

# A NEW STRATEGY FOR SPORT: CONSULTATION PAPER – RESPONSE FROM WOMEN'S SPORT TRUST

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## About Our Response

### Who are WST?

- We are a charity with the aim of raising the visibility and increasing the impact of women's sport through the development of role models, increased investment and greater media attention
- At WST, we believe sport has the potential to raise aspirations and demonstrate what individuals are capable of both on and off the playing field. Our focus is on ensuring that women and girls – as well as men and boys - have the opportunity to realise their talent through sport. In this way, sport can act as a catalyst for positive social change and encourage progress towards broader equality ambitions.
- WST are delighted to respond to the DCMS call for input and evidence on a New Strategy for Sport – and because of the focus of the charity will concentrate on the development of women's sport in our responses.

### Why have we chosen to respond?

- Sport is one of the most important public arenas that we have in the UK, and internationally. As such, it is a powerful lever in supporting and delivering social change.
- The Women's Sport Trust believe that the platform of sport should reflect and represent the society in which we live, and deliver strong role models for all that engage and inspire everyone to seek opportunities.
- Where WST has been most successful it has brought together different sectors and constituencies (primarily sport, business and the media). By connecting these sectors more effectively with one another, WST has helped to develop a wider understanding of the issues affecting women's sport as well as the opportunities it presents – it has also sought to take and stimulate action as result of these insights.
- We believe that the DCMS, and minister Tracey Crouch are uniquely positioned to join the dots across government - from the Department of Education, to the Department of Health, the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills and other governmental bodies including Sport England and UK Sport. DCMS can exercise significant influence to change the game in a systemic way with widespread impact within and beyond sport. DCMS has an extraordinary convening power to cut across sectors and departments so that sporting solutions are more coherent, integrated and shared – especially in a time of austerity. There are no magic bullets – but there is significant scope for a more strategic approach.
- In addition, DCMS also have a large role to play in influencing private sector behaviour as it relates to the intersection between culture, media and sport.
- DCMS can also exert its political and funding muscle power to encourage and - where necessary compel - greater inclusion in sport. Leadership in sport is in no way diverse, funding decisions require greater scrutiny and participation figures for girls and women are worryingly low. Any effort to make sport more inclusive of women and girls also needs to pay greater attention to the intersection between gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background and disability.

## Theme 1: Participation

### **h. How to use the power of sport to achieve broader positive social outcomes and whether some funding should specifically be spent for that purpose**

*The power of role models in affecting positive social outcomes and engagement with sport*

There are many organisations working directly on participation – for example on the provision of facilities, playing opportunities or coaching. WST works more indirectly to create a cultural backdrop where participation in sport is perceived as fun, normal and as open to women and girls as it is to men and boys. One of the main ways we do this is by working with athlete role models so that they exercise a positive influence on a wide range of platforms.

*“Positive role models are recognized as an important way to increase participation of women and girls in sport and sport leadership.” (United Nations, 2007)*

In developing our definition of what it means to be a role model we have drawn on research and project work spanning a range of sectors including sport, academia, the construction sector and work around profiling LGBT role models. The prevailing model of success in these areas still tends to be male, white and straight. Role model initiatives challenge and change these perceptions by presenting alternatives to those dominant norms – at WST such projects include Sport is Beautiful, #ManOnSide and #AthleteGameChangers – we also create platforms to promote diverse role models through our online magazine the Mixed Zone and our annual #BeAGameChanger Awards.

The working definition of a role model informing the work of WST is:

*“Role models are people who (individually or collectively) are **aware** of their potential to influence others and **intentionally** choose to use that influence to **create positive change** for women in sport.”*

Role models do not need to be perfect and we are not looking to put them on a pedestal – rather we see the value in presenting a range of compelling stories that a wide range of women and girls can associate with and be encouraged by. Each person’s identity and background will condition who they find most – and least - appealing as a role model. For this reason it is vital that that sporting role models are themselves diverse – not only based on protected characteristics like gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity and disability but also in terms of social background, education and upbringing. By raising the profile of sporting role models at every level – from local coaches to elite athletes – it is possible to provide concrete evidence of what women and girls can do in sport, demonstrate the options and value of engaging in sport – and therefore encourage greater participation.

