

Sport and Recreation Alliance

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PARLIAMENT

APPG for Sport

The most recent meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Sport considered the state of women's sport and the opportunities presented by major events such as the London 2012 Games and the FIFA Women's World Cup. Parliamentarians heard from guest speakers Gail Emms MBE, Sue Tibballs and Kelly Simmons, and the meeting was chaired by Baroness Grey-Thompson DBE. The discussion highlighted the discrepancy between recent successes at the elite level of women's sport and declining participation at the grassroots, and members considered the role of national governing bodies and local authorities, the challenges of funding cuts and the nature of social attitudes towards women in the sporting arena. Also discussed was the extent of government involvement required to make a difference to women's sport, and a number of positive initiatives. Wolverhampton Wanderers community programmes and the ECB's 'Chance to Shine' programme were cited as useful examples for others to follow.

The next meeting of the all-party group will take place in the House of Commons on 28 June at 3pm, and will focus on the role of sport within the public health agenda. The meeting will include special guest speakers Duncan Goodhew MBE, Anne Adams-King (ASA), Dr William Bird MBE (Physical Activity Alliance) and Phil Veasey (MEND).

How can you make yourself heard in Parliament?

If you would like more information, have suggestions about future activities or would like to support the work of the group please contact the secretariat to the group, [Simon Butler](#) ^[1].

You can also stay up-to-date by viewing [the APPG's webpage](#) ^[2] and by following the group on Twitter [@appgsport](#).

Update on abolition of cheques

In light of considerable public concern, on 15 June the Treasury Select Committee questioned representatives of the UK Payments Council about their proposal to abolish cheques by 2018. The Committee's Chairman, Andrew Tyrie MP, suggested that the current position was an "appalling mess" and a "scandal" and asked the Chairman of the Payments Council if this proposal was a "colossal error of judgement". His comments followed those of Financial Secretary Mark Hoban MP, who stated in a letter that he can see no clear and coherent reason to abolish cheques. Richard North, Chairman of the Payments Council, told the Select Committee that he regretted the failure to get the message across to the public and emphasised that the decision to abolish cheques had not yet been made.

The Committee's questions also explored the merits of two proposed alternatives to cheques; a mobile payment system and a paper-based alternative. Richard North conceded that there is likely to be an alternative payment system that looks exactly like a chequebook by 2020, but quicker and cheaper to process. Concerns were raised by the Committee about the impact on charitable giving, which has also been highlighted by Early Day Motion 1902. The motion calls on the Government to investigate alternative payment schemes.

What you can do

The full text of EDM 1902 and the names of current signatories can be viewed on [the Parliament website](#) [3]. The website www.theyworkforyou.com [4] offers an easy method of contacting your MP to ask them to sign the EDM and keep the pressure on the Government to consider the needs of sport and recreation. [The full transcript of the Select Committee's grilling of the Payments Council can be read here](#) [5].

Ticket touting bill delayed

The Sale of Tickets (Sporting and Cultural Events) Private Member's Bill, tabled by Sharon Hodgson MP, has been delayed and is now scheduled for a second reading in the Commons on 21 October 2011. [More information about the Bill can be found here](#) [6].

Debate on police charging at sports events

Last month MPs considered the cost of policing football matches in a debate tabled by Aidan Burley MP. Mr Burley said that Premier League matches required a uniquely heavy police presence and questioned why – at a time when players' wages are averaging £55,000 per week – taxpayers should have to foot the bill. The MP pointed to estimates that the police are faced with a cost of up to £25m to deal with football matches while only recovering £12-15m a year from clubs.

In response, Home Office Minister Damien Green reminded MPs of falling levels of violence and disorder since the introduction of tough legislation. He recognised that the disparity between what clubs pay and what police forces estimate as the cost of policing could be interpreted as a subsidy, but said that increasing the clarity and consistency of existing guidance in the light of case law could help to ensure a more reasoned approach to charging for special police services.

The full transcript of the debate is now available on [Hansard](#) [7].

What does this mean outside football?

