



Office of the  
Deputy Prime Minister

Creating sustainable communities

# Research Report 9

Joint Working in Sport and Neighbourhood Renewal



Neighbourhood  
Renewal Unit



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# Executive Summary

## 1. Introduction

In August 2003, SQW was appointed by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to undertake a study into the nature of joint working between sports organisations and those promoting neighbourhood renewal, with a view to identifying ways to increase the incidence and the effectiveness of this joint working.

Neighbourhood renewal and sport can be thought of as overlapping worlds, each with its own silos of structures, decision-makers and specialist funding streams. It is where these worlds meet that progress is made – where sports organisations and neighbourhood renewal organisations work together to promote the role of sport in neighbourhood renewal. Our challenge is to understand why the crossover area is not larger, involving more people and more areas.

The study has focused on grassroots community sporting activities in England. We have explored decision making from national to neighbourhood level and looked for joint working through agendas, networks and activities.

The study does not include consideration of elite sporting activities or large set-piece sporting events as these raise different issues. It has also not sought to evaluate specific sports projects or provide a comprehensive overview of the evidence base on the links between sport and wider benefits, as these have been done elsewhere.

## Research process

The research for this study has been based upon a desk review of relevant literature, a series of consultations with national bodies and Government departments, and eight case studies of different deprived areas within England drawn from the 88 most deprived authorities. The eight case studies were selected to illustrate the diversity of experience between deprived areas with respect to involvement in sport. Each case study focused on a local authority area, interviewing decision-makers at that level, but also including the study of a specific neighbourhood and decision-making at a regional level. This approach was chosen in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how sports and regeneration organisations work together.

The eight case studies covered were:

- Newham, London
- Bristol, South West
- Newcastle, North East
- Wear Valley, North East
- East Manchester, North West
- Birmingham, West Midlands
- Bradford, Yorkshire and the Humber
- Nottingham, East Midlands

## 2. Sport and Regeneration: Making the Link

The study has drawn on the Council of Europe's broad definition of sport which is *"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"*, (Council of Europe, European Sports Charter, 1993).

At a national level, the policy frameworks for sport and regeneration overlap, with clear mutual interests identifiable. The national vision for sport includes a clear commitment to significantly increase the number of people doing 30 minutes of moderate physical activity five times a week – to 70% of the population by 2020 (Game Plan, Cabinet Office, 2002). This includes a commitment to ensure that participation amongst disadvantaged groups rises, and will therefore require higher participation rates in deprived areas. Sport also has the potential to contribute to national neighbourhood renewal objectives – particularly the cross-governmental 'floor targets' which incorporate objectives relating to health and other social and economic benefits in deprived areas. The two sets of policy agendas reinforce each other, as illustrated in the diagram on page vi.

There is also a growing body of evidence on the wider benefits of sport. In terms of achieving improved neighbourhood renewal outcomes, the most compelling evidence relates to improved health, enhanced educational attainment and lowering youth crime. Sport England's new evidence database provides easy access to a growing range of relevant studies (see the *Value of Sport Monitor* at [www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org)). Nevertheless, the evidence also suggests that if these wider outcomes are to be sought via sporting activities, they require well designed and clearly targeted interventions – they have to be worked for.

### The challenge for sport in deprived areas

Participation in sport in England is not high – with approximately 32% of adults doing 30 minutes of moderate exercise five times a week. There is also considerable variation in participation rates between different social and ethnic groups, between men and women, and between geographical areas. Raising participation to 70% is a major national challenge.