The ambition is to positively influence thinking about what women and girls are “allowed” to do or be – and thereby lessen the fear of judgement. In this sense it is about much more than sport – it’s about providing evidence that will encourage a girl to realistically believe that she is able to study science or be a business leader – as well as get good and sweaty doing a physical activity she enjoys.

There is evidence that shows the impact of visible role models on participation numbers such as Women in Sport’s report into “What sways women to play”. This highlights how inspirational stories about sporting women can inspire a young girl to practice and in so doing maintain motivation and ensure sustained behaviour change. (Women in Sport, 2015). Research by Opinium (2015) into attitudes towards women’s sport found that 22% of women (of 2,000 adults surveyed split approximately 50:50 women/men) had been inspired by recent coverage of the Women’s World Cup to try out a new sport.

Studies have indicated that there are a number of barriers to women participating in sport. In 2008, WSFF research (now Women in Sport), supported by Sport England, cited one barrier as “female invisibility – media representations and lack of role models in sport.” This “invisibility” can be better understood through the stark facts that in 2014, women athletes received only 7% of newspaper coverage and 0.4% of sports sponsorship compared to men (Women in Sport). WST supports the notion that “you can’t be what you can’t see”, which is why we put so much emphasis on role model activity.

WST is also increasingly extending its notion of role modelling beyond individual athletes to encompass organisations, projects and initiatives. WST believes that role modelling is about setting an example that demonstrates what’s possible. The WST’s annual #BeAGameChanger awards help to showcase trailblazers, with a view to stimulating others to follow their example. WST is able to highlight sponsorship partnerships, participation initiatives, media contributors and imagery campaigns all of whom role model ways of working that advance women’s sport.

Shifting attitudes to women’s sport needs a multi-faceted approach and requires active collaboration from influencers across sport, media, politics and business. One catalyst for bringing these constituencies together is the athletes themselves. By seeing them, hearing from them and reading what they have written they have the potential to provide insights and provoke a vigorous conversation amongst decision makers about what it will take to get more women and girls engaged in sport.

### How can DCMS amplify the affect of role models?

- Bring together and exercise ongoing influence on the media – through effective research maintain a tight focus on the volume, breadth and quality of stories and images of women’s sport. Use this research to set benchmarks and track progress – and bring media players round the table to get engaged with how best to do this e.g. extending the reach and impact of Women’s Sport Week.
- Promote the business case and data that supports increased profiling of women’s sport and the role models involved in it – e.g. audience appetite and viewing figures. The Women’s World Cup for example provides powerful indications of the value of the potential market.
- Consider funding work designed to develop the influence of athlete role models – it is no small thing to choose to step up as a powerful role model, so there is real value in providing space and support for athletes to define what they want to speak out about, where and how. WST’s #AthleteGameChanger work is focused on this area.
- Consider how best to use athlete role models to advance political debate and business engagement – identify meetings, platforms and encounters where these individuals could add their weight to making the case for sport. Identify the athletes with the appetite and desire to feature on the most high profile stages and work with them to nurture the next Tanni Grey-Thompson e.g. Kate Richardson-Walsh, Pamela Cookey, Eni Aluko, Hannah Cockroft and Anna Watkins.
- Use Ministerial clout to endorse and encourage role model activity – from quoting athletes in speeches through to presenting awards and speaking at events like the #BeAGameChanger Awards.
- Support and promote the work of grassroots and local role models – in particular by investing in increasing the number of female coaches working in sport (see later.)

## Theme 4: Financial Sustainability

### **a. How to encourage new sources of commercial investment into sport, particularly in areas that have previously struggled to form commercial partnerships in the past such as women's sport and smaller sports;**

1. *Private / Corporate Funding* – There is major shift happening with inclusion and diversity across the private sector that has specific relevance to forming commercial partnerships for women's sport. For there to be sustainable investment in women's sport it needs to move from a "worthy" enterprise subsidised from CSR budgets to a core spend linked to brand, marketing, talent and organisational reputation.