Police forces are under pressure to recoup charges for major events. While it could be considered a simple 'polluter pays' argument, sport actually pays £7bn in taxes every year to Treasury and receives just £1bn in funding, so in effect sport has already paid for policing. The 20% VAT on £250,000 gate receipts from a full stadium should more than pay for policing. Despite this, there will be continued pressure for sport to pay more for policing, but the Alliance is working with the Home Office to try to limit the impact on this on sport. If your events are being affected, please contact [James Macdougall](#) [8] as we are in continuing dialogue with the Home Office on this issue.

POLICY

Forestry panel set for site visits

The DEFRA-created Independent Panel on Forestry met for a second time at the end of May

and issued a schedule of site visits and a [‘call for views’](#) ^[9].

The panel was created in response to the public backlash to the proposals to sell 20% of the public forest estate. The Alliance called on the Government to protect existing public access both by dedicating land and ensuring that historical use for sporting events is maintained. The ‘call for views’ asks very broad questions in relation to forests and the Alliance encourages members to submit evidence on the importance of forests to their activities and how access could be improved (in both public and private forests).

The Alliance is part of the Forest Access Users Group which seeks to ensure that the Government delivers on its promise to improve access to forests for sport and recreation. For further information please contact [Martin Key](#) ^[10].

National Planning Framework

A Government-appointed advisory group has published a proposed draft of the new National Planning Policy Framework. The group’s members, appointed by the Minister for Decentralisation and Planning, Greg Clark MP, have delivered a greatly slimmed down framework compared to the current set of guidance notes and statements (known as PPGs and PPSs). As a result there is only one page covering open spaces for sport and recreation.

The Alliance is pleased that the draft recommends that local planning authorities should identify areas where there is a facility deficit and that standards are based on an assessment of needs. The Alliance has recommended that when the benefits of a development outweigh the loss of a facility there is a requirement to replace the lost facility. The Alliance has contacted Greg Clark MP to push that this is included in the final framework and that there is a presumption in favour of development that enhances access to facilities (e.g. flood lighting).

For further information please visit the [advisory group's website](#) ^[11] or contact [Martin Key](#) ^[10].

Report on intellectual property rights

The Hargreaves Review, an independent report on intellectual property rights commissioned by Whitehall, has now been published. Sport’s input into the consultation may have assisted in preventing some of the proposals which could have been negative for the sector, such as the introduction of the US concept of fair use. Many recommendations would not impact sport and recreation. Both the Sport and Recreation Alliance and the Sports Rights Owners Coalition will continue dialogue on areas such as enforcement, copyright licensing and digital rights exchange.

The full report is available on the [IPO website](#) ^[12].

ALLIANCE INITIATIVES

CASC - the next steps

On June 29, the Sport and Recreation Alliance will hold a seminar on Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC) London.

The event coincides with the 6,000th CASC registration and almost £100 million saved for sports clubs in the UK. The Minister for Sport, Hugh Robertson MP, will be speaking at the event, along with several other key figures involved in the development of the CASC scheme, including HMRC and runningsports. The Minister will discuss some of the key policy recommendations that came out of the Alliance’s Red Card to Red Tape report. These included issues around payment of players, deregistration, Gift Aid, corporation tax and VAT

rates. It will also offer an opportunity for NGBs to find out more about the development of the CASC scheme, find out what support is available to them and their clubs and to ask any questions they may have about the scheme.

What NGBs can do

Find out more about CASCs and promote a scheme that offers your clubs 80% mandatory rate relief. If you would like to attend the event, or would like any more information, please contact UK & EU Regulatory Officer [David Foster](#) ^[13].

'Voluntary Code of Good Governance' launched

In a turbulent month for sports governance, the Sport and Recreation Alliance has launched its Voluntary Code of Good Governance. The code, written by sport for sport and coordinated by the Alliance, aims at providing national governing bodies with the ideas and tools to refine their governance.

Sport and Recreation Alliance chair Brigid Simmonds OBE believes that it is high time guidance tailor-made for the sector was created. "We hear a lot about how sport could be better governed but it's difficult to apply principles developed for the private sector or for charities to sports organisations. That's why we've worked with the sector to produce the voluntary code".