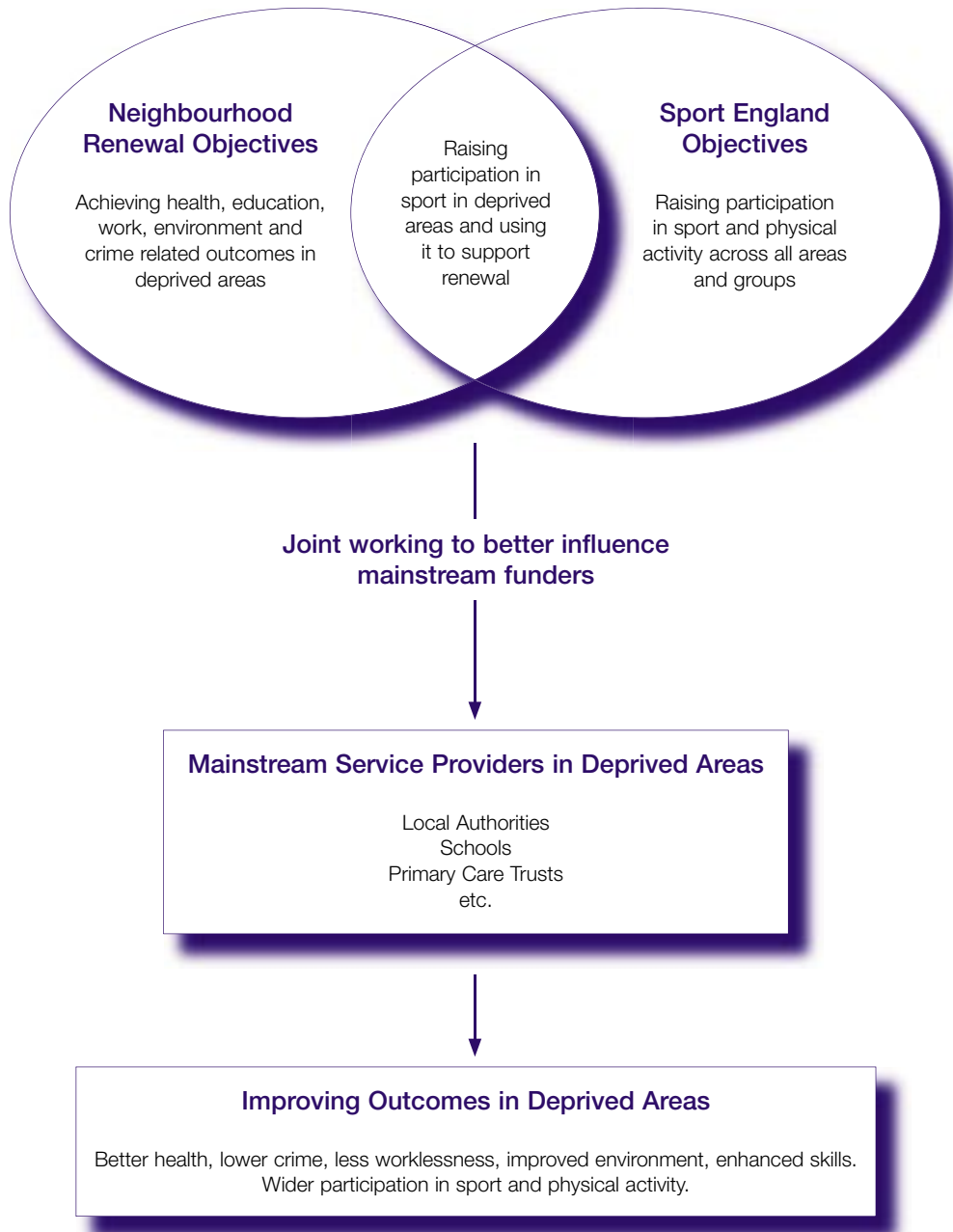
The information available, whilst not comprehensive, shows that generally participation in sport is lower amongst disadvantaged social groups and in deprived areas. While it does not seem to be the case that there are fewer facilities in deprived areas, issues of quality, accessibility, affordability and the nature of provision mean that in these areas take up by the local community is not high.

There is therefore a major challenge in raising participation in deprived areas and achieving the wider benefits of sport. There is a strong case for sports organisations and those promoting neighbourhood renewal to work together, as there are clear mutual benefits from doing so:

- Sport England has the lead responsibility for promoting **wider participation** in sport nationally and amongst disadvantaged groups, working with the mainstream providers of sporting opportunities – local authorities, schools and sports clubs. Neighbourhood renewal bodies are well placed to support Sport England in achieving these objectives in deprived areas.
- Neighbourhood renewal organisations should also recognise that sport can play a role in **achieving renewal outcomes**, including the key floor targets. They should be seeking to develop and pilot new ways of achieving these outcomes through well-designed targeted interventions. They therefore have an incentive to work with Sport England and its partners in the sports world.

In both cases, Sport England and neighbourhood renewal organisations can work together to influence mainstream providers of sporting opportunities to achieve mutual goals.

## The Case for Joint Working



### 3. Sport and Regeneration: Who's Who

It is important to understand the roles of the various organisations in the worlds of sport and regeneration, before seeking to explore how they work together.

#### Sport Structures

The world of sport is complex. Sport England, as a national agency of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, provides strategic leadership for sport. It works with an array of national institutes, national Governing Bodies, regional and county partnerships and many other local organisations. The key points to note are:

- Local authorities are by far the main source of funding for sporting facilities and opportunities at a grassroots level. Schools are also becoming increasingly important providers of sporting facilities both for their own use, and for wider community use. Government funding of sport and schools has increased significantly since 2000.
- The advent of the Lottery in 1994 has seen a significant increase in the amount of capital investment in sport in the last decade, particularly through the New Opportunities Fund, although Lottery funds are currently decreasing.
- There are 112 recognised sports in the UK, with some 300 governing bodies. Much of the organised sporting activity covered by this is delivered by a network of approximately 110,000 amateur sports clubs in the UK, largely supported by volunteers and local fundraising, and mostly voluntary or private sector owned and run. This strand of sporting activity is large and complex, and is not controlled or funded (in the main) by the public sector.
- Sport England has been through a significant process of change, and is developing a more strategic approach to sport, with a new national Framework for Sport in England, and a new Regional

Sports Board in each region. The ongoing work of Sport England's Sport Action Zones in twelve deprived areas is also relevant to this study, given their experience of promoting joint working and piloting new ways of working.