Organisations who started their diversity journey because it was 'the right thing to do' are realising that not only is that so, but excelling in inclusion and diversity provides a very tangible economic and strategic opportunity. More specifically, it provides the ability to differentiate products, engage markets and customers, and delight employees. The data to support these claims is overwhelming with research from McKinsey, Credit Suisse, the UN, Catalyst and countless others demonstrating the value of more fully engaging women with businesses and in the global economy.

#### *Marketing & Advertising*

Organisations who have for years been achieving significant internal results in the diversity space are beginning to see the value of inclusion and diversity to the socially conscious customer. In this way they are connecting their internal efforts on inclusion with their external messaging. This September alone, three major brands have launched campaigns and products aimed at engaging minority, and socially conscious customers.

- a. Doritos launched a limited edition Rainbow bag, with a percentage of profit going to the [It Gets Better Project](#). The limited edition crisps sold out within hours of launch at £10 per bag.
- b. Wells Fargo launched a [commercial depicting a same sex couple applying for a mortgage](#), to support their growing family as adopt a young deaf girl.
- c. Closer to home Guinness launched a [series of ads](#) during the 2015 Rugby World Cup aimed at the socially conscious consumer. One advert shares gay rugby star Gareth Thomas loneliness and fear until he came out to his rugby teammates and the empathy they expressed when he finally did.

These ads are not the first to showcase minority groups, but they do break new ground in a few fundamental ways. First, the organisations have been prepared for the potential conservative backlash and have been unfaltering in their support and intent, even after calls from extreme groups to boycott these organisations. Instead, the overwhelming majority of the public have been hugely supportive of the way Doritos, Wells Fargo and Guinness have challenged status quo.

Women are not a minority but the way brands engage with gender - as with the LGBT market described above – has been affected by limiting stereotypes and lower visibility. In 2014 Always launched #likeagirl to challenge preconceptions about little girls, and how public attitude affects their development and mindset. If you grow up being told girls can't throw a ball/run/play sport, then the likelihood is that you will also believe that you can't do any of these things well. As a brand Always set out to take a clear, visibly different stance – to startling effect with the campaign video being amongst the most shared globally with nearly 60 million views to date.

## *Sports Sponsorship*

In sports sponsorship, a similar shift is happening as organisations begin to align internal diversity ambitions and external market presence, but also to capitalise on the fact that in many sectors, women make up the majority of consumer purchasing decisions.

- [SSE's landmark sponsorship](#) of the women's FA is a prime example. The seven-figured deal includes a commitment to invest in the women's game with significant funding ring-fenced to create a country-wide programme of girls-only football around FA Women's Cup events. It also represents a landmark moment in the history of women's football with the first ever major sponsorship of the Women's FA Cup competition. SSE has been very open and vocal that this sponsorship is part of an ambition to support women externally as they do internally, engage customers and differentiate their brand, and to use their influence to change the societal imbalance for girls and women in sport.
- A similarly ground breaking standalone deal came in women's cricket in 2014 when South Korean carmaker Kia agreed to sponsor the newly professional English team.
- In the US, Fox News aired all 52 games of the women's football world cup live, which was expected to raise \$30million in ad revenue for the organisation.

When WST engages with corporate organisations – we make an informal audit of their current sports sponsorship investment. All too frequently, organisations that are publically committed to ambitious gender equality goals are at the same time sponsoring exclusively male sports. This not only sends a very mixed message about the values of the brand, it also means they fail to gain full credit for some genuinely progressive work – it is a missed opportunity.

Sports and the agencies / consultancies that promote them need to become far more articulate in making a powerful business case for investment. Those brokering deals must become more creative in the way they position current properties but also generate new and exciting events and competitions.

At the same time businesses need to be more rigorous in scrutinising their investment decisions so that they pick up on discrepancies between male and female sports sponsorship that undermine their ambitions to be seen as an inclusive brand. There may be an opportunity for DCMS to generate a simple audit tool / request / debate that stimulates business to actively question their current investment activity.

## *The Importance of Removing Male / Female Comparisons*

Part of the challenge in sports sponsorships and the funding of women's sports is that the women's game and women's teams are often compared to men's teams. Not only is this comparison not helpful, it limits the value of women's sport and means that it is measured against unhelpful and often irrelevant success criteria. Women bring different skills and strategies to a game and any sponsorship package should reflect the unique value of women's sport, not be a smaller imitation of a men's deal.