If you would like to find out more, [please visit our website](#) ^[14].

Alliance reviews the key principles of adventurous activity

The Alliance and SkillsActive have developed a set of key principles to guide the development of the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE's) Code of Practice to replace statutory licensing of adventure activities. The aim is to produce a simple set of criteria which it is hoped that all key organisations in the diverse outdoors industry sector will be able to support, at least in principle. The list will then be used to inform the on-going discussion on safety accreditation and to send a clear message to HSE to help guide the development of the Code of Practice.

What you can do

The more support we can get for the key principles the better. If you would like to find out more with a view to putting your name to the document, let us know. The HSE will be consulting on the Code of Practice at the end of June. If you would like to know more about either the set of key principles or the consultation please contact [Martin Key](#) ^[15].

Data protection guidance on the cards

Following the recommendations in its Red Card to Red Tape report, the Alliance has met with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to discuss the impact of data protection laws on sports clubs. This positive and informative meeting has clarified the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 on sports clubs, and given the sector an insight and opportunity to input into proposed changes for the future of this legislation.

It has been agreed that data protection law should be appropriate to the size and nature of what an organisation is doing and the sensitivity/confidentiality of the information involved. As a result expectations and requirements placed on sports clubs should follow a principle of reasonableness where if no attempt has been made to deceive or mislead someone about the purposes for which their data will be used, then it is unlikely that using the data for those purposes would constitute a breach of the legislation.

Help for clubs and organisations

The Alliance is currently working in partnership with the ICO to produce simple, sports friendly guidance on what data protection law means for sport. In the meantime, should you need any specific advice you can call the ICO telephone helpline on 0303 123 1113.

CONSULTATIONS

Cabinet Office reviews giving

As part of the Government's Big Society project, the Cabinet Office published the Giving White Paper at the end of May. The White Paper builds on the proposals contained in the Giving Green Paper and follows a period of consultation with key stakeholders. The Giving White paper contains policy initiatives that aim to develop a stronger culture of giving time and money to charitable causes in the UK.

What this means for sport and recreation

The charity and voluntary sectors both stand to benefit from the proposals outlined in the White Paper. These include making giving money easier (via ATM's and mobile phones), making information on volunteering opportunities more accessible, providing more advice on philanthropic giving and removing obstacles to giving. Particularly relevant to sport and recreation are the proposed improvements to Gift Aid which will see more money being made available for sport clubs. The paper alludes to other Government policy areas that may also impact sport, including relaxing CRB checks, the work of the Red Tape Task Force and promoting a legacy of increased sporting activity and volunteering after the Olympics in 2012.

The Sport and Recreation Alliance's consultation response can be [viewed here](#) ^[16] and the White Paper itself is available from the [Cabinet Office's website](#) ^[17].

HMT examines capital allowances for stadia safety improvements

The Treasury has released its [tax reliefs consultation](#) ^[18] which includes the abolition of tax allowances for safety improvements to stadia (relief 21, page 34). While this won't come into effect until 2013 at the earliest, it is being consulted on alongside all of the recommended relief cuts now. The proposed cut will stop relief which can be claimed for safety work on new stadia, multisport centres, free-standing stands and improvements to current facilities.

The Alliance has met with Treasury to discuss the proposal who insist that the proposed abolition is about simplification and removing an obsolete relief rather than money, so it is very important that our response proves the value of the relief to sport.

How you can help

Please let [James MacDougall](#) ^[8] know if your organisation uses these allowances and whether you would be happy to help us gather information to help fight the proposed abolition.

Review of overseas betting operators

The Culture, Media and Sport Committee announced that it will be conducting an inquiry into gambling in the second half of 2011. The inquiry will focus particularly on the implementation and operation of the Gambling Act 2005.

What this means for sport and recreation

Gambling and sport are closely linked. As such, the Alliance will be submitting written evidence in the coming weeks and will work closely with the Sports Betting Group and the Sports Rights Owners Coalition to ensure that strong and robust arguments are put forward from the sports sector. These will include calls for stricter licensing conditions for overseas bookmakers, a greater involvement for sport in gambling policy and more resources allocated to sport to help tackle betting-related integrity issues.

