



## **AN OPEN LETTER FROM WOMEN'S SPORT TRUST CEO TAMMY PARLOUR MBE**

### **A New Phase for Women's Sport - And the Insight That Must Support It**

Over the past few years, women's sport has moved from breakthrough moments to a period of accelerated commercial development, though long-term sustainability is not yet guaranteed. We have seen record broadcast hours, rising investment, deeper commercial partnerships and athletes commanding greater visibility and influence.

The debate is no longer about whether women's sport deserves attention, but about how that attention is structured and sustained in a noisy and evolving ecosystem.

Since 2021, the Women's Sport Trust has tracked that progress systematically, building one of the most comprehensive independent evidence bases on the visibility and commercialisation of women's professional sport in the UK.

In a maturing market, the questions become more and more complex. It is no longer enough to ask whether women's sport is being seen. We must now ask whether that visibility is structurally secure, whether it is translating into sustainable commercial models, long-term value and an industry that reflects the audiences it serves.

Questions like:

- Is growth consistent?
- Is investment aligned with audience demand?
- Are rights-holders building long-term value?
- Is the system strengthening as a whole?
- Is women's sport being valued in line with its audience and potential?
- Does the system understand the value of the new women's sport audience?
- Who is still missing from the picture?
- How inclusive is the industry we are building?

As a campaigning charity, Women's Sport Trust is more than just a research publisher. For over a decade, we have worked across the sector, combining independent evidence, sector convening and strategic challenge to accelerate the progress of women's sport.

Our Visibility research has helped establish a shared evidence base across sport, media, brands and government. It has enabled decision-makers to track progress, identify gaps and act with confidence. It also connects commercial growth at the top of the system with the sustainability of what sits beneath it, ensuring that visibility, investment and long-term development are understood as interdependent, not isolated trends.

That responsibility doesn't diminish as the sector grows, it increases. As audiences and investment expand, independent cross-sport measurement becomes even more important to ensure progress is consistent, accurate and fairly shared. To support this next phase of commercial growth, the systems that provide independent insight must also evolve.

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From 2026, headline findings from our Visibility research will remain publicly accessible and free, ensuring transparency and accountability across the sector. But the deeper data, expanded analysis and early engagement that underpin strategic decision-making will now sit within a professional research membership model - *Inside Track*.

This is not about limiting access. It is about sustaining independence. Robust, system-wide research requires a funding model that reflects the maturity of the market it serves, and recognises that those who depend most directly on this insight have a role in supporting it.

Inside Track enables us to maintain the integrity of the evidence the sector relies on, while offering organisations closer to the work the opportunity to engage more deeply with the forces shaping women's sport.

We are grateful to our founding members; Sky Sports, The Football Association, Firebird Impact, UK Sport, England and Wales Cricket Board, Sunset+Vine, CAA Brand Consulting, Rugby Football Union, MCC/Lord's, Metro Bank, Whisper and Surrey County Cricket Club, who recognise that investing in independent insight at this moment is an investment in the long-term health of the ecosystem. The next phase of women's sport will require shared responsibility, and we welcome others who want to be part of building it.

The next chapter of women's sport will not be defined by moments alone, but by the systems that sustain them.

A handwritten signature in brown ink, reading 'Tammy Parlour'.

**Tammy Parlour MBE, CEO, Women's Sport Trust**