#### Regeneration Structures

There is also a complex array of organisations and funding streams in regeneration. There are three main components:

- Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) – aim to bring together at a local level the public, private, voluntary and community sectors, and are often led by the local authority. For LSPs in the 88 most deprived districts a key task is the development and implementation of a Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, supported through an allocation from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.
- Area-based initiatives – a large number of area-based initiatives have been developed in recent years, many funded from Central Government departments but targeted at specific areas. The most common initiatives found in our case study areas included Sport Action Zones, Health Action Zones, Sure Start, New Deal for Communities and Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders.
- Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) – RDAs administer Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) funds to a large number of partnerships in deprived areas. As these SRB schemes come to an end, RDAs will have growing flexibility on how to spend their funds. Generally, RDAs are using their funds to invest in economic objectives, through brownfield land redevelopment, job and business creation and the promotion of skills and learning.

As with sport, local authorities are key players in decision-making. It is also important to note that the way in which partnerships operate varies between regions and localities.

## 4. Joint Working Today

Drawing on our eight case studies in particular, as well as national consultations, we have explored the nature and extent of joint working between regeneration and sports organisations today. Linkages have been studied in relation to three aspects of joint working: strategies/policies, networks and programme/project activities.

### Joint working through strategies

The key findings with regard to strategies at regional and local levels were as follows:

- The potentially important role that grassroots sport can play in neighbourhood renewal is currently only weakly acknowledged in regional strategies, if at all, particularly those produced by RDAs. The new Regional Plans for Sport should provide clear strategic direction at a regional level, but this will need to be actively communicated to other regional bodies.
- Although a number of neighbourhood renewal strategies include reference to sport, there is little evidence of them addressing its potential in any significant way or giving it much priority. There are certainly no specific objectives or targets covering such issues as promoting greater participation.
- Local sports strategies tend to make a link to wider neighbourhood renewal issues, but often in a fairly generalised and unfocussed way. There is usually an implicit assumption that raising participation alone will deliver these benefits, with little understanding of how they might accrue. Sports strategies usually do not have area-based targets for participation, or even targets for specific social groups, making their commitment to equity in participation difficult to measure. Available data at local level tends to be about service users of specific leisure centres, not broader data on participation.
- There are, however, some noteworthy examples of joint strategic working between health and education departments and sports agencies, in ways which will impact on deprived communities.

### Joint working through structures and networks

The case studies explored the various links and networks through which organisations operate. The key findings were as follows:

- At the regional level, linkages between Government Office DCMS officers, Government Office Neighbourhood Renewal teams, RDAs and Sport England are generally weak and under-developed. Sport and renewal issues are often not being linked but are discussed in separate 'silos'. There are some exceptions to this where good working relationships exist, and Sport England's reorganisation is beginning to improve the situation, but the challenge remains.
- The series of secondments from Sport England to Government Offices and RDAs, and from SAZs to local authorities, appears to have stimulated activity. The extent to which these changes are sustainable beyond the duration of the secondments is not yet clear.
- At a local level, it is more likely that sports departments/organisations will influence how regeneration funds are spent, than regeneration teams will influence how sports departments deliver services.
- Many LSPs do not address sports issues seriously or make the links between sport and neighbourhood renewal. As a result, activities supported by Neighbourhood Renewal Funds do not often contribute much to those issues, and opportunities to influence mainstream sports providers are lost. There are, however, some good examples of LSPs where links have been made. SAZs have been generally effective in making links at a local level between the different interests.
- There is some evidence to suggest that neighbourhood renewal teams have generally been less interested in joint working than sports organisations – with the latter group at least recognising that links could be made.

- In many areas at a local level, neighbourhood renewal agencies and sports agencies appear to operate in parallel, with few links, even though they share a number of common members and interests.

### Joint working through funding

The case studies also sought to identify the different ways in which activities or projects were jointly funded in deprived areas, with the following findings emerging:

- The most common form of joint working between sports and regeneration organisations is through joint funding of individual projects, on a project by project basis, although the depth of partnership varies significantly between projects.
- Jointly funded projects are often small scale and the total amount of regeneration funding devoted to such activities is modest.
- On the whole, project activity generally takes place in an uncoordinated and opportunistic way, rather than as part of a strategic approach.
- Projects and activities being supported are not always clearly focused on achieving well defined outcomes, and are often not tied to ‘bending’ mainstream sport and leisure services. These mainstream services are, as a result, not well targeted to the needs of deprived areas.
- In some areas Primary Care Trusts and local education authorities have recognised the value of sport and are devoting mainstream resources to supporting greater participation among certain groups. Nevertheless, there is often a conspicuous absence of explicit links to outcomes in deprived areas.