The messages a brand is able to send through sponsoring women's sport are quite different to those sent via sponsoring men's sport. For example there are opportunities to connect more clearly with female consumers, to send a message about brand values, to be associated with highly accessible

elite athletes as ambassadors and all at a relatively accessible price point. Helena Morrissey, who was the catalyst for the ground-breaking support of the Women's Boat Race, is very clear about the need to reimagine investment in women's sport and not simply imitate what has gone before – this requires “a vision, not a spreadsheet, because women's sport requires you to create something.” Depending on which figures you read – Newton's investment in the Women's Boat Race has had between a 3 and 10 times ROI and an incalculable ROR (return on reputation).

The sports industry needs to develop new approaches to supporting those wanting to make investment in the emerging market of women's sport, providing expert guidance and navigation through the inevitable complexities and 'unknowns' of a relatively immature and emerging market. Because the structure and value of sports sponsorships have typically been aimed at men's sport, the organisations which exist to promote, sell and package sport today are not necessarily best placed to support both male and female athletes and teams. At WST, we recognised the importance of taking a new approach and prompted the development of, and collaborate with, a new sports management and sponsorship agency (Y Sport) that understands not only the value and viability of women's sport, but also brings knowledge of what leading organisations are striving for with the inclusion & diversity ambitions.

### What role can DCMS play in increasing private funding of women's sport?

DCMS has a unique opportunity to showcase not only the viability of women's sport, but also to influence organisations who may have a very limited sponsorship and endorsement approach.

DCMS has a part to play in speaking to and influencing senior business leaders – not just Directors of Marketing - to stimulate a shift in thinking that moves women's sport from a CSR spend to a powerful investment in their reputation. WST has endeavoured to do something similar through its Funding Development Board and signature events like the BeAGameChanger Awards – but DCMS could take this engagement to a new level. DCMS could do research to generate a clear target list of organisations to influence who have not shown congruence in their internal diversity goals and their external sponsorship. As mentioned previously, there is room to provide guidance and support for organisations wishing to audit their current sponsorship activity – and scope to broker / provide introductions to the agencies and sports who could help them to identify investible properties.

DCMS could lead a reconstituted Women's Sport Advisory Board with clear deliverables on moving the numbers around investment in women's sport – and recruit the participants necessary to do achieve this. It could collaborate with organisations like the 30% Club and their Sport & Business Group (which WST co-chairs) to convene a robust conversation about investment in women's sport, which in turn generated an action plan and signatories to deliver that plan. We wondered if there were also ways that DCMS could recognise and reward best practice – through promotion, endorsement or even tax incentives?

## 2. *Government Funding –*

Similar to private funding, there is a significant shift to be made in public funding of sport. Today, whilst there are many excellent bodies to deliver sporting education and development to boys, girls, men and women, the reach and impact of those organisations is not yet where it could be. Specifically, we believe it is not the amount of funding, but the equal nature to which the funding is allocated.

In the US the importance of Title IX and its influence in development sports equality – and subsequent sporting success - should not be underestimated. Brought into law in 1972, the Title IX act has ensured that all governmental funds have been allocated equally to both genders. In essence, the law ensures that for every dollar that is spent on men's and boys' sporting development and education, an equal dollar must be spent on sporting development and education for women and girls. Title IX has not only assured equal funding through all levels of education (elementary to university) for girls and boys, it has provided a framework for institutions to adopt. For example, whilst American football teams net a higher profit through attendance than women's volleyball might attract per se, government funded schools automatically put all proceeds raised from any sport, back into a general bucket which is dished back out to fund facilities, uniforms, training, coaches etc – on an equal basis. This secondary effect means that equality is achieved through every level of sports funding and has had profound impacts on the development of women and girls through sport.

### What role can DCMS play in improving public funding of women's sport?

DCMS not only has the influence, but also the convening power to ensure that public funding for sport is done in an equal manner. There are pre-existing policy and legislative levers (e.g. Social Value Act) that could perhaps be pulled to create an affect similar to Title XI in the States but more work is needed to understand how these are currently being used, why their impact is limited and whether further legislation may be needed.