Furthermore, the Alliance has been informed that Minister for Tourism and Heritage, John Penrose MP, is expected to make an announcement before the Parliamentary summer recess on the future of overseas operators. In recent years, an increasing number of betting operators have moved to Gibraltar to avoid paying the horseracing levy and being bound by UK gambling laws. This has implications on both funding and integrity in sport, while punters also receive far less protection.

What sport and recreation can do

Interested parties are asked to submit written evidence to the Committee by 30 June. [More information is available on its website](#) ^[19].

If you would like further information on this inquiry or wish to submit a comment from your organisation, please contact [David Foster](#) ^[13].

COMPLETED CONSULTATIONS

Health Select Committee Inquiry into Public Health

The Commons Health Select Committee recently launched an inquiry into public health with the intention of scrutinising proposals contained within the Health and Social Care Bill. In response to the Committee's call for evidence, [the Alliance submitted a document](#) ^[20] which built upon our response to the recent Department of Health consultations.

This response highlighted the benefits of physical activity and the importance of sport and recreation in delivering positive health outcomes, and called for much-needed coordination both within government and at the local level between local authorities and County Sports Partnerships. The response also highlighted the benefits of 'medic-to-sport' initiatives such as the 'Swim4Life' programme which form a connection between patient advice and local sport and recreation opportunities.

For more information about the inquiry please see the [Health Committee's website](#) ^[21].

Youth sports events backed as non-discriminatory

The Equality Office's consultation on discrimination on grounds of age recommended allowing sport and recreation to continue to offer youth and senior events, showing that events are non-discriminatory when aimed at creating fair competition. In sports which do not require the matching of physical attributes, a further exemption is recommended to allow certain age groups to come together, avoiding isolation and keeping healthy. Given that many sports have Government targets for participation, the recognition that events targeted at specific age groups to increase participation was recommended in the Alliance's response, which can be found on the website.

Charity Commission reviews sport as a charitable aim

The Charity Commission's consultation on the advancement of sport as a charitable aim closed at the end of May. The objective of the consultation was to clarify in more detail the definition of the 'advancement of sport' as set out in the Charities Act 2006. The review

considers the existing conditions on the level of mental skill or exertion required to promote health and the meaning of 'amateur' in the context of payment of players (including grant funding and sponsorship).

What this means for sport and recreation

The primary intention of the Charity Commission is to broaden, rather than restrict, the scope of the criteria. This is certainly positive for the sport and recreation sector and it will hopefully allow more sports clubs to benefit from charitable status in the future. In its response, the Alliance called for a more flexibility around the payment of players and greater recognition of the wider health benefits of non-traditional sports and games. The Charity Commission anticipates that it will publish its guidance later in the year.

[Our consultation response can be found on our website](#) ^[22].

For further information about charitable status for sports clubs, please contact [David Foster](#) ^[13].

RESEARCH

Sports Club Survey

The Alliance has now finished collecting data for the 2011 Sports Club Survey. This year we have gathered 1942 complete responses, from which we can gain an understanding of the financial health of sports clubs over the last year. Where there are over 30 responses we will also be looking at the data by sport and region to provide further insights for our members.

The findings of this important research will be available to members towards the end of July when we will run through the main findings, what these mean from a policy perspective, and how your organisation can use the information for your own needs in a seminar. Details about this event will be available soon. Following the summer recess we will then launch the report findings and our subsequent policy requests to MPs and civil servants in October.

If you would like to know more about this research or would like to register your interest for attending either launch event please contact [Syann Cox](#) ^[23].

The challenges of localism

Members from across the divisions met in a working group in May to discuss how the Alliance could support the sector in the face of local authority funding cuts. The group raised a number of topics affecting clubs including discretionary rate relief, community asset transfer, increasing costs and local networks. The group agreed to share evidence held by their organisations to work out where the problems are and to decide if further research is required.