## 5. Identifying Key Barriers

At the national level, policy makers have identified the links between the sport and neighbourhood renewal agendas. However, our review of current working does point to the need for more coherent and consistent joint working at both regional and local levels. We have identified seven key barriers that are currently obstructing progress, together with what we suggest are the priorities for action that flow from these:

### (1) Lack of interest in sport by regeneration bodies

RDAs and regeneration organisations tend not to recognise the value of sport as a ‘regeneration issue’ or prioritise it at regional or local levels. Even where the cultural agenda is supported, sport appears to be the poor relation and is often only weakly acknowledged. A lack of joint working therefore arises partly through lack of interest or awareness from these organisations, although there are some notable exceptions to this.

#### 1 - Priorities for Action

- Persuade local and Government Office Neighbourhood Renewal teams, and RDAs of the potential value of sport for regeneration through awareness raising and education. There is a role for local sports/leisure departments in helping to achieve this.
- Ensure that the energy, innovation and drive often apparent in the delivery of neighbourhood-level community sports projects can continue, but within a clearer strategic framework.

## (2) Unfocused regeneration interventions

Local regeneration teams are not always clearly focusing their funding and activities on influencing the way that mainstream services (such as local authority leisure services) are provided. There is a tendency to support short-term projects that are not designed to secure mainstream changes, and that are also not always well focused on achieving specific outcomes. The effectiveness and impact of regeneration funding is therefore often quite limited, with few prospects of changing the priorities or nature of mainstream services in deprived areas.

### 2 - Priorities for Action

- A case can be made for a larger proportion of regeneration funding overall to be spent on sport-related activity, particularly in those areas where little or nothing is invested in it. It is also equally important to make more effective use of the regeneration funding that is already going into such activities, and to persuade those who do not engage with sport at all, to do so. If activities are seen to work and deliver appropriate outcomes, local decision makers will be well placed to decide for themselves how much funding to devote to such activities.
- Regeneration interventions need to be better designed to reflect available evidence of 'what works' where available and be clearly focused on achieving specific outcomes with specific groups.
- A greater proportion of the regeneration funding spent on sport-related activities should be spent on influencing and seeking the reshaping of mainstream services, particularly local council-funded activities.

## (3) Links from sport to regeneration outcomes not clearly expressed or understood

Organisations delivering sporting activities, particularly local authorities, have not always been able to clearly identify or express the process by which sport leads to other outcomes or to identify appropriate actions in their strategies to unlock these potential wider benefits. They need help and support in doing so. The frequent failure to evaluate or monitor outcomes from sporting activities (or even pilot projects) has not helped make the case for wider involvement in, or support of, sports activities.

### 3 - Priorities for Action

- Generally, local sports departments do not need to be persuaded of the links between sport and regeneration, although they do need support in improving their understanding of how those links work, and what activities can best exploit them.
- Better data and evaluation on sporting interventions is required at local level, to support the case for the more frequent use of sport interventions for wider outcomes, and to show how effective pilot projects might be.

## (4) Lack of information and incentives to drive changes in mainstream services

Data on sporting participation for different social groups (or neighbourhoods) is incomplete and there are few explicit targets for raising participation amongst disadvantaged groups. This has led to a lack of knowledge and incentives to drive improvements/changes in mainstream sports provision, and a lack of information on the nature of local needs and how well providers are (or are not) doing in meeting them.

#### 4 - Priorities for Action

- Neighbourhood renewal organisations need to focus attention on mainstream sport/leisure services, and schools, in order to ensure that deprived areas are being well served by them.
- Better data on participation in sport in deprived areas, including data for different social groups, is required - not just basic data on the numbers of users for leisure centres. This will be important in making the case for change in mainstream services.
- Clear local targets are required on both the desired level of participation in sport and physical activity, and the sorts of wider outcomes that sport might contribute to. The likelihood and effectiveness of such targets galvanising action would be greatly enhanced if supported and promoted by a national framework such as Best Value.
- National sports funding programmes, whether those provided by DfES, Lottery funders or others, should include specific targets for the proportion of funding to be delivered to deprived areas. The challenge for funders also extends to finding ways to manage facilities in more inclusive ways.
- Better networking between sports and regeneration organisations will improve relations and build confidence for joint working.

#### (5) Lack of a clear strategic framework

To date a clear strategic framework for sport (or sport-related activities) has often been absent at regional and local levels, leading to a lack of coherence in the use of both mainstream and short-term funding streams. There are too many small unrelated initiatives. This has been reinforced by the often complex array of both regeneration and sports organisations involved.

#### 5 - Priorities for Action

- The new Regional Plans for Sport must provide a clear framework to guide expenditure and activities in each region, including identification of priorities and targets.
- Clearer local strategic frameworks to guide work on sport and physical activity are required in each LSP, owned and supported by all the key funders of sporting activities in that area.

#### (6) Inconsistent involvement of mainstream funding agencies

Mainstream providers such as Primary Care Trusts are not always involved in discussions about, strategies for, or funding of, sport and physical activities in deprived areas. This has led to missed opportunities.