Based on WST's limited exposure to public funding bodies, we question whether there is an inadvertent bias against smaller, newer or more innovative organisations – may of whom are linked with women's sport because it is generally less established than men's sport. Whilst there is a clear need for due diligence and protecting public funds, the process required to bid for funding is onerous, complex and far better suited to large organisations with the capacity and experience to submit applications. There is a risk of stifling imaginative, new initiatives linked to engaging new audiences with sport if such outfits can't compete with more established providers when trying to secure funding. DCMS might consider developing "Innovation Units" within – or separate from - bodies like Sport England. These groups could be tasked to seek out organisations that are committed to the development of women's sport and have evidence of making a positive impact. They could work with such organisations to navigate the funding landscape more effectively and set them up to succeed – for example in identifying funding sources, developing bids and demonstrating impact.

Through Sport England, UK Sport, the National Governing Bodies and other agencies there could be scope for clearer accountability, commercial targets and support to meet those targets. An effective audit of their rights, properties, events and activities and the subsequent generation of a commercial strategy could help to make a more effective bridge between sport and business. These strategies would include specific, measureable targets including ones relating to the attraction and retention of commercial sponsorship, which would be evaluated on a regular basis. Some NGBs will be better placed to undertake this work and indeed several are well advanced – but others will require consultancy support to do so.

Finally it is impossible to talk about the financial sustainability of women's sport without acknowledging the vital role of the media. It is imperative to remain focused on driving up coverage

and visibility in the media in order to maintain any long-term engagement of brands. Increasing investment and participation in women's sport requires a whole system approach – with each element (sport, politics, media, business) necessary for coherent and sustainable development.

**e. Drawing on the successes of the cultural and charitable sector, how to harness the huge enthusiasm for sport to encourage greater levels of philanthropic giving to sport and sports bodies;**

*Engaging major donors and greater individual giving.*

- Whilst the UK has less of a culture of philanthropy than in the States, WST has received a small but significant number of philanthropic gifts from high net-worth donors ranging from £5k -100k. All the individuals concerned had a strong personal connection with sport and / or gender equality and this clear personal stake drove their giving. In our fundraising strategy WST has a strong focus on developing a major donor programme – although this is in its early stages.
- There are a range of formal and informal networks of senior women who have achieved significant seniority in their fields and are keen to use their clout – for example top female CIOs in technology and Directors in MarComms. WST's networks provide us with routes and introductions to such groups and individuals. These people are rightly very discerning and typically time-poor, so it is vital for us to be in a position to understand their motivation, connect what we are doing with what matters to them, to make clear asks and to keep them informed / involved in what we are able to deliver so they can see the impact of their giving. One-to-one conversations, dinners hosted by influential ambassadors, access to events and athletes are all part of our approach.
- We are also intensely aware of the importance of engaging men as well as women in making sport gender inclusive – much as gender equality in the workplace has only been progressed with the active engagement of men. WST has developed a campaign – ManOnside – specifically with this in mind. We are in the process of wooing a group of powerful men to be role models and investors in this campaign – just as they have been trailblazers for gender inclusion in their careers.
- We are also making particular efforts to target individuals working in sectors that clearly need to attract female talent – e.g. those relating to STEM subjects, as this means they will have first-hand insights into the value and importance of trying to level the playing field.
- Individual giving can happen on many different scales and it is important to explore the potential for new funding platforms such as crowd funding, crowd shares and other community investment and ownership models. These newer platforms have the added advantage of ensuring investment reaches widely out into communities and has significant local as well as national impact. We are in the early stages of exploring how these approaches can become part of the financial model to support sport – including clubs, individual athletes, facilities and campaigns.

**What role can DCMS play in encouraging philanthropic giving?**

- Curate conversations with small groups of selected senior business people from sectors who have an acknowledged need to appeal to female staff and / or customers. Invite and encourage them to step up as inclusive leaders – both within their sectors and beyond – making the link with women's sport where appropriate. Such conversations could offer appropriate Ministerial access and also have the appeal of being around the table with other senior figures. They could be co-delivered with other

government departments. Robust research would help to identify those individuals most likely to be interested in such an approach.

