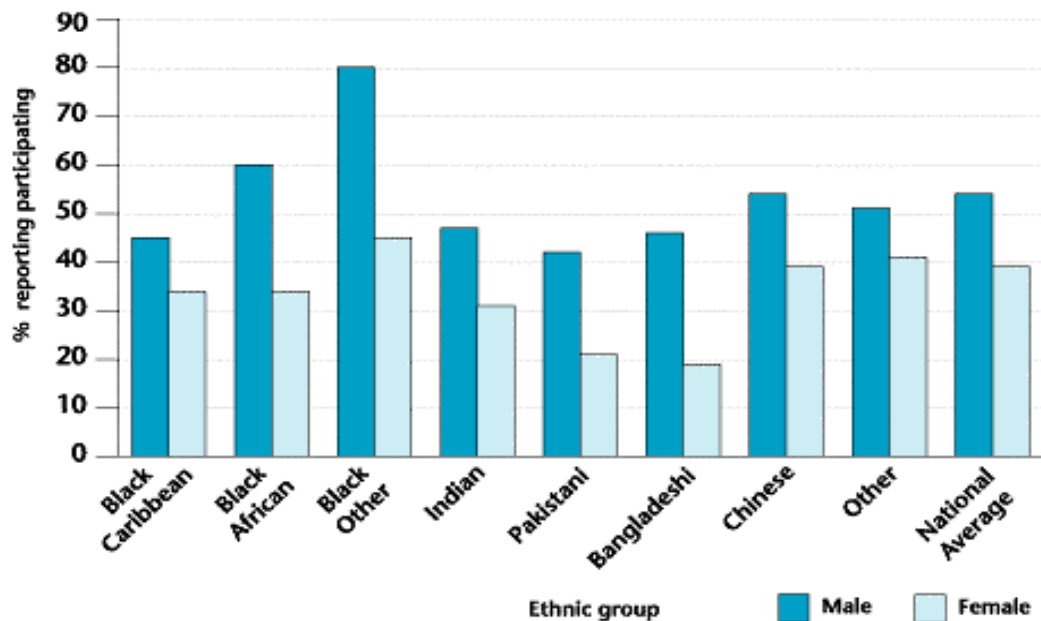
The Sports Council for Wales produces statistics on participation in sport by over 15s during the four weeks preceding the survey. Their results cover age groups up to 75+.

Age Range	Wales	Scotland
	% of Adult Population	% of Adult Population
12-15	85	98
16-24	67	77
25-34	54.5	68
35-54	40.3	55
55+	23.8	29

Age Range	Wales	Australia
	% of Adult Population	% of Adult Population
18-29	61	68.5
30-44	50	54.2
45-59	32.3	49.7
60-75	21.8	54.4

Sports participation by ethnic minority groups

Figure 1.9: Ethnic minority participation is generally lower than the UK average

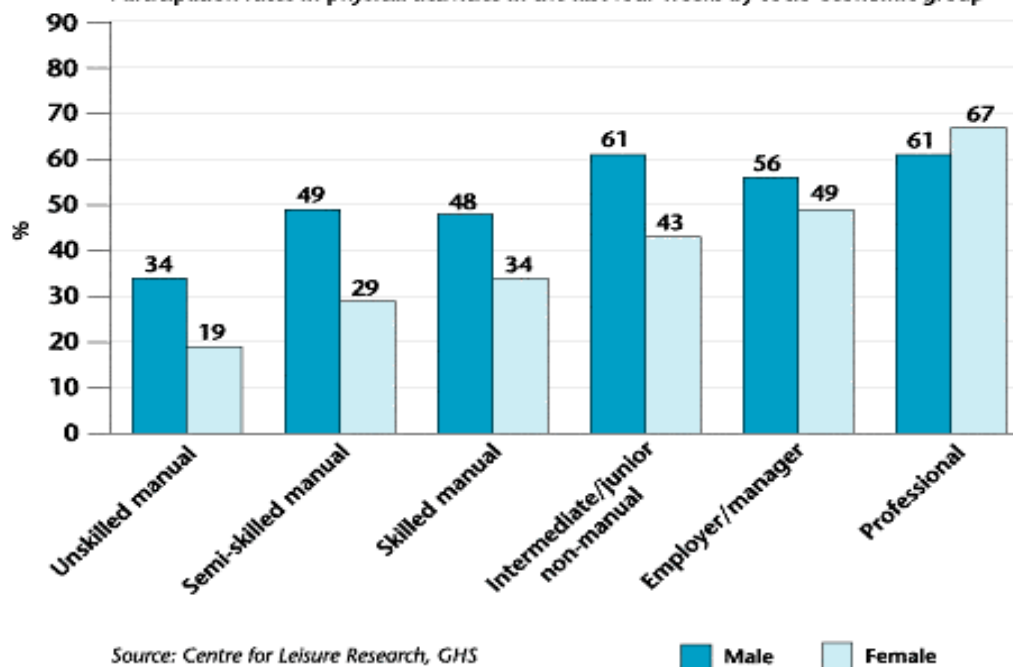


Source: Sport England's Sport Participation and Ethnicity in England – National Survey 1999/2000

Sports participation by socially disadvantaged groups

Figure 1.8: Participation varies with socio-economic group

Participation rates in physical activities in the last four weeks by socio-economic group



Source: Centre for Leisure Research, GHS

1.2.5 Higher participation levels in other countries can be attributed to cultural and social factors (for example sports activities being the main leisure activity in Finland) but also to government intervention (the successful “Fit for Life” campaign in Finland aimed at improving participation levels among older groups -discussed in more detail later in the report).

Barriers

1.2.6 A number of barriers were mentioned repeatedly by different organisations and individuals. They can be divided into barriers relating to lack of opportunities (“supply side”) and barriers relating to lack of motivation (“demand side”).

Motivational barriers

- sport not seen as a priority, or even suitable, for certain groups;
- lack of role models;
- lack of supportive family environment;
- negative experiences of sport when young;
- lack of prowess in competitive games leading to low confidence/enthusiasm;
- time constraints, especially for women with work and family responsibilities, and those required to work long hours;
- concerns about personal safety travelling to facilities.

Opportunities

- facilities - lack of local facilities (e.g. netball courts);
- personnel - coaches and volunteers;
- cost of facilities for some groups;
- lack of transport to facilities in rural areas.

Structures

Providers

1.2.7 The Committee heard from a range of sectors and organisations involved in sports provision: the Sports Council for Wales, sport governing bodies, local authorities, the private sector and voluntary bodies. These bodies have differing remits and priorities and accordingly have a greater or lesser interest and involvement in increasing mass participation in sport. This represents a fairly complex picture and the levers for government intervention in this field – particularly as local authorities are not under a statutory duty to provide sports facilities - are not necessarily either direct or straightforward therefore. However, most of the organisations we heard from were united by

enthusiasm and commitment, although a number expressed funding concerns. An organisational structure is at annex 5.

Funding

1.2.8 The main sources of public expenditure on sport in Wales are: local authorities' capital and revenue expenditure on leisure services; Sportlot lottery funding; New Opportunities fund; and the Assembly's grant-in-aid to the Sports Council. Local authorities' expenditure on sport is not monitored centrally. The figures in the following table should therefore be treated as indicative only.

Estimated Public Expenditure on Sport in Wales 2003/04 – Indicative Estimate

	Total	NGBs/Elite	Local development
SCW (Grant in aid)	9	6	3
Lottery	11	2	9
NOF	16	0	16
NAW* (PESS plan)	1	0	1
Local Authorities**	11	0	11
Capital spend	60	0	60
Revenue spend			
Total	108	8	100

(Millions) -figures rounded to the nearest million [Source: Sports Council for Wales]

*Figures for NAW exclude sponsorship of major events such as the Ryder Cup

**Figures for local authorities are historical figures based on 1998 SCW research.

Current Initiatives

1.2.9 During the course of our review we of course heard about initiatives falling within the Assembly Minister for Culture and Sports' portfolio relevant to increasing participation - for example the Sports Council for Wales' Dragonsports, Girls First, and Disability Sports Cymru programmes. But we also heard about initiatives within other Ministers' portfolios which are of relevance to increased participation in sport and physical exercise:

- Physical Education and School Sports Task Force report
- Welsh Network of Healthy Schools

- Safe Routes to School Initiative
- Walking and Cycling Strategy
- Wellbeing in Wales
- Healthy and Active Lifestyles Action Plan
- The Strategy for Older People in Wales

A number of these strategies cross-refer to each other.

1.2.10 It is important that the Assembly adopts a holistic approach to encouraging our overly sedentary population to be more active, particularly in view of the range of initiatives already under way in different policy fields. *We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government adopts a co-ordinated, strategic approach to promoting increased levels of physical activity and sports participation in order to promote good health by:*

- *allocating lead responsibility to either a Minister or a Cabinet sub-committee as appropriate for co-ordinating, monitoring, and reporting on progress;*
- *setting clear measurable targets in each of the policy fields which contribute to the strategy; and*
- *reporting annually to plenary on the progress made across all the relevant policy fields.*

1.3 OUR APPROACH

1.3.1 Given the range of existing initiatives which are already in hand, this report seeks to:

- bring together and build on the activities already underway or planned in the sports, health, and education sectors;
- identify what the Committee considers the priorities to be;
- endorse those existing activities which it supports; and
- identify any gaps/areas where the Committee considers further action is required.