#### 6 - Priorities for Action

- Work is required to engage PCTs and LEAs in particular to understand the role of sport and physical activity in deprived areas, and bring them into strategic discussions about how they can support it more actively.

#### (7) Affiliated voluntary clubs difficult to engage

Formal voluntary sports clubs, especially affiliated ones, have been generally absent from the debate on widening participation and making links to regeneration. This is despite the fact that many community-based organisations provide sporting opportunities.

#### 7 - Priorities for Action

- Sport England in particular must seek to influence the working cultures and objectives of the formal sports clubs and their governing bodies to promote greater engagement with the local community. More use of measures of equity could be employed in assessing their performance and contribution.
- There is a case to be made for more permanent mainstream revenue funding to support neighbourhood level community-based organisations in delivering sporting activities.

# 1. Introduction

1.1 In August 2003, SQW was appointed by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to undertake a study into the nature of joint working between sports organisations and those promoting neighbourhood renewal, with a view to identifying ways to increase the incidence and the effectiveness of this joint working.

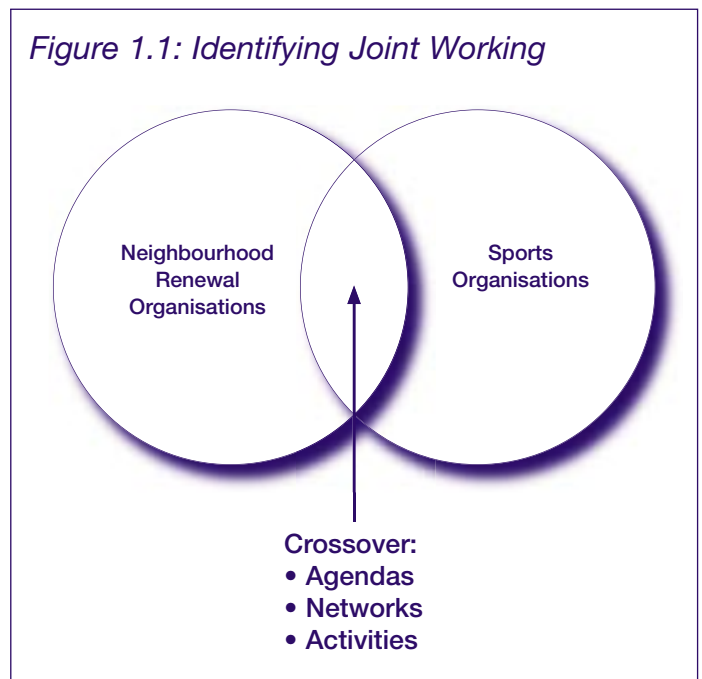
## Study Objectives

- 1.2 The specific research objectives defined at the outset were as follows:
- To identify the key decision-makers in the worlds of neighbourhood renewal and sport who can influence the role of sport in neighbourhood renewal;
  - To clarify what sorts of joint working are likely to add value in promoting neighbourhood renewal objectives;
  - To establish the present nature and extent of joint working (including the aims, nature and funding of those activities); and
  - To identify the barriers to effective joint working and possible ways of overcoming these to better secure neighbourhood renewal objectives through sport.

1.3 Neighbourhood renewal and sport can be thought of as overlapping 'worlds', as illustrated in Figure 1.1, each with its own silos of structures, decision-makers and specialist funding streams. It is in the crossover area that progress is made – where sports organisations and neighbourhood renewal organisations work together to promote the role of sport in neighbourhood renewal. Our challenge is to understand why this crossover area is not larger, involving more people and more areas.

1.4 The study focuses on grassroots community sporting activities in England, and does not include consideration of elite sporting activities or large set-piece sporting events, as these raise different issues.