- Highlight concrete examples where philanthropic giving could make a tangible difference – through live case studies and input from sporting organisations. Consider imaginative communications to get the message across – including creative use of digital and social media.
- Where possible broker introductions and signpost individuals to sporting opportunities that may be a fit for their particular interests. Consider ways of developing a live list of current needs that could be addressed through philanthropic giving.
- Support the work of WST's #AthleteGameChanger programme and ambassadorial initiatives from UK Sport and others in developing powerful elite athlete role models. These sportspeople can then make the best possible case for the value of women's sport and the importance of investing in it. Access to high profile, inspirational sporting figures can make a decisive difference in getting people to the point of actual donation.
- Encourage innovative fundraising for sport through supporting, developing and promoting digital and social media routes to increased individual giving. This could be a natural opportunity to collaborate with other governmental departments for example in running a competition for tech solutions to engagement and investment in sport.

## Theme 5: Coaching, Workforce & Good Governance

### **f. How to ensure that we uphold the highest standards of governance, openness and transparency in sporting bodies.**

#### *The Importance of Inclusive Leadership & Culture in Sport*

At WST, we believe authentic and inclusive leaders know what they stand for and have a knack for realising their own distinctive abilities. Even better, they create an environment for others to do the same. Inclusive leadership can make a decisive difference in attracting, retaining and developing a diverse range of individuals within sport. Most leaders within any organisation, sport, or coaching programme develop skills and capability based on what they were taught – and by whom. If we want to create greater inclusion in sport, we must invest in expanding, developing and rewarding inclusive behaviour from sports leaders and coaches at all levels of sport. This will have a decisive impact on the culture of sport and the extent to which it becomes more a more inclusive environment.

#### *Behaviours & Decision Making*

Leaders play a vital role in not only setting the tone and culture of an organisation or body, but in the decision making process. Decisions such as equal access to funding or facilities – one example of this is St. Andrews Golf Club. Whilst inherently there is no problem with a single-sex private club as long as they have no formal influence on opportunities for all. Unfortunately, many facilities and institutions like The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrew's have significant influence on public opinion and on the game of golf. St. Andrew's has finally made a

decision to allow women within the club and the hope is that this will not only set a tone for golf but also provide potential financial upside and a positive impact on participation figures.

#### *The connection between funding & coaching*

Attracting and retaining sports coaches & a diverse array of sports leaders is vital. Coaching and development programme funding should be reviewed to ensure equal opportunity, so should funding of sports coaching. Equal pay for coaching roles regardless of the gender of the team is a critical component of attracting and retaining coaches across male and female sports.

Within FE and HE there continues to be a gender imbalance on educational courses for the sport and fitness industry, with more men choosing these subjects and gaining subsequent employment within the sports industry on graduation. To deliver a diverse workforce action to redress this must be pursued at all levels and this includes apprenticeships. Schools, FE, HE and employers need to take action to ensure women and girls are represented in sport education at all levels and that opportunities are open to them. This requires pro-active promotion of education routes and opportunities, role models to demonstrate the careers on offer, as well as work with potential employers to ensure their approach to recruitment is free of unconscious bias.

Other organisations are better placed than WST to talk in more detail about how vital it is to increase the proportion of female coaches across sport – including Women in Sport, the Female Coaching Network, Judy Murray and others. Although it is not our primary area of focus – it is clear to us based on work we have done around the impact of role models, that coaches can be some of the most powerful and accessible role models available, particularly for girls. They can influence choices around participation or drop out at critical points. Developing many more great female coaches should be a priority for any effective sporting strategy.

#### *Joining forces between business and sport*

There are sectors that can be seen to be making significant strides on becoming more diverse and inclusive. There could be value in creating forums for the exchange of learning and best practice between sport and business on the areas of leadership, inclusion and coaching. Many businesses have a wealth of knowledge, research and learning in this space about what has worked / has not worked within their own organisations. A partnership between business and sport to jointly tackle the issues, and to learn from each other has many benefits – the 30% Club's Sport & Business group could be a natural avenue to foster such an exchange. Cross-organisational mentoring of the kind run by Women Ahead is also a natural opportunity to exchange insights, experience and ideas across sectors.