1.3.2 A summary of our recommendations is at Section Three.

SECTION TWO - AREAS FOR ACTION

2.1 PRIORITIES

2.1.1 We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government's forthcoming sports strategy should focus on increasing participation in sports and physical activity and cover the following priority areas:

- i. Scope - the approach should focus on the broader issue of encouraging all forms of physical activity, not just competitive sports, and should promote greater variety and choice for participants.
- ii. A strategic co-ordinated approach – ensuring effective links between sports, health, local government, education and transport policies, and with the private and voluntary sectors.
- iii. Children and young people – ensuring that children have experiences of sport and physical exercise which are high quality, varied and fun and teach them the skills they need to participate in a range of sports.
- iv. Tackling the drop-off in participation rates amongst adolescents and after leaving school.
- v. Improving sport and physical exercise participation rates amongst girls and women.
- vi. Encouraging increased activity levels among more mature age groups, for whom there will be particular health benefits.
- vii. Identifying and tackling barriers to participation for those ethnic minority groups for whom participation rates are particularly low.
- viii. Continuing support for initiatives to assist disabled people to participate in sport.
- ix. Improving access to sports and activity levels amongst socially disadvantaged groups, for whom there will be greater potential health benefits than for more advantaged groups.
- x. Research and evaluation – ensuring that reliable research and evaluation mechanisms are in place and disseminating best practice. Monitoring of activity rates should include participation at the recommended level of 30 minutes of moderate activity 5 times a week as well as monitoring sports participation on a monthly and weekly basis.

2.1.2 The following paragraphs set out our recommendations in relation to specific target groups. Cross-cutting issues which affect participation rates for a number of the target groups are discussed at the end of this chapter.

2.2 INCREASING THE APPEAL OF SPORT AND PHYSICAL EXERCISE

2.2.1 If people do not wish to get involved in sport and physical exercise, the quality of the sports facilities across Wales will be irrelevant. The high numbers of people who join private sector health clubs in a rush of New Year good intentions and then use the facilities on only a handful of occasions illustrates this point. It is important therefore to look at what motivates people to want to participate in sport and physical exercise, what deters them, and what mechanisms might be available successfully to encourage people to participate more. *Stimulating demand for sports and exercise activities will need to be a key element of the Welsh Assembly Government's sports strategy.*

2.2.2 While it would be useful for people to understand the health benefits of regular exercise, enjoyment is likely to be more of a motivating factor for many people. Conversely, negative experiences of PE in school and low fitness levels (perceived or real) can deter people from participating in sport in later life. Time constraints, travel difficulties, costs, and personal safety concerns repeatedly emerged as barriers to participation for a number of groups (women and girls, with time being a particular difficulty for women with family responsibilities; children and young people; older people; socially disadvantaged groups, for whom cost can be a particular issue).

2.2.3 Counteracting the increasingly sedentary nature of our modern society is a challenging task. It will require: a sound understanding of what motivates and what deters people from taking exercise; evidence of which interventions work and which do not; sustained and co-ordinated effort at national and local level, involving a wide range of organisations; an effective series of information and marketing campaigns; and sound evaluation arrangements.

2.2.4 Local programmes to increase participation in sport and exercise will need to:

- Emphasise the social and fun aspects of participation;
- Offer a variety of activities to cater for a wide range of tastes;
- Cater for a range of ability levels so that individuals can participate at a level which suits them;
- Provide particular support and encouragement to those who lack confidence in their fitness level and physical abilities;
- Offer activities at times which suit participants' needs.

2.2.5 Consideration could be given to involving private sector providers (who have an interest in people becoming more interested in sport and exercise) in information and marketing campaigns.

2.3 TARGET GROUP - CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

2.3.1 The Healthy Active Lifestyles Action Plan states that the recommended activity level for children up to 18 years is 60 minutes of moderate intensity activity on most days. Given the pressures on curriculum time in schools and constraints in relation to facilities and teaching resources, it is unrealistic to expect these activity levels to be delivered entirely through curriculum time and that in any event might be counter productive in terms of young people's propensity to continue participating after leaving school. A holistic approach is needed - covering travel to and from school; curriculum time; extra-curricular activities; community opportunities for young people; and family time.

2.3.2 *We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government places a high priority on increasing activity levels among children and young people. This will need to include:*

- increasing the range of sports available through the curriculum and the quality of pupils' experience in PE lessons;
- increasing the range and take-up of extra-curricular sporting and physical activities; and
- encouraging increased participation in sports clubs.

Sport and Exercise in Schools

2.3.3 The PE and School Sports Task Force was established in May 2000 and reported its recommendations in June 2001 (annex 6). The Assembly Education Minister accepted the six headline recommendations, and asked the Sports Council for Wales to take the lead on action in relation to curriculum development centres, initial teacher training, and continuing professional development. However some of the specific recommendations have not yet been implemented. The Committee welcomes the findings of the PE and School Sports Task Force and welcomes the progress made to date. However, given the time and the expertise which went into the Task Force report we believe that, where specific recommendations (for example the proposals that PE be made a core subject within the National Curriculum and a core subject in initial teacher training) are not to be implemented, the reasons for this should be made clear to Assembly Members. *We invite the successor to the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee to undertake a scrutiny session on the implementation of the PE and School Sports Task Force report to review progress and clarify why certain recommendations will not be implemented.*

2.3.4 Having listened to the views of a range of organisations during our review, we believe that there are a number of issues relating to sport and exercise in schools which require particular attention.

2.3.5 **Facilities** We are concerned that in many schools the sports facilities are inadequate: dual use of sports halls and gymnasias for other school activities limits the time available for, and the number of children who can

participate in, sport; facilities which are in poor condition are also a problem. Unpleasant changing rooms can be off-putting to those who already have low motivation levels. New Opportunities Fund (NOF) grants of £48 million are currently being made available to local authorities in Wales for improvements to facilities for PE and school sports, with a requirement that there should also be community benefits. We welcome this investment in school facilities. It is important that the investment leads to increased participation rates by all pupils, not just to an improved experience for those who are already highly motivated to participate. *We recommend that the Assembly Minister seeks to ensure that evaluation mechanisms are built into the NOF programme to measure its impact on participation rates in the schools and areas affected. We recommend that the successor to the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee reviews the success of the programme.*

2.3.6 Time The PE and Schools Sports Task Force recommended that schools allocate 2 hours of curriculum time for PE each week for all pupils at all key stages. Although no specific time allocations are prescribed for any curriculum subject, the Assembly Education Minister has given her support to this recommendation. We also support this recommendation and recognise the difficulties that can face schools in making best use of the time available for PE - for example, lack of facilities and dual use of facilities can mean time is lost on travel and preparation of equipment. *We recommend that support is provided to schools and headteachers on making best use of curriculum time for PE.* We suggest that the successor to the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee considers this issue as part of the scrutiny session suggested at paragraph 2.3.3 above.

2.3.7 Choice A number of organisations argued that the choice of sports activities available to pupils is too limited, tends to be conservative and traditional, and can be off-putting to those (particularly girls) who are less likely to enjoy competitive team games. We heard that Golf Development Wales has developed a golf game suitable for use in primary schools, together with training material for teachers. We welcome this initiative and were reassured to hear that they would not use their funds to work with golf clubs which were unwilling to accept young players. We understand that the Sports Council for Wales' current focus is on increasing the number of schools participating in the Dragon Sport initiative. *We recommend that SCW continues to roll out the Dragon Sport initiative to schools and that consideration is given to extending the range of sports, by working with other sports bodies to explore whether other sports which are not traditionally available in schools could be adapted for school use, for example baseball. We recommend that the work which the Sports Council for Wales has in hand following the PE and School Sports Task Force report on Curriculum Development Centres, initial teacher training and continuing professional development also focuses on how the range of activities on offer in schools can be broadened.*

2.3.8 Extending Opportunity A number of respondents expressed a view that school sports tended to be targeted at the most able pupils and that efforts should be made to ensure that pupils of all ability levels are

encouraged to participate. *We recommend that the Sports Council for Wales investigates the factors which discourage less able youngsters from participating in sport and how these could be overcome.* Issues to consider might include:-

- the transition from primary to secondary schools;
- the opportunities available to pupils who played in their primary school teams but are not selected for secondary school teams;
- extending the Dragon Sport initiative to secondary schools;
- the scope to build on the Code of Practice for Out of School Hours Learning recently produced by Education Extra, in order to increase extra-curricular sports and exercise activities.
- the availability of trained coaches to assist with additional activities.