*Figure 1.1: Identifying Joint Working*



- 1.5 Our research has sought to map how decisions are made in each ‘silo’ and identify where joint working occurs and why, and where it does not occur and why. We have explored decision-making at the national, regional, local and neighbourhood levels, and looked for joint working in three different ways:
- Agendas – to what extent do the renewal and sports agendas interrelate in terms of intention, objectives and strategies?
  - Networks – to what extent do the renewal and sports networks of decision-makers interrelate, and where?
  - Activities – to what extent do the various funding streams support activities that will secure renewal benefits from sport?
- 1.6 It should be noted that this study has not sought to provide a review of the evidence base in relation to the benefits of sporting activities. We summarise some of the evidence in Section 2 in setting out the context for this study, but comprehensive reviews already exist<sup>1</sup> and have not been duplicated here. The study has also not sought to evaluate specific sports projects; the purpose of our case studies was to explore the nature of joint-working between organisations and to identify barriers and good practice relevant to this.
- Research Process**
- 1.7 The research for this study has been based upon a desk review of relevant literature and studies, a series of consultations with national bodies and Government departments and eight case studies of different deprived areas within England - drawn from the 88 most deprived authorities<sup>2</sup>. The national consultations included interviews with senior representatives in Sport England, NRU, DCMS, DfES, Home Office, the New Opportunities Fund, the Institute of Leisure Amenities Management and the Football Foundation.
- 1.8 The eight case studies were selected to illustrate the diversity of experience between deprived areas with respect to involvement in sport. The selection was made to reflect regional diversity, to include areas of known joint working as well as areas where it was not so obvious, to incorporate some areas covered by Sport Action Zones, as well as some not, and to ensure a mixture of urban and rural areas. The case studies undertaken were as shown in Figure 1.2.
- 1.9 In each case study, we focused on a particular local authority area. We interviewed key decision-makers at that level, but also interviewed decision-makers above at the regional level and below in a selected deprived neighbourhood, in order to provide a good cross-section of experience. So, in each of the case studies, we interviewed:
- Regional level – representatives from Sport England Regional Office, RDA and Regional Government Office;
  - Local level – representatives of the local authority’s leisure department, education department, neighbourhood renewal team, and the PCT; and
  - Neighbourhood level – a range of stakeholders in a particular deprived neighbourhood, often including a regeneration partnership, a local school headteacher, and a sports club/leisure centre manager.

<sup>1</sup>See the bibliography at the end of this report for examples of specific reports and also Sport England’s ‘Value of Sport’ evidence database at [www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org).

<sup>2</sup>The NRU has identified the 88 most deprived local authorities in England. They each receive Neighbourhood Renewal Funding and additional support to promote neighbourhood renewal.

**Figure 1.2 – Case Study Pen Portraits**

<p><b>Newham London</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• London borough</li> <li>• Large NRF allocation</li> </ul>	<p>This case study focused on Newham, one of England’s most deprived areas, with 23 of its 24 wards amongst the 10% most deprived. Research focused on joint working between the Council’s neighbourhood renewal team, Healthy Living and Sport team, education department and Newham’s LSP. The LSP has allocated specific NRF monies to support the development of sporting activities for disadvantaged young people in particular, contributing to delivery of the Council’s Healthy Living and Sport Strategy.</p> <p>Joint working was also studied at a more local level in the Manor Park neighbourhood in Newham and at the regional level between Sport England, the Government Office for London and the London Development Agency. In Manor Park, there is much emphasis on providing sports facilities and opportunities for young people, given the large youth population in Newham, and involving the area’s numerous minority ethnic communities.</p>
<p><b>Bristol South West</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City</li> </ul>	<p>This case study focused on Bristol, a relatively prosperous city with significant pockets of deprivation. We considered the joint working between the Bristol Partnership (the LSP), the Bristol Sports Partnership, Bristol City Council’s Sports Services and Neighbourhood Renewal teams, and other city-level regeneration programmes.</p> <p>This research was complemented by a study of joint working in the Southmead neighbourhood, part of Bristol’s ‘Northern Arc’. Regeneration is being promoted there by the Southmead Steering Group, with a particular focus on development of opportunities for young people. Regional links were also explored, involving the Government Office for the South West, Sport England, the Chief Leisure Officers Group, sports partnerships and the South West RDA.</p>
<p><b>Newcastle North East</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City</li> <li>• Sports College</li> </ul>	<p>This case study concentrated on joint working in the City of Newcastle. We considered links between various departments in the City Council – Leisure Services, Education, Strategic Support (including regeneration) – as well as Health Promotion Teams in local PCTs, the LSP, Newcastle FC and other sports clubs, and the Tyne and Wear Sports Board (a sub-regional grouping of leisure services officers). The links to the regional level were also studied, including the work of Sport England and One NorthEast.</p> <p>At the neighbourhood level, the case study also considered local sporting and regeneration activities in Walker, in the East End. Regeneration is led by the East End Partnership, largely supported with NRF monies, and there is a sports focus in Benfield School which is a Sports College that also provides facilities for the wider community.</p>
<p><b>Wear Valley North East</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural district</li> <li>• Sport Action Zone</li> </ul>	<p>This case study focused on the Wear Valley district in County Durham, a rural area with several market towns, with significant pockets of deprivation. Our study included consideration of the work of the District Council’s Regeneration and Community Services Departments, the County Council’s Education Department, Durham Dales PCT, the Wear Valley Sport Action Zone and the range of local sports clubs.</p> <p>This was complemented with a study of activities at the regional and sub-regional level – through One NorthEast, the Government Office, Sport England and the Durham Sport Partnership – as well as in the deprived neighbourhood of Woodhouse Close. In this neighbourhood on the edge of Bishop Auckland, sporting opportunities are available through a leisure centre, a school and some local clubs and groups.</p>
<p><b>East Manchester North West</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inner urban area</li> <li>• Sport Action Zone</li> <li>• NDC</li> <li>• Education Action Zone</li> </ul>	<p>The case study focused on East Manchester, one of the most deprived parts of England, and an area of significant regeneration activity. Our research considered the work of the Manchester LSP in providing a strategic vision for the city, the LSP’s thematic Cultural Partnership (covering sport), and the work of the City Council (through its Leisure, Education and regeneration teams). The networks in East Manchester were also studied - including the lead regeneration partnership (Beacons Partnership), the closely associated work of the New East Manchester Urban Regeneration Company, and the area’s Sport Action Zone. Research also covered regional working with Sport England, the Government Office and the North West Development Agency.</p>