#### *Engaging the Majority*

One of the most effective ways to increase the pace of inclusive diversity results is to engage the majority, or in LGBT terms, the 'ally'. Within sport, men have played a dominant role in participation, coaching and leadership for centuries. If we are looking to achieve greater diversity within each of those areas, we must take men on the journey.

The UN, in its "Women 2000 and Beyond" (UN, 2007) identified that role models for men and boys, in their support of women and girls in sport, is of great importance:

*"Positive role models and support are not only required for girls and young women; there is also a critical need for gender-sensitive male athletes,*

*coaches, journalists and other leaders to provide positive role models and support for boys and young men.”*

The WST has drawn on research findings from Catalyst, Glass Hammer, Men Advocating Real Change (MARC) to understand better the characteristics that predict men’s awareness of gender bias, obstacles that prevent men from becoming gender champions and how to include men in gender diversity. Recent research conducted on attitudes shows that coverage of women’s sport works – 45% of men surveyed said that recent prominent coverage of women’s sports events had changed their perceptions of women’s sport (Opinium 2015).

WST is building a core campaign to engage men in the future of sport, through the relationships they hold with women. Titled ‘ManOnSide’ our aim is to showcase the future of sport, why it’s exciting for men and women, and the behavioural shifts required to create this future – in a way that matter to men and women alike. We would welcome DCMS support in raising the profile of this initiative and recruiting partners for it.

### How can DCMS influence inclusive leadership & coaching in sport?

- The leadership makeup (the % of women and minorities) and leadership behaviour of sporting bodies in the UK is critical. DCMS has a clear role in ensuring that national sporting bodies reflect the diverse nature of our society. Lord Davies’ report led to action at an individual company level, but also through groups sponsored by senior chairmen (the 30% club, Women on Boards, etc). Not only do we need similar targets to achieve progress, but similar support for the actions required to make it so. Research from Women in Sport (Trophy Women) and Women on Boards show clear evidence of how much still needs to be done – and ongoing research from these and other bodies should continue to track progress and hold sports organisations to account.
- Given the sometimes glacial rate of progress towards diverse boards and the absence of any real consequence for NGBs and others who fail to demonstrate headway – there is a need to review the funding implications of inaction. There should be no room to consider opting out of inclusion for any body in receipt of public funding. That said a compliance based approach can only ever be part of what’s needed. There is also a need for effective leaders who can articulate why D&I matters to their own organisations, business/sports strategies that plumb in inclusion to every level of decision making and a clear linking of D&I to the purpose of an organisation. Without these fundamentals in place – efforts around D&I will stall.
- There is an opportunity to draw from other sectors that are doing better on inclusion. There are very effective D&I consultants and examples of best practice that could be used to support sports organisations to become more diverse and inclusive. Change in this area doesn’t happen by magic but neither is it rocket science - well-funded, highly professional leadership / strategy support can dramatically accelerate progress. DCMS could mandate and consider funding this kind of support activity. More broadly there are a range of opportunities to foster the exchange of best practice between sport and business and DCMS could play an active role in bringing these about (as mentioned above.)
- Those organisations taking advantage of support on inclusion could be required to have 2-3 “Board scholarship” seats around their table whilst any programme was on-going. These seats could be taken by Board-ready individuals from under-represented groups thereby immediately shifting the constituency around the top table. Organisations like Women Ahead and Women on Boards could help source high calibre candidates.

- DCMS to work with individuals and organisations to define and implement the best ways of increasing the proportion of female coaches at all levels of sport.

## Theme 6: Elite & Professional Sport

### **d. How to better utilise our funded athletes to inspire and encourage others to participate;**

We have talked elsewhere in our submission about the value of funded athletes exercising influence as role models and would like to reinforce that point again here.

#### *1. The Importance of Role Models & Media in Shaping Aspiration*

Role models come in all forms shapes and sizes, but the reality is, not all coverage of sports, or of modern British culture, presents a diverse range of positive role models that raise expectations about what women and girls are capable of. If you open a broadsheet, or turn on the television, you are likely to see less coverage of women as a whole and when you do see them many will tend to reinforce narrow gender stereotypes or be cast in support roles.