2.3.9 Support for Teachers Many of the proposals discussed above will require the support and enthusiasm of teachers to succeed. We are conscious of the many demands placed on teachers and we welcome the work in hand to improve initial teacher training and continuing professional development in relation to PE and school sport. *We recommend that the Sports Council for Wales uses the experience gained in its Dragon Sport initiative to identify what additional support teachers require and reports to the Assembly Minister with its advice.*

Opportunities for Young People in the Community

2.3.10 School-based activities must not be the only opportunity for children and young people to participate in sport. It is important that young people consider sport and exercise an integral part of their personal lives and not as something which is restricted to the school day. Walking and cycling to school offer simple ways for young people to increase their activity levels as a natural and integral part of their lives. The Welsh Assembly Government has earmarked £3.3m of transport grant funding in 2003-04 for local authorities to develop projects to enable children to walk and cycle to school safely under the Safe Routes to School initiative.

2.3.11 A number of respondents expressed concern at the lack of 'exit routes' for school leavers to community participation in sport. The Sports Council for Wales attempts to address this by encouraging young people to participate in clubs while of school age and developing links with community clubs (formerly the "Clwb Cymru" initiative). The Sports Council for Wales' publication "Swings and Roundabouts" (2000) indicates that the most popular club activity at primary school age is swimming and that around 30% of primary school children had participated in a swimming club since the previous summer. At secondary school level the most popular club sports are football (28%), rugby (18%), swimming (17%), dance (15% of girls), cricket (14% of boys) and netball (13% of girls). Information on club participation since the previous summer does not give a detailed picture of how regularly young people are participating in sporting activities out of school. *We recommend that the SCW reviews the information it collects on young people's participation in clubs.*

2.3.12 Support for family sports Some organisations suggested that there can be a lack of family support for some children to participate in sport. In contrast we heard that, in Finland, sport is the main leisure activity for children who take part in sport: with their families; through sports clubs run by volunteers, who are mainly parents; and in after school clubs. Sports Council for Wales figures show that children are more likely to participate in sport if their parents or siblings do so. Increased family involvement in sport and exercise would benefit parents as well as children. *We recommend that actions to encourage family participation in sport should be a key element of the work to increase children and young people's participation. This might include a publicity campaign supported by local initiatives such as family sports afternoons with reduced price admissions.*

2.4 TARGET GROUP - WOMEN AND GIRLS

2.4.1 The rates of participation in and exercise are lower for women and girls in Wales than they are for men. While this pattern is repeated across the UK and in a number of other countries, it is not inevitable: in Finland participation rates are higher for women than for men.

2.4.2 *We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government places a high priority in its sports strategy and its healthy active lifestyles action plan on increasing women's participation rates in order to bridge the gap between women in Wales and the rest of Britain and between women and men. We would like to see the proportion of women in Wales who regularly participate in sport and exercise match the rest of Britain (one quarter) within 5 years; Australia (over half) in 15 years; and Finland (over two thirds) within 20 years.*

2.4.3 Many of the barriers to participation which affect other groups in society also apply to women (access to facilities, transport, costs) while some barriers are of particular relevance to women (child care, time constraints, preconceptions about women and sport).

Cultural Factors

2.4.4 **Media Image and Role Models** A number of respondents commented that sport in Wales is perceived to be male dominated and that there is minimal media coverage of women's sports and a lack of positive role models for women in sport. It was felt that the problem of women's sports and women in sport being 'invisible' even extended to the home where it was suggested that girls often receive less family support in pursuing sporting activities than boys.

2.4.5 It would help if local initiatives to increase girls' participation in sport did not find themselves swimming against the tide of society and media images of women and peer group pressure. While media representation of women and

sport is not within the control of the Assembly, we believe it is an issue which should be addressed. It is incumbent upon organisations which receive public funding to ensure that the services provided are representative of, and fair to, all groups in society. *We recommend that the Sports Minister work with the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Sports Council for Wales, DCMS and the broadcasters to improve the media coverage of women's sports and the profile of female athletes. We also recommend that consideration be given to the role that publications aimed at girls and young women could play in presenting positive images of women's sports.*

Increasing Opportunities for Women

2.4.6 Facilities Concerns were expressed to us that there are fewer facilities for traditional women's sports in Wales than for traditional men's team games. It was argued that rugby, football and cricket pitches are in plentiful supply in local communities, whereas hockey pitches and netball courts are less common, requiring players to travel. *We recommend that SCW works with local authorities and women's sports associations to identify areas where gaps exist in the facilities available for women's sports and produces a costed action plan to remedy this situation, for consideration by the Assembly Sports Minister.*

2.4.7 In addition to the availability of facilities, there is also the question of the quality of facilities and their attractiveness to women. Respondents identified the following factors which affect women's willingness to use sports and leisure centres:

- crèche facilities;
- well lit and signposted secure carparks with CCTV;
- privacy - individual cubicles and showers.

2.4.8 *We recommend that SCW produces guidance on the needs of women and girls in relation to sports and leisure facilities and continues to work with local authorities to improve the appeal of sports facilities to women and other groups with particular needs.*

2.4.9 Structures We also received views that the structures in place for organised women's sports are limited and the exit routes from school sports to community sports are not as strong as for traditional male sports. The Sports Council for Wales has ring-fenced up to £650,000 of Sportlot funding to support the development of women and girls sport, including support for projects which increase the number of both recreational and competitive opportunities in the community and through developing sporting structures such as clubs, competitions, coaches and leaders. Within this budget the Sports Council for Wales are also about to launch a Leisure Centre Challenge to encourage leisure centres to provide new opportunities for women and school- community links for girls. *We support these initiatives and recommend that our successor committee monitors their implementation.*

2.4.10 Choice We heard evidence that women and girls are less likely to enjoy competitive team games than boys and men, and that women are more likely to choose dance and fitness activities. One respondent drew attention to the significant increases in participation in aerobics in recent decades and pointed out that by targeting women the sport had attracted women to participate who would be deterred by mixed gender sports. We heard from the Football Association of Wales that they have targets for the expansion of girls' football: to increase the number of players from 600 to 4000 and create 25 new leagues and 300 new teams by 2007. We welcome this new opportunity for girls to participate in traditional male sports. However, we are also anxious that resources should be directed to enable women and girls who find such sports unappealing to participate more by having a choice of more varied activities. We welcome the Sports Council for Wales' Girls First initiative, which is directed at girls in secondary schools and is still in its early stages. *We recommend that the Assembly Sports Minister increases funding for the programme to enable it to be expanded. We have recommended earlier that the Dragon Sport initiative should broaden its scope to cover more non-traditional sports; in doing so it should endeavour to include sports and activities which are more likely to appeal to girls, for example dance and fitness activities. It is even more important for a variety of sports to be available at secondary school age.*

2.4.11 Time A number of consultation responses drew attention to the time pressures faced by many women with family responsibilities and pointed out that activities need to be available in short chunks and at a convenient time. *We recommend that Sports Council for Wales and local authorities take this issue into account when developing services for women.*

2.4.12 Given the time constraints faced by women, travelling to and from leisure centres to participate in sport may be unrealistic, and facilities in the workplace may be a more practical option. *We recommend that the Assembly Minister for Culture and Sport examines the scope to encourage employers to provide fitness opportunities in the workplace. This might include an award scheme for employers who support their staff increasing their health levels and fitness levels.*

2.5 TARGET GROUP - OLDER PEOPLE

2.5.1 Participation rates decline with age while exercise helps to prevent conditions associated with middle and older age - cardio-vascular disease, type 2 diabetes etc. *In the view of the health benefits for this group, we recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government places a high priority on increasing participation rates among older people.*

2.5.2 Adopting a broad definition of sport and physical exercise will be particularly important in relation to older people, who are less likely to participate in outdoor team games and more likely to keep fit by walking.

2.5.3 During the review we were particularly interested to hear that in Finland the government succeeded in tackling low participation rates among older people via a targeted campaign "Fit for Life". The programme was launched in 1994 and ran for 5 years. It targeted people aged 40-60 who did not exercise three times per week. The goal was for 150,000 people in the target group to begin taking regular exercise by the year 2000. The programme consisted of an information campaign (picked up by newspapers and broadcasters) and local and regional projects. Local authorities, health bodies, employers, residents associations and sports clubs were all involved. During the programme participation rates for the age group targeted increased from 33% in 1994 to 46% in 1999. The programme has been re-launched from 2000-2004 and the target group extended to include people over 60. *We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government considers incorporating Finland's "Fit for Life" model into its Healthy Active Lifestyles Action Plan and its sports strategy.*

2.6 TARGET GROUP - ETHNIC MINORITY COMMUNITIES

2.6.1 Participation rates among people from ethnic minorities and in particular within certain groups, for example Asian women. Consultation response identified a range of barriers to participation:-

- cultural issues (do not associate with the sport) and traditional costumes;
- home/family demands (women);
- work/study demands (men);
- lack of role models/ethnic minority coaches;
- fear of abuse/being unwelcome;
- lack of female only classes and privacy needs.

2.6.2 Sport England and the Commission for Racial Equality have together launched an initiative "Sporting Equals" to promote racial equality in sport throughout England. The initiative includes:

- Racial Equality Charter for Sport to which more than 60 organisations are signatories;
- a racial equality standard for sport. Twenty organisations have achieved the preliminary level of the standard; and
- a series of fact-sheets on positive publicity images, working with ethnic minority communities etc.