If you are interested in the work of this group or would like to attend the next meeting please contact [Martin Key](#) ^[10].

Centre for Social Justice report

A report into how the power of sport can be used to transform the lives of disadvantaged young people was released at the end of May. 'More Than a Game' from the Centre for Social Justice also examines the obstacles to be overcome in order to do so, citing access to facilities, issues surrounding red tape and coaching as key areas for improvement.

The Alliance is in agreement that progress needs to be made in these areas and that such

progress will not only improve social justice and help disaffected young people, but also deliver on a number of other policy outcomes as well as providing sport for sports sake.

More Than a Game also recommends that political ownership of sport with regards to benefiting disadvantaged young people is necessary, and that this should reside within the Department for Education. Given the breadth of social impacts that sport can have, the Alliance believes that sport would be better served by having more cross-cutting departmental power, not less.

The report is a detailed look at sport, disadvantage and social reform which in addition to the areas above covers governance, barriers to volunteering and the Olympic legacy. It can be downloaded from the [Centre for Social Justice's website](#) [24]. The Alliance's response can be found on our website [25].

Red Tape Task Force unshackles good neighbours

A suffocating blanket of red tape and an insidious mythology about being sued are deterring millions of Britons, volunteer organisations and charities from helping out more fully in society, according to the Red Tape Task Force, led by Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbots, which has launched its "Unshackling Good Neighbours" report. [The full report can be found on the Cabinet Office's website](#) [26].

Many of the recommendations in the report echo the Alliance's Red Card to Red Tape report from earlier in the year. Indeed the Alliance is working with the Cabinet Office to ensure that sport is represented on its proposed insurance working group and also working on new proposals for society lotteries.

Meanwhile, the Government's Red Tape Challenge, where you can log suggestions of red tape changes directly with the powers that be, has seen the dates for addressing specific topics changed. The areas affecting sport and recreation are currently scheduled as follows:

28 July 2011 - Healthy living

5 January 2012 - Marine, fisheries and inland waterways

19 January 2012 - Arts, sport and entertainment

1 September 2012 - Environment

27 October 2012 - Water quality

For more info see the [Cabinet Office's red tape website](#) [27].

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Links:

[1] <mailto:sbutler@sportandrecreation.org.uk>

[2] <http://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/appgsport>

[3] <http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2010-11/1902>

[4] <http://www.theyworkforyou.com>

[5] <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/treasury-committee/inquiries1/cheques/>

[6] <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/saleofticketssportingandculturalevents.html>

[7] <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm110518/halltext/110518h0002.htm#11051885000003>

[8] <mailto:jmacdougall@sportandrecreation.org.uk>

[9] <http://archive.defra.gov.uk/rural/forestry/documents/forestry-panel-callforviews-110519.pdf>

- [10] <mailto:mkey@sportandrecreation.org.uk>
- [11] <http://www.nppfpractitionersadvisorygroup.org/>
- [12] <http://www.ipo.gov.uk/ipreview.htm>
- [13] <mailto:dfoster@sportandrecreation.org.uk>
- [14] <http://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/sites/default/files/web/GovernanceCodeFinal.pdf>
- [15] <mailto:mkey@sportandrecreation.org.uk>.
- [16] <http://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/sites/default/files/web/documents/consultation/Giving%20Green%20Paper%20Final%20Version.pdf>
- [17] <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/giving-white-paper>
- [18] http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/consult_removal_36_tax_reliefs.htm
- [19] <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/culture-media-and-sport-committee/news/committee-announces-new-inquiry-into-gambling/>
- [20] <http://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/lobbying-and-campaigning/consultations>
- [21] <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/health-committee/>
- [22] <http://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/sites/default/files/web/documents/consultation/Charity%20Commission.pdf>
- [23] <mailto:scox@sportandrecreation.org.uk>
- [24] <http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/default.asp?pageRef=266>
- [25] <http://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/news/24-05-2011/sport-and-recreation-alliance-comments-centre-social-justice-report-sport>
- [26] <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/unshackling-good-neighbours>
- [27] <http://www.redtapechallenge.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/home/index/>