At WST, we believe images play a key role in attracting women to sport, and in shaping young girl's impression of what it means to be an athlete. Whilst we endorse the diversity of body type, ethnicity and attitude of women portrayed in This Girl Can, we believe much more still needs to be done to depict women in sport in a way that will encourage greater engagement and participation. Through our collaborative image bank and image campaign Sport Is Beautiful, we have an aim to put strong sporting images of women and girls in every school in the country.

#### *2. Storytelling & The Role of Mass Media*

What is clear from sports enthusiasts the world wide, the more you know the players, the deeper connection you feel to a sport and to a team. Elite athletes play a pivotal role in the cultural impact of sport – both in whose story gets told, and what that story is. Media coverage of men's sport means that the depth and breadth in which a player's story is told, from their upbringing, to their ethos and aspirations, is significantly greater than that of their female counterparts. If we want to inspire a generation of girls to participate, we must not only showcase visible images of strong female athletes, but we must tell their story in a way that creates affinity, builds bridges with communities, and delights male and female supporters alike. This type of in-depth storytelling will not only give growing girls aspirations of who and what to be like, it will shape the culture around them, and enhance the view of fathers, brothers and other male influencers on the impact and viability of women's sport.

### **How can DCMS enhance the impact of elite athletes and role models?**

- See earlier suggestions about encouraging media coverage and developing athlete role models.

## Theme 8: Fairness & Equality

### **a. How to ensure the culture of sport allows everyone to flourish, and addresses all forms of intolerance, whether as a result of active discrimination, or unconscious bias;**

- Please see our previous comments under Theme 5: Coaching, Workforce and Good Governance where we pay particular attention to what we see as the imperative to develop inclusive leadership across all levels of sport. With strong leadership and governance from the top, alongside inspired and inclusive grassroots leadership you create the pincer movement that is capable of delivering sporting environments characterised by fairness and equality.
- Whilst it is absolutely necessary to have the support, policies and procedures in place to address intolerance, active discrimination and bias as it arises – we see these primarily as symptoms not causes of unequal environments. We advocate investing most energy in developing the leadership and cultures that make such behaviour unlikely and – where it occurs – results in robust action to stop it. It is important to note the damage done to efforts to promote inclusion in sport and messages about zero tolerance of sexism / racism etc when there are high profile examples of individuals seemingly “getting away with” deeply inappropriate comments and actions. We wonder what role DCMS has in calling out such behaviour in a bold way.
- We passionately support the DCMS ideal of a #SportingFuture and see the future as fair, equal and empowered for all. Fairness comes not just through, funding of sports, equal access of sports but also in what girls are ‘allowed to do’. In early 2015, WST was approached by a group of girls attending a state funded secondary school in Norwich. Their frustration was clear, at their school the boys programmes included rugby, football and cricket. Girls were cheerleading, gymnastics and dance. WST supported the girls in taking their petition to the head teacher to expand the variety of sporting opportunities made available to girls, and to allow more co-ed sports on both sides (a number of boys have since taken up access to gymnastics. We are delighted to report that the girls were successful in achieving a more balanced opportunity to play sport, but this type of inequality exists throughout the country and should not be left as something young girls must fight for, but instead something provided in a widespread manner.

### **How can DCMS enhance fairness and equality?**

- WST is focusing on the impact of role models, media and funding to help change the cultural landscape that shapes how people experience sport. These are only three facets of the response need to provide a complex and systemic approach to making sport fairer and more equal. In simple terms DCMS can take a conducting, convening and cohering role in making efforts around sport join up. It can also bring the rigour of clear, published targets – for example on board diversity – as well as holding individuals and organisations accountable for their part in making sport fairer and more equal. DCMS can also inspire as well as compel change by showcasing what’s working, encouraging leadership and making the most of role models.
- DCMS hold unique power in their relationships with other governmental departments, including the Department for Education and Department for Health. By creating a standard to which girls are allowed access to sport (in funding, number and variety) in the same way boys are, DCMS can exercise their influence to create equality of opportunity for girls.

### **b. How to prevent and take action on all forms of harassment and abuse in sport;**

- See comments under section A of this theme.

**d. How to ensure that the leadership and workforce in sport is diverse.**

- Please see comments in other sections.