2.6.3 *We recommend that the Sports Council for Wales works with the Commission for Racial Equality, local authorities and sports associations to learn from and build on the Sporting Equals initiative and develop an action plan to address barriers to participation by people from ethnic minority communities in Wales.*

2.7 TARGET GROUP - DISABLED PEOPLE

2.7.1 The Assembly is committed to the principle of equality of opportunity for all people, and this includes opportunities for disabled people to participate in sport and physical exercise. The high profile recent successes of our disabled athletes both help to counteract ignorance and stereotyping and provide inspiring role models for young disabled people. During our review we were impressed by the presentation we received on the work of the Federation of Sports Associations for the Disabled (FSAD). *We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government/SCW continues to provide funding and support for the work of the FSAD and works with local authorities to remove the barriers to participation by disabled people.*

2.7.2 We heard that barriers to participation by disabled people include:

- lack of local facilities/appropriate equipment;
- lack of information;
- transport difficulties;
- lack of companions;
- shortage of appropriately trained staff; and
- costs.

2.7.3 Co-operation between local service providers – social services, sports and leisure, education – will help to facilitate the development of sports opportunities for disabled people. Sports and physical recreation projects should also take account of the additional costs of services for disabled people – special equipment, reduced rates for companions and carers, transport costs. Improved training for those involved in sports and leisure is needed – general awareness, accessibility issues, and adapting coaching techniques. *We recommend that the Assembly Minister's sports strategy takes account of these issues. Support for volunteers will also be important to improve the opportunities for disabled people.*

2.7.4 We also read with interest the Wales Council for the Blind's sports and physical recreation strategy for visually impaired people. Many of their recommendations (adopting a broader definition of sport and physical recreation, focusing on women and girls, ensuring all age groups can participate) mesh with ours. *We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government, the Sports Council for Wales and local authorities co-operate with the Council to implement its strategy.*

2.8 TARGET GROUP - SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

2.8.1 Research suggests that rates of participation in sport and physical exercise are lower among socially disadvantaged groups than among higher income groups. As social disadvantage is also linked with poor nutrition patterns and higher levels of ill health, the benefits of exercise will be particularly important to this group. As noted previously there are indications that participation in sport can also have a positive impact on social inclusion

as part of a package of other social measures, although firm evidence of the impact of sport participation alone on, for example, crime reduction is not available

2.8.2 Consultation responses identified the following barriers to participation by socially disadvantaged groups:

- lack of awareness of facilities/opportunities available;
- lack of role models/parental interest; peer pressure;
- perceived attitudes of clubs and staff as unwelcoming;
- low community involvement;
- lack of facilities in local community;
- transport costs;
- day time access to dual use facilities.

2.8.3 The Healthy Active Lifestyles Action Plan includes socially disadvantaged people as a target group. The Communities First initiative is aimed at tackling the problems of severely disadvantaged areas. There will be benefits in linking activities proposed as part of the Healthy Active Lifestyles Action Plan and the Culture Minister's forthcoming sports strategy with Communities First. *We recommend that the Communities First initiative includes participation in sport as one of its priority areas.*

2.8.4 It can be more difficult in deprived areas to develop successful lottery projects due to a lack of the required skills within the local community. Capacity building in local communities is an important issue and we welcome the Local Government and Housing Committee's recent report on this "Community Regeneration – Capacity Development and Training".

2.8.5 The cost of accessing facilities can also be an issue for socially excluded groups. The Audit Commission report noted that local authorities' pricing of leisure services and subsidy schemes were not always clearly linked to authorities strategic objectives and were often determined by historic patterns of provision. *We recommend that authorities in Wales review their pricing schemes and consider the scope for targeted subsidies for key groups.*

2.9 FACTORS AFFECTING ALL TARGET GROUPS

2.9.1 As indicated above, a number of the barriers to participation in sport and physical exercise were identified as affecting several or all of the different target groups. Where a particular barrier affects a specific group differently to others, this has been highlighted above. The following paragraphs discuss the barriers which are of general relevance to most groups.

Facilities

2.9.2 Quantity Many respondents cited access to suitable local facilities in their communities as a barrier to participation. The Sports Council for Wales has a database of sports and outdoor facilities in Wales (excluding private sector sport centres). When compared with Edinburgh University's "Facilities Planning Model", this indicates that the match between population and the number of facilities across Wales is generally good, albeit with a lack of local authority swimming pools in certain locations. However transport issues and time constraints can make travel to facilities more of a barrier for some groups, which makes it important that best use is made of all local facilities available including schools, community halls etc. As noted previously NOF funding is available to upgrade school sports facilities and make them accessible for community use.

2.9.3 Quality The quality of facilities which exist is another matter. Due to the age of facilities, and insufficient maintenance at times of financial constraint, the quality of public sector facilities may often be unsatisfactory and off-putting to those whose motivation to participate in sport or exercise is not already strong. Factors which can deter individuals include: safety concerns – poor lighting, non-secure car parks; lack of privacy in changing rooms; lack of disabled equipment and poorly kept facilities. In 1994 the Sports Council for Wales produced guidance on marketing of leisure facilities. *We recommend that this is updated and guidance is produced on the facilities, equipment and services required by groups with low participation levels.*

2.9.4 Maintenance and upgrading of local authority facilities is a matter for local authorities. However, Sportlot capital funding is available through the Community Investment Programme to upgrade facilities where added value can be demonstrated in terms of sports benefits to young people, girls and women, disabled people and economically disadvantaged groups. *We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government/Sports Council for Wales continues to work with local authorities to improve the quality of local sports facilities in particular focusing on their accessibility and appeal to groups with low participation levels.*

2.9.5 Access While sports facilities exist in most areas, they may not be perceived to be accessible to some groups. Some respondents pointed out that where facilities are linked to schools, they may not be available for day-time use, which can exclude certain groups – for example mothers with young children and older people who may not wish to travel in the evenings. *We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government addresses the issue of balancing schools' needs with day time community use of school sports facilities in its strategy.*

2.9.6 Private sector providers There has been huge private sector investment in the health club sector in recent years. (For example about half a dozen private sector health clubs have been established in Cardiff within the last decade, excluding those attached to hotels.) The Audit Commission report "Sport and Recreation: Learning from Audit, Inspection and Research" highlights this issue and emphasises that local authorities should not see themselves as in competition with the private sector. It recommends that local

authorities think carefully about their objectives in providing a sports and leisure service and target that service accordingly . For many people, of course, membership costs at private clubs will be prohibitive and local authority provision will be their only means of accessing sports facilities. *We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government uses the findings of the Audit Commission report to work with local authorities in Wales to promote best practice in the provision of sport and leisure services. We recommend that our successor committee reviews the improvements made as a result of this best practice work.*

Community Structures (Clubs And Associations)

2.9.7 A number of respondents commented on the lack of structures within the community to support participation in sport after leaving school. There were comments that the structures which do exist are stronger for traditional male sports than for women's sports. We have discussed previously the steps being taken by the Sports Council for Wales to develop stronger community structures in relation to women's sport, which we support.

2.9.8 It was also suggested that sports associations' main focus tends to be on supporting the more talented players rather than broadening participation. It was felt that opportunities for casual, social participation in sport were limited. Funding was an issue raised by a number of organisations. *We recommend that the Minister's sports strategy identifies ways of developing structures in the community to increase social participation in sport.* Issues to consider might include: development of multi-sports clubs; simplified funding routes for voluntary bodies; broadening the range of sports available, such as baseball; and a greater emphasis on the fun aspects of sport.

Human Resources

Volunteers

2.9.9 We heard of the crucial role that the voluntary sector plays in sport in Finland: while high numbers of adults in Finland undertake sport on an individual basis - for example through outdoor activities - sports activities for children and young people are provided through the voluntary sector sports clubs, which depend on high numbers of volunteers, particularly parents. We also heard from sports governing bodies and voluntary sector sports associations in Wales of the importance of volunteers and of a shortage of coaches. We were told that the factors which deter people from volunteering include: the increasing burden of legal responsibilities (health and safety, child protection legislation, personal liability insurance); time commitments; assistance with incidental costs (travel costs); and a need for effective training and support. Volunteers (particularly parents) are an important element of the Dragon Sport initiative, however a broader focus is required. *We consider the contribution of volunteers to be vital and accordingly we recommend that the Minister for Culture and Sport develops an action plan for promoting volunteer*

activity in sports, with a particular focus on tackling the factors which deter people from volunteering.

Coaches

2.9.10 We heard from a number of organisations that a shortage of coaches was a barrier to expanding opportunities. As for volunteers, we also heard of the importance of effective training of coaches. A strategy is required to ensure that the personnel, whether volunteers or professional coaches, are in place to support the initiatives being developed to increase participation in sport. The Sports Council for Wales provided us with information which they had submitted to the Assembly Minister in support of a bid for a three year initiative to increase the number of coaches. The Minister has since asked the Council for more detailed proposals. *We recommend that the Assembly Minister considers the Sports Council for Wales' proposals and that the development of a coaching strategy is included within the overall sports strategy.*

Transport and Personal Safety

2.9.11 Availability of transport, travel time, and personal safety concerns may all act as barriers to some groups in the community making use of the facilities which exist. *We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government works with local authorities to address the problem of transport to facilities, particularly in rural areas and for target groups.*

2.10 OTHER ISSUES

2.10.1 The terms of reference for our review also included: the role of local authorities and the Audit Commission report; the impact of major events on participation levels; and the impact of elite sports on participation levels. This is discussed below.