**Figure 1.2 – Case Study Pen Portraits**

<p><b>Birmingham West Midlands</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City</li> <li>• Sport Action Zone</li> <li>• NDC</li> </ul>	<p>The case study focused on the city of Birmingham, considering links between the local authority regeneration team, the LEA, the Sports and Leisure division of the council, the Sport Action Zone and the City’s Strategic Partnership. The latter is responsible for preparing Birmingham’s Community Strategy and its Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. The Sport Action Zone covers 8 deprived wards in the inner city and operates at a strategic level, seeking to establish sustainable partnerships between decision-makers. A new Sport and Physical Activity strategy is being developed, led by the Council.</p> <p>Joint working was also researched in the Aston neighbourhood, where a New Deal for Communities Partnership is operating. Links at the regional level were also studied, including the work of Advantage West Midlands, Sport England and the Government Office.</p>
<p><b>Bradford Yorkshire and the Humber</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City</li> <li>• Sport Action Zone</li> </ul>	<p>The case study focused on the city of Bradford, exploring joint working between the Council (particularly the Education Department, Regeneration Department and the Arts, Heritage and Leisure Department), the Local Strategic Partnership (Bradford Vision), the Primary Care Trust and the Sport Action Zone. The SAZ team is based in the Arts, Heritage and Leisure Department of the Council and focuses on 14 deprived neighbourhoods in the city.</p> <p>Links were also explored at a regional level with Sport England, Yorkshire Forward, the Government Office and the Yorkshire Cultural Consortium. At a neighbourhood level joint working was considered in the Canterbury Estate, south Bradford. This is one of the Sport Action Zone’s target areas. The Canterbury Acting Together Partnership, a school and community centre were consulted about a number of sports-related projects. There are no affiliated sports clubs and no leisure centres in this neighbourhood, but a range of sporting activities operate in the community centre and new sports facilities are being developed at the school.</p>
<p><b>Nottingham East Midlands</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City</li> </ul>	<p>The case study considered joint working in Nottingham, particularly with its LSP (the One City Partnership), PCT and the Council’s Sport and Leisure Services, Education and Regeneration departments. Regional working between the Government Office for the East Midlands, Sport England and the East Midlands Development Agency was also covered.</p> <p>The specific neighbourhood where local joint working was studied was in the west of Nottingham, covering some of the City’s largest council estates – Broxtowe and Bells Lane. The Broxtowe Partnership leads regeneration in the area. There is also a council leisure centre in the neighbourhood.</p>

1.10 We have not sought to duplicate the existing work of the Sport Action Zone (SAZ) evaluation; we have drawn on this where relevant, but have also studied areas not included within the SAZ initiative.

1.11 It should be noted that whilst our research was being undertaken, Sport England was in the midst of a major re-organisation. At the time of writing, the national and regional strategies were still being finalised. Therefore, at various points in the report we have had to acknowledge some uncertainties around the exact nature of Sport England’s unfolding role.

**This Report**

1.12 The rest of this report is set out as follows:

- Section 2 – we set out the context for this study, including the relevant national policy objectives, how sport and regeneration are

- linked and why joint working matters;
- Section 3 – we outline the key organisations in the world of sport and regeneration and the main funding streams of relevance to joint working;
- Section 4 – draws on our case study work in particular to set out the nature and extent of joint working observed today between regeneration and sports organisations; and
- Section 5 – identifies the key barriers that are obstructing joint working, and suggests possible actions in response.

1.13 A short explanation of the various acronyms used in the report can also be found in the appendices, together with a selective bibliography and some examples of good practice identified through our research.

# 2. Making the Link

## Introduction

2.1 The purpose of this section is to set out the conceptual basis for the study. We outline the policy framework within which both sport and regeneration operate, identify the potential benefits of joint working between the two – why it matters – and seek to be clear about the nature of the challenge for sport in deprived areas. Our thinking is based on a selective literature review of the available evidence base and of relevant strategies, a series of interviews with national bodies, and on the case studies.

2.2 We have taken our definition of sport from the Council of Europe which defines it broadly as: “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”.

2.3 Within this, the study is focusing on England and has a clear brief to consider sporting activities at the grassroots level (with an emphasis on lifelong grassroots participation in sport), rather than competition (with an emphasis on performance and excellence in sport) or large set-piece sporting events (like the Commonwealth Games).