The Role of Local Authorities

2.10.2 Local authorities are not under a mandatory duty to provide sport and recreation services. Moreover with the rapid changes to the sport and leisure sector, local authorities now find themselves offering facilities alongside highly competitive private sector providers. Despite the absence of a statutory duty on them and this private sector competition, local authorities are major providers of sport and recreation facilities, although the quality of facilities and services can vary. As noted above, the recent Audit Commission report on sport and recreation highlights the challenges now facing local authorities and explores how authorities can target their provision most effectively.

2.10.3 During our review we encountered little enthusiasm for placing a statutory duty on local authorities in relation to sport and recreation. It was felt that the establishment of minimum statutory standards would not necessarily improve the current position and that authorities should have the freedom to determine their own priorities in this arena. We heard that a local authority conference had been held in North Wales to discuss sport provision in Wales. *We recommend that this initiative is built on and that the Assembly Minister holds an annual conference of local authority sports and recreation officers to provide an opportunity for current issues to be debated and best practice to be shared.*

Mega and Major Events

2.10.4 The Cabinet Office report “Game Plan” defines mega and major events as follows:

Mega events The Summer Olympics, FIFA World Cup, UEFA European Championships, IAAF World Athletics championships and the Commonwealth Games. These events are awarded after competitive bidding to an international federation and tend to involve significant infrastructure investment.

Major events Events that are part of a regular international calendar for that sport - eg Wimbledon, cricket test series; one-off events that attract substantial interest in the UK and international TV rights – eg the rugby and cricket world cups; and showcase events – eg the World Disability Athletics Championships, the World Judo Championships.

2.10.5 Although we heard concern expressed during the review that a lack of role models and a low media profile for a particular sport can affect participation levels, it was felt that mega and major events do not, of themselves, generate long term increased participation in sport and that the economic/ tourism benefits will be more significant. “Game Plan” concludes that the benefits of hosting mega sporting events, whether economic, social or cultural are difficult to measure and the available evidence is limited. It recommends that mega events should be seen as an occasional celebration of success rather than as a means to achieving other government objectives, and that the cost implications of events should be understood from the start.

2.10.6 In view of the above concerns we were pleased to hear of the attempts by Golf Development Wales to maximise the benefits of the Ryder Cup by using it as a springboard for increasing participation in golf and widening access.

2.10.7 The Commonwealth Games Council for Wales advised us that the only mega sporting event for which Wales could realistically bid is the Commonwealth Games but that to do so would require major financial investment both in infrastructure and in a bidding campaign. They

emphasised the cost and complexity of such an exercise and also warned of the risks to the image of the country hosting a mega event if the organisation of that event is less than entirely successful

2.10.8 As noted in previous sections of the report, the focus of our review was on increasing grass roots participation in sport and exercise and we have recommended that this should be the key focus of the Minister's sports strategy. In view of the doubts expressed regarding the sporting and other benefits of mega events (at least in terms of long term increases in mass participation), we have no further action to recommend on mega events.

Elite Sports

2.10.9 Apart from anecdotal evidence about the impact of role models and a high media profile on participation in popular sports, there is no firm evidence of a link between international success in elite sports and mass participation in sport. For example Australia has high levels of international medal success but its mass participation levels, while higher than those in the UK, are not the highest. In Finland on the other hand the extremely high mass participation levels are not matched by similar levels of success in international medals (although it should be noted that Finland's voluntary sector sports clubs' main focus is on competitive and elite sport).

2.10.10 During our review we heard concern at the distances that our elite athletes have to travel to participate in suitable training and support. It was argued that there is a need for regional centres of excellence to feed into the national centres. *We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government and the Sports Council for Wales develop a network of regional sporting excellence centres.*

2.10.11 In terms of funding of elite sports, the Cabinet Office report "Game Plan" proposes that in future funding for elite sports should take account of the popularity of the sport as well the chances of international medal success. We were very concerned that this approach could lead to funding being directed towards traditional male sports and run counter to the goal of greater gender equality in sport. *We recommend that the Assembly Minister's strategy in relation to funding of elite sports takes account of gender equality issues.*

SECTION THREE - SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 As noted in Section One, given the range of existing initiatives which are already in hand, this report seeks to:

- bring together and build on the activities already underway or planned in the sports, health, and education sectors;
- identify what the Committee considers the priorities to be;
- endorse those existing activities which it supports; and
- identify any gaps/areas where the Committee considers further action is required.

3.2 The following provides a summary of our recommendations.

PARAGRAPH	RECOMMENDATION
	Overview
1.2.10	We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government adopts a co-ordinated, strategic approach to promoting increased levels of physical activity and sports participation in order to promote good health by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allocating lead responsibility to either a Minister or a Cabinet sub-committee as appropriate for co-ordinating, monitoring, and reporting on progress. • setting clear measurable targets in each of the policy fields which contribute to the strategy; and • reporting annually to plenary on the progress made across all the relevant policy fields.
2.1.1	We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government's forthcoming sports strategy should focus on increasing participation in sports and physical activity and cover the ten priority areas set out in Section 2.1.1
2.2.1	We consider that stimulating demand for sports and exercise activities will need to be a key element of the Welsh Assembly Government's sports strategy.
	Children and Young People
2.3.2	We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government places a high priority on increasing activity levels among children and young people. This will need to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing the range of sports available through the curriculum and the quality of pupils' experience in PE lessons;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing the range and take-up of extra-curricular sporting and physical activities; and • encouraging increased participation in sports clubs.
2.3.3	We invite the successor to the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee to undertake a scrutiny session on the implementation of the PE and School Sports Task Force report to review progress and clarify why certain recommendations will not be implemented.
2.3.5	<p>We recommend that the Assembly Minister seeks to ensure that evaluation mechanisms are built into the NOF programme to measure its impact on participation rates in the schools and areas affected.</p> <p>We recommend that the successor to the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee reviews the success of the programme.</p>
2.3.6	We recommend that support is provided to schools and headteachers on making best use of curriculum time for PE.
2.3.7	<p>We recommend that Sports Council for Wales continues to roll out the Dragon Sport initiative to schools and that consideration is given to extending the range of sports, by working with other sports bodies to explore whether other sports which are not traditionally available in schools could be adapted for school use, for example baseball.</p> <p>We recommend that the work which the Sports Council for Wales has in hand following the PE and School Sports Task Force report on Curriculum Development Centres, initial teacher training and continuing professional development also focuses on how the range of activities on offer in schools can be broadened.</p>
2.3.8	We recommend that the Sports Council for Wales investigates the factors which discourage less able youngsters from participating in sport and how these could be overcome.
2.3.9	We recommend that the Sports Council for Wales uses the experience gained in its Dragon Sport initiative to identify what additional support teachers require and reports to the Assembly Minister with its advice.

2.3.11	We recommend that the Sports Council for Wales reviews the information it collects on young people's participation in clubs.
2.3.12	We recommend that actions to encourage family participation in sport should be a key element of the work to increase children and young people's participation.
	Women and Girls
2.4.2	We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government places a high priority in its sports strategy and its healthy active lifestyles action plan on increasing women's participation rates in order to bridge the gap between women in Wales and the rest of Britain and between women and men. <i>We would like to see the proportion of women in Wales who regularly participate in sport and exercise match the rest of Britain (one quarter) within 5 years; Australia (over half) in 15 years; and Finland (over two thirds) within 20 years.</i>
2.4.5	<p>We recommend that the Sports Minister work with the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Sports Council for Wales, DCMS and the broadcasters to improve the media coverage of women's sports and the profile of female athletes.</p> <p>We also recommend that consideration be given to the role that publications aimed at girls and young women could play in presenting positive images of women's sports.</p>
2.4.6	We recommend that the Sports Council for Wales works with local authorities and women's sports associations to identify areas where gaps exist in the facilities available for women's sports and produces a costed action plan to remedy this situation, for consideration by the Assembly Sports Minister.
2.4.8	We recommend that the Sports Council for Wales produces guidance on the needs of women and girls in relation to sports and leisure facilities and continues to work with local authorities to improve the appeal of sports facilities to women and other groups with particular needs.
2.4.9	We support the initiatives mentioned in paragraph 2.4.9 (leisure centre challenge and ringfenced Sportlot funding for facilities for women and girls) and recommend that our successor committee monitors

	their implementation.
2.4.10	We recommend that the Assembly Sports Minister increases funding for the Girls First programme to enable it to be expanded. We have recommended earlier that the Dragon Sports initiative should broaden its scope to cover more non-traditional sports; in doing so it should endeavour to include sports and activities which are more likely to appeal to girls, for example dance and fitness activities. It is even more important for a variety of sports to be available at secondary school age.
2.4.11	We recommend that the Sports Council for Wales and local authorities take time constraints facing women with families into account when developing services for women.
2.4.12	We recommend that the Assembly Minister for Culture and Sport examines the scope to encourage employers to provide fitness opportunities in the workplace. This might include an award scheme for employers who support their staff increasing their health levels and fitness levels.
	Older People
2.5.1	In the view of the health benefits for this group, we recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government places a high priority on increasing participation rates among older people.
2.5.3	We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government considers incorporating Finland's "Fit for Life" model into its Healthy Active Lifestyles Action Plan and its sports strategy.
	Ethnic Minorities
2.6.3	We recommend that the Sports Council for Wales works with the Commission for Racial Equality, local authorities and sports associations to learn from and build on the Sporting Equals initiative and develop an action plan to address barriers to participation by people from ethnic minority communities in Wales.
	Disabled People
2.7.1	We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government/ Sports Council for Wales continues to provide funding and support for the work of the Federation of Sporting Associations for the Disabled and works with local

	authorities to remove the barriers to participation by disabled people.
2.7.3	We recommend that the Assembly Minister's sports strategy takes account of these issues. Support for volunteers will also be important to improve the opportunities for disabled people.
2.7.4	We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government, the Sports Council for Wales and local authorities co-operate with the Wales Council for the Blind to implement its strategy.
	Socially Disadvantaged Groups
2.8.3	We recommend that the Communities First initiative includes participation in sport as one of its priority areas.
2.8.5	We recommend that authorities in Wales review their pricing schemes and consider the scope for targeted subsidies for key groups.
	Facilities
2.9.3	We recommend that the SCW guidance on marketing leisure facilities is updated and guidance is produced on the facilities, equipment and services required by groups with low participation levels.
2.9.4	We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government/ Sports Council for Wales continues to work with local authorities to improve the quality of local sports facilities in particular focusing on their accessibility and appeal to groups with low participation levels.
2.9.5	We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government addresses the issue of balancing schools' needs with day time community use of school sports facilities in its strategy.
2.9.6	We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government uses the findings of the Audit Commission report to work with local authorities in Wales to promote best practice in the provision of sport and leisure services. We recommend that our successor committee reviews the improvements made as a result of this best practice work.
	Community Structures

2.9.8	We recommend that the Minister's sports strategy identifies ways of developing structures in the community to increase social participation in sport.
	Human Resources
2.9.9	We consider the contribution of volunteers to be vital and accordingly we recommend that the Minister for Culture and Sport develops an action plan for promoting volunteer activity in sports, with a particular focus on tackling the factors which deter people from volunteering.
2.9.10	We recommend that the Assembly Minister considers the Sports Council for Wales's coaching proposals and that the development of a coaching strategy is included within the overall sports strategy.
	Transport
2.9.11	We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government works with local authorities to address the problem of transport to facilities, particularly in rural areas and for target groups.
	Local Authorities
2.10.3	We recommend that this initiative is built on and that the Assembly Minister holds an annual conference of local authority sports and recreation officers to provide an opportunity for current issues to be debated and best practice to be shared.
	Elite sports
2.10.10	We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government and the Sports Council for Wales develop a network of regional sporting excellence centres.
2.10.11	We recommend that the Assembly Minister's strategy in relation to funding of elite sports takes account of gender equality issues.

ANNEXES

LIST OF COMMITTEE PAPERS CONSIDERED

Name	Date of Meeting	Paper Reference
Sports Council for Wales	17 July 2002	CC 15-02(p.1)
Welsh Assembly Government - Position Paper	17 July 2002	CC 15-02(p.2)
Audit Commission	23 October 2002	CC 16-02(p.1a)
Welsh Local Government Association	23 October 2002	CC 16-02(p.1b)
PE and Sports in Schools Taskforce: Progress Report	6 November 2002	CC 17-02(p.1)
Caerphilly County Borough Council	6 November 2002	CC 17-02(mins)
Llandarcy Park Ltd	6 November 2002	CC 17-02(p.1a)
Nigel Walker	20 November 2002	CC 18-02(mins)
Welsh Region of the British Sports Council for the Deaf	20 November 2002	CC 18-02(mins)
Welsh Development Agency (Ryder Cup)	28 November 2002	CC 19 -02(p1)
Golf Development Wales	28 November 2002	CC 19 -02(p1)
Commonwealth Games Council for Wales	28 November 2002	CC 19-02(mins)
Health and Education Officials from Finland	4 December 2002	CC 20-02(mins)
Ginney Blakey, Assembly Official, Healthy and active Lifestyles Action Plan	4 December 2002	CC 20-02(p.1)
Ceri Breeze, Assembly Official, Wellbeing in Wales	4 December 2002	CC 20-02(mins)
Welsh Sports Association	18 December 2002	CC 21-02(p.1)
Welsh Schools Athletics Association	18 December 2002	CC 21-02(p.2)
Athletics Association of Wales	18 December 2002	CC 21-02(p.3)
Cabinet Office	16 January 2003	CC 01-03(mins)
Federation of Sports Associations for the Disabled	16 January 2003	CC 01-03(p.2)
Welsh Assembly Government - Position Paper - Updated version	23 January 2003	CC 02-03(p.6)

ANNEX 2

ORAL PRESENTATIONS TO COMMITTEE – LIST OF ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

1. Sports Council for Wales
2. Audit Commission
3. Welsh Local Government Association
4. PE and School Sports Taskforce
5. Llandarcy Park Ltd
6. Caerphilly County Borough Council
7. British Sports Council for the Deaf
8. Nigel Walker
9. Golf Development Wales
10. Welsh Development Agency (Ryder Cup)
11. Commonwealth Games Council for Wales
12. Health and education officials from Finland
13. Ginney Blakey, Assembly official, Healthy and Active Lifestyles Action Plan
14. Ceri Breeze, Assembly official, Wellbeing in Wales
15. Welsh Sport Association
16. Welsh Schools' Athletics Association
17. Athletics Association of Wales
18. Cabinet Office official, Game Plan
19. Federation of Sports Associations for the Disabled

**LIST OF ORGANISATIONS SUBMITTING WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS TO
THE REVIEW**

1. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
2. Boys and Girls Clubs of Wales
3. Cardiff County Council
4. Ceredigion County Council
5. City and County of Swansea
6. Colin Crayford
7. Disability Wales
8. Fitness Wales
9. Institute of Sports and Recreation Management (South Wales and West of
England Branch)
10. National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)
11. Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
12. Powys County Council
13. RNIB Cymru
14. Rupert Moon
15. Tennis Wales
16. The FAW Football in the Community Ltd
17. Wales Council for the Blind
18. Wales Council for the Deaf
19. Wales Tourist Board
20. Welsh Council for School Sport
21. Welsh Gymnastics Association
22. Welsh Hockey Union
23. Welsh Netball Association
24. Welsh Rugby Union

WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT POSITION PAPER ON PARTICIPATION IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY – FOR CONSIDERATION AS PART OF THE CULTURE COMMITTEE REVIEW OF SPORT – JANUARY 2003.

Definition

From the *Council of Europe*:

"All forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and well-being, forming social relationships, or obtaining results in competition at all levels"

Introduction

As the Minister has stated to Committee, the Welsh Assembly Government is working towards a first WAG strategy for Sport, Physical Activity and Fitness. This work will be informed by the Culture Committee's Review of Sport and by important developments on roughly parallel tracks in terms of timing such as the DCMS/Strategy Unit Review of Sport and the Quinquennial Review of the Sports Council for Wales.

This paper therefore (and as specifically requested by Committee) will set out the current context and activity to date while making reference to the cross cutting initiatives underway across various Ministerial portfolios. It will not seek to anticipate or pre-empt the Welsh Assembly Government sports strategy itself.

The Committee should also be aware that the Welsh Assembly Government is also undertaking work on an Events Strategy for Wales that will focus largely though not exclusively on sporting events, and the Welsh Tourist Board are working on a Sports Tourism Strategy. Both the above will be published in 2003.

Why Sport is Important & Key Issues

Sport can make a contribution (although not necessarily providing the solution) across a wide range of Assembly objectives. In no particular order:

<u>Economy</u> : <i>sport is a contributor to our economic development</i>
<u>Health</u> : <i>sport is an essential component of our well being</i>
<u>Culture</u> : <i>sport is an important element in how we define ourselves</i>
<u>Society</u> : <i>sport is a key constituent in the fabric of our communities</i>
<u>Environment</u> : <i>sport is an active part of our unique landscapes</i>
<u>Wales on the World Stage</u> : <i>sport is putting Wales on the international map</i>

- Total government spend on sport in the UK is estimated to be about £2bn per annum, most of which (85%) is delivered through local authorities.
- Sport and Physical Activity in Wales at a level that delivers a health benefit (ie 5 x 30' per week) is:

WALES	TOTAL	28%	MALES 36%	FEMALES 19%
ENGLAND	TOTAL	31%	MALES 37%	FEMALES 25%
AUSTRALIA	TOTAL	57%	MALES 58%	FEMALES 56%

This is one of the great challenges for us in Wales.

- There are a number of organisations that are responsible for delivering sport in Wales. These include the Welsh Assembly Government; Local Authorities, Sports Council for Wales, Governing Bodies of Sport, Sports Clubs, Schools, Colleges and Universities, Community Clubs.
- In terms of gender issues, men are still more likely to participate in sport than women, with rates of participation of 53% compared to 41% in 1997/98. The Plan for Wales sets a goal, within the overall increase of participation, of halving the gap between men and women's participation by the year 2005.

National Assembly for Wales/ Welsh Assembly Government

Listed below are some areas in sport that the Assembly has been involved with since 1999:

- Established the Healthy and Active Lifestyle Taskforce whose action plan is now subject to consultation and representatives have addressed the Culture Committee as part of the review;
- Provided financial assistance towards the Special Olympic Games held in Cardiff;
- Established the Football Forum that reported last year and was followed by a Ministerial announcement that £1.3m of additional WAG funds would support football development over the next 3 years;
- Established the Wales Outdoor Activities Awareness Forum that reported last year followed by the launch of a safety leaflet for outdoor activity in Wales;
- Played a crucial role in winning the 2010 Ryder Cup bid followed by significant long term investment by the WAG to realise the economic and sporting benefits including £250K per annum via the Sports Council for Wales for golf development;
- Provided financial assistance to Millennium Stadium plc towards staging the FA Cup final and associated events;
- Sets strategic priorities in Plan for Wales for participation in sport, especially by women and girls and young people.
- Launched the Culture Strategy which identifies several objectives involving sport, such as increasing the number of people taking part in sport;
- The Sports Council has provided financial support to the Commonwealth Games Council for Wales towards the team competing at the Manchester Games;
- Sports Council and Welsh Assembly Government have implemented the PE and School Sport Task Action Plan for Wales with £5m of additional funding announced recently by the Education Minister;
- Provided financial support towards Ynys Mon County Borough Council conducting a feasibility study in connection with submitting a bid to host the Island Games 2009.
- The Welsh Assembly Government in partnership with the WLGA and the Local Authorities are developing a free swimming initiative for which there are very high hopes in terms of increased participation for target groups. A working party is currently preparing detailed criteria and will report soon.

Welsh Assembly Government Priorities for the Sports Council for Wales

1: In the current financial year 2002-03

The Sports Council's grant in aid for 2002/2003 is £9.4m (£7.958m on a cash basis). Of the 76 governing bodies of sport in Wales recognised by the Sports Council, 58 are supported financially and 83 funded posts will account for about 52% of the budget. In its role as lottery distributor, the Sports Council will distribute this financial year over £11m to a range of projects throughout Wales.

The Sports Council's mission is:

- increase participation, to encourage participation in sport both in terms of numbers of people and their frequency of activity;
- raising standards- to raise standards of performance and excellence in sport
- improving facilities
- providing technical information and advice and general understanding about sport and physical recreation.

Women in Sport

The Welsh Assembly Government has directed that this area of development should continue to be given additional emphasis in all aspects of the Sports Council's programmes. There are several initiatives in place, which are aimed at increasing participation. The most notable new initiative is:

Girls First

This scheme offers up to £1,000 to secondary schools to help provide additional extra curricular opportunities for girls. Around 80% of all secondary schools in Wales have participated in the programme offering a range of over 30 different after school activities for girls. The Welsh Assembly Government has committed £350K to this programme this year.

Golf Development

An additional £250K has been provided this year. The Committee has received a presentation on this work.

Sportsmatch

An additional £150K making a total of £450K this year ensures that very considerable scope exists for creating public/private partnerships that benefit sport.

Playing for Wales

An additional £250K has been made available this year to minimise the cost implications for international competitors, particularly those who are faced with the greatest travelling burdens to train and play for Wales.

2: Over the next three financial years of the budget planning round.

In addition to the ongoing priorities listed for the current year there are two major additional priorities for the next period.

Football Development

As previously mentioned an additional £1.3m, making an overall total of almost £2m will be committed by the Welsh Assembly Government to football development in Wales over the next three years. The FAW Trust has made a presentation to the Committee regarding their action plan for implementing the recommendations of the Football Forum. This investment will make a very significant contribution to participation in sport, especially by women and girls.

Coaching

Subject to agreement with the Sports Council for Wales over a detailed delivery plan that addresses factors such as maximising participation rates, developing women and girls sport and so on, the Minister hopes to make a significant announcement in due course.

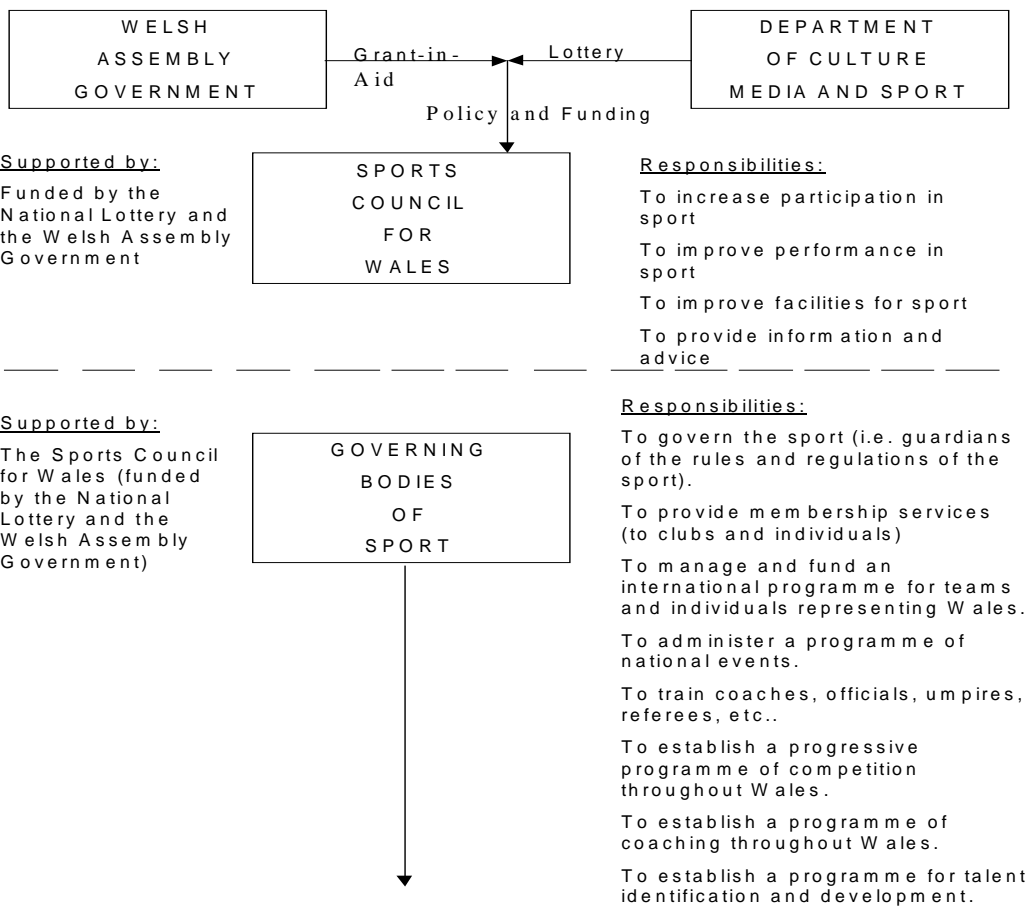
Conclusion

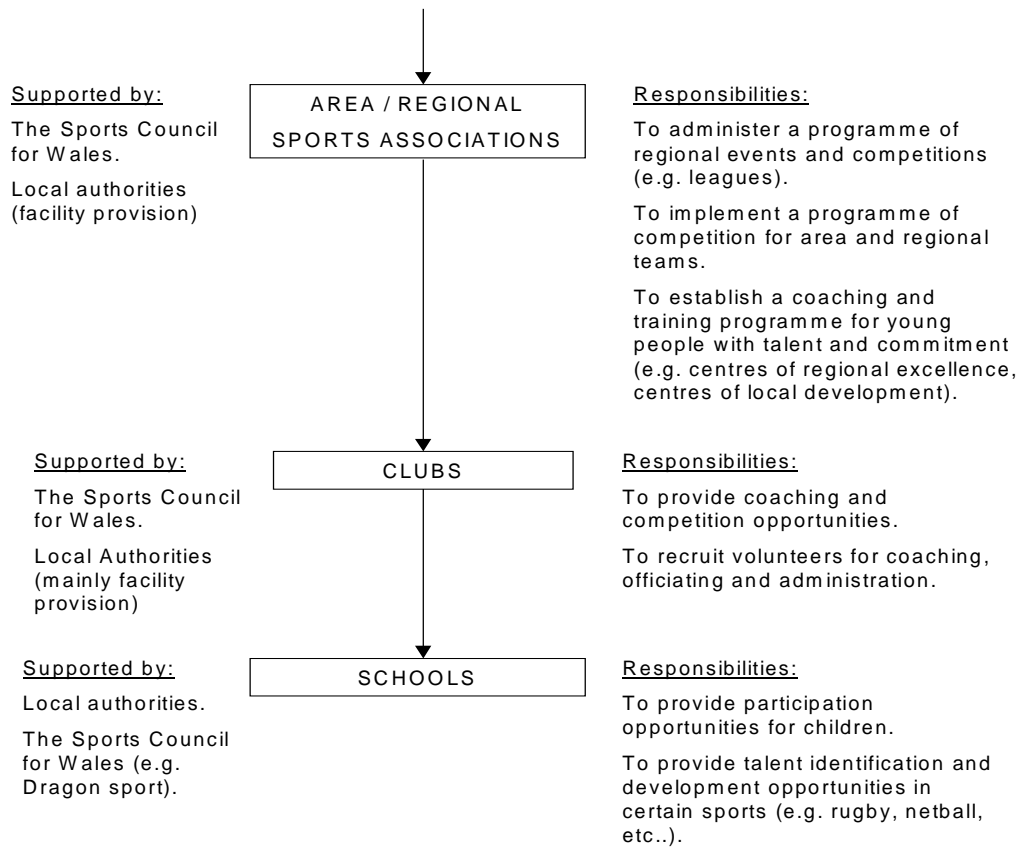
The Welsh Assembly Government has made a significant contribution to enhancing opportunities for participation in sport. The Sports Strategy will seek to seek to make a candid assessment of what has been achieved but also of the significant challenges that lie ahead if Wales is to aim to emulate and match some of the benchmark countries such as Australia and Finland.

The result of the Lottery Review may of course have a bearing on ways in which Wales be able to fund opportunities for sports participation in future years and that is a process that we hope to influence but cannot control. The recently created Culture Fund however does provide some additional flexibility allowing Government in the future to respond quickly and effectively to innovative ideas and plans from key partners in the delivery of public expenditure on sport in Wales.

Sports Policy Unit – January 2003

**ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF SPORTS BODIES
IN WALES**





N.B. The majority of sports facilities in Wales are provided by local authorities e.g. sports/leisure centres, swimming pools, football/rugby pitches, etc..

**PE AND SCHOOL SPORTS TASK FORCE REPORT –
RECOMMENDATIONS**

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>1. PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM</p> <p>Raise standards in physical education by ensuring that all schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • manage the subject effectively within the whole school • Curriculum; • set challenging targets for raising standards in PE and school sport; • provide enough curriculum time to teach the requirements of the National Curriculum for PE in all key stages; • develop young people’s physical skills from one year to the next and improve their understanding of the importance of health and fitness.
<p><u>MANAGE PHYSICAL EDUCATION</u></p> <p>manage the subject effectively within the whole school curriculum, including setting targets for raising standards in physical education and school sport;</p>
<p>1.1.1 headteachers should identify areas for development in physical education and school sport in the school development plan;</p>
<p>1.1.2 secondary physical education departments and primary subject leaders should identify quantitative and qualitative targets in their subject development plans aimed at raising standards. These targets should include health-related education and fitness issues</p>
<p>1.1.3 all primary inspection reports should include a report on standards in physical education.</p>
<p><u>1.2 PROVIDE CURRICULUM TIME</u></p> <p>provide sufficient time for teachers to deliver the requirements of the National Curriculum for physical education in all key stages;</p>
<p>1.2.1 the NafW makes physical education a core subject within the National Curriculum;</p>
<p>1.2.2 schools allocate at least 2 hours of curriculum time for physical education each week at all key stages for all young people;</p>
<p>1.2.3 the NafW should publish guidelines for the effective use of curriculum time using case studies from LEA and Estyn reports.</p>
<p><u>1.3 ENSURE CONTINUITY AND PROGRESSION IN LEARNING</u></p> <p>develop progression in young people's physical skills, including improvement in their understanding of the importance of health and fitness.</p>
<p>1.3.1 Local Education Authorities (LEAs), with funding from NafW, should establish a system of physical education co-ordinators to raise standards, spread good practice and work with groups of schools and their senior management teams to help them plan the curriculum together;</p>
<p>1.3.2 schools manage their facilities effectively, especially gymnasias and sports halls, and</p>

	always make their use for physical education and school sport the main priority.
2	TRAINING
2.1	PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING (ITET) Ensure that Initial Teacher Education and Training equips trainees with the necessary confidence, knowledge, skills and understanding to teach physical education.
2.1.1	the NafW produces a National Curriculum in Physical Education for Initial Teacher Education and Training to improve consistency in the quality of training across Wales.
2.1.2	all ITET providers should give trainees an agreed number of hours training in the teaching of physical education in order to deliver the requirements of the proposed NC in physical education for ITET and to make sure they achieve a clearly defined minimum level of competence by the time they complete their course;
2.1.3	all trainees must include reference to levels of competence achieved in physical education in their Career Entry Profile (CEP);
2.1.4	the NafW should commission a survey of good practice in mentoring trainees in physical education during their ITET course.
2.2	CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT Raise standards in physical education and school sport by establishing accredited continuing professional development (CPD) programmes for all teachers
2.2.1	the NafW identifies priority areas for teacher development in physical education
2.2.2	the NafW sets up a Professional Development Board for Physical Education in Wales (PDB-PE Wales) to put in place a regional and national strategy for assuring the quality of accredited professional development for physical education teachers.
2.2.3	the NafW establishes a system to help all teachers and trainees access national coach education programmes including a summer school of NGB courses for NQTs and ITET trainees;
2.2.4	the NafW makes physical education a compulsory part of any teacher induction or early professional development system introduced in Wales to strengthen safe practice;
2.2.5	the NafW establishes a training programme for all non-specialist inspectors, mentors and tutors of physical education;
2.2.6	the NafW should establish a system of school physical education co-ordinators and train them to provide support for primary school teachers in order to improve standards;
2.2.7	should provide specific professional development programmes for NQTs and supply teachers.
3	ACCOMMODATION AND RESOURCES Improve the quality of accommodation and resources for physical education in all schools in Wales
3.1	Estyn should identify basic standards for physical education accommodation in primary and secondary schools;
3.2	the NafW should allocate a significant amount of the extra National Lottery money, recently announced by the First Minister, to LEAs for the development and maintenance of school facilities;
3.3	a strategic approach to the provision of school and community facilities should be established;
3.4	school-based facilities such as gymnasias and sports halls, should be managed more

	effectively with physical education and school sport requirements as the main priorities for specialist use.
4	SCHOOL SPORT
	Support schools in Wales to extend opportunities for school sport beyond the school day by improving the quality and the breadth of after school activities for all young people irrespective of age, ability, ethnicity, gender or geographical location.
4.1	all schools should adopt a strategic approach to planning and implementing school sporting opportunities for all young people whatever their age, gender, ability, ethnicity or geographical location;
4.2	schools should adopt a co-ordinated approach to their planning of physical education and school sport in order to use resources within the community efficiently and effectively;
4.3	cross phase school co-ordinators should work with community providers of sport to provide a sustainable infrastructure for the development of school sport;
4.4	out of school hours learning opportunities, including sport, should be annually evaluated and LEAs should apply for funding from the New Opportunities Fund (NOF);
4.5	a Regional School Sports Association (RSSA), appropriately funded and to include primary and secondary teachers, Sports Development Officers (SDOs), Regional Development Officers and Dragonsport co-ordinators should be set up for the purpose of co-ordinating school sport within LEAs and throughout the Principality;
4.6	the Dragonsport Initiative should be extended to secondary schools.
5	THE WAY FORWARD
	<u>A STRUCTURE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SCHOOL SPORT INITIATIVES</u>
	Establish a collaborative structure of Curriculum Development Centres for the identification and development of good practice in physical education and school sport.
5.1	the NafW should appoint a national co-ordinator to manage, monitor, evaluate and report on the implementation of the recommendations of this report.
5.2	a steering group should be set up to support the implementation of the recommendations.
5.3	the NafW should establish a collaborative structure for the identification, strengthening and further development of existing good practice in physical education and school sport by piloting a network of curriculum development clusters to provide structural support for the recommendations identified in this report. A flexible range of models will be required in order to reflect the individual needs and specialisms locally and regionally.
	The structure should provide:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a cluster of schools, colleges and/or leisure centres for the promotion of effective liaison and continuity between key phases of education; • a network to strengthen and develop existing good standards in physical education and schools sport; • a network for the development of new initiatives in physical education and school sport; • centres committed to sufficient provision of time, supportive management and the identification and sharing of good practice in both its physical education programme, extra-curricular activities and initiatives such as Dragonsport; • centres within which to develop professional development programmes for trainee teachers

and lecturers, students on Initial Teacher Education and Training programmes and coaches;

- centres that develop shared provision and use of specialist resources;
- centres that promote knowledge and understanding of health and fitness and which are committed to an active lifestyle philosophy;
- centres that will produce evidence of a good practice to be shared throughout Wales

6. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT CENTRES

Establish Curriculum Development Centres (CDCs) and make sure they work together for the identification and development of good practice in physical education and school sport.