## (2.1) The Present Policy Framework

### The National Policy Framework for Sport

2.4 The overall framework for the promotion and support for sport in England is defined by the Government’s strategy A Sporting Future for All (DCMS, 2000), the subsequent Plan for Sport (DCMS, 2001) and a more recent strategic review by DCMS and the Cabinet Office Strategy Unit - Game Plan: a strategy for delivering Government’s sport and physical activity objectives (Cabinet Office, 2002). These documents provide the strategic direction for sport in England. Also important are the operational performance targets of those Government Departments and Agencies charged with delivering the strategy – particularly the DfES and DCMS Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets and the new Sport England objectives.

2.5 The overall aim expressed in Game Plan is: **Vision:** To increase significantly levels of sport and physical activity, particularly among disadvantaged groups; and to achieve sustained levels of success in international competition.

**Recommendation:** By 2020, 70% of individuals to be undertaking 30 minutes of physical activity 5 days a week.

2.6 This is an ambitious target and achieving it would require a step change in national behaviour. Two further targets of strategic significance are the two sports-related PSA targets of the DCMS, as follows:

**PSA 1:** Enhance the take-up of sporting opportunities by 5-16 year olds by increasing the percentage of school children who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum from 25% in 2002 to 75% by 2006. (Joint target with DfES).

**PSA 2:** Increase significantly take-up of cultural and sporting opportunities by new users aged 20 and above from priority groups.

2.7 At the national level, it is also important to note the work of the Activity Co-ordination Team, a cross-Government team jointly led by the Department of Health and DCMS. The team is presently developing a national delivery plan to better co-ordinate Government actions to deliver the Game Plan vision of 70% participation.

2.8 The new Framework for Sport in England, prepared by Sport England, goes further when detailing the contribution that it hopes to make to “increase and widen the base of participation”. The overall target for participation has been set at “increasing participation in sport to at least 50% by 2020”, and “making significant reductions in the ‘equity gap’ for women and girls, ethnic minorities, people with a disability and people in the lowest socio-economic groups”. The latter objective is an explicit and headline recognition of the importance of tackling low participation issues amongst disadvantaged groups, and will require action in deprived areas if it is to be met. The new Framework also provides explicit acknowledgement of the contribution that sport should be seeking to make to wider social and economic outcomes.

## The Policy Framework for Neighbourhood Renewal

2.9 The overall strategic direction for neighbourhood renewal in England was set out in the Social Exclusion Unit’s ‘A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal: National Strategy Action Plan’ (2001). The aim is to “narrow the gap between deprived neighbourhoods and the rest of the country” by improving key outcomes in deprived areas – better health, lower worklessness, less crime, better skills, better housing and physical environment. It is recognised that this largely needs to be achieved through securing changes to the way that mainstream public services operate, as these are the main ‘levers of change’ in deprived areas. The responsibility for leading the delivery of the strategy rests with the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU) within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

2.10 To help secure this a series of ‘floor targets’ that define minimum acceptable outcomes in deprived areas have been agreed across Government. The 13 most relevant (as agreed in the 2002 Spending Review) are summarised in Figure 2.1 (many are also defined by particular quantified targets).

**Figure 2.1 – Neighbourhood Renewal Floor Targets (2002)**

Outcomes	Floor Targets
Lowering worklessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote enterprise in disadvantaged areas</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the economic performance of all regions and reduce the gap in economic growth rates between regions</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the employment rates of disadvantaged areas and groups</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the gap in productivity between the least well performing rural areas and the average</li> </ul>
Lowering crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce crime and the fear of crime overall, reduce vehicle crime, domestic burglary and robbery in particular, and reduce the gap between the worst crime areas and the best comparable areas</li> </ul>
Raising educational attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise standards in English and Maths in primary schools nationally and significantly reduce the number of underperforming schools</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise standards in English, Maths, ICT and Science in secondary schools nationally, and significantly reduce the number of underperforming schools</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the proportion of students achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A* - C, with all schools achieving a minimum standard</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the proportion of students achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A* - C, with all LEAs achieving a minimum standard</li> </ul>
Improving health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the gap between the areas with the highest teenage conception rates, and the average</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the gap between the areas with the lowest life expectancy at birth, and the average</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents nationally, particularly in disadvantaged areas</li> </ul>
Improving the quality of housing and the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring all social housing into decent condition, especially in deprived areas, and increase the proportion of private housing occupied by vulnerable groups that is in decent condition</li> </ul>

## Making the Policy Links

2.11 It is possible to identify a clear interlinking of interests between sport and neighbourhood renewal policy objectives. Given the disproportionate presence of disadvantaged groups in deprived areas, achieving Sport England's objective of raising participation amongst these groups will require attention to participation in deprived areas. Also, the health, and other social and economic benefits of sports participation represent another means through which key neighbourhood renewal targets might be met. The two sets of policy objectives are reinforcing and can be understood as complementary agendas.

## (2.2) The Benefits of Sport for Neighbourhood Renewal

2.12 People participate in sport for many reasons, not least the simple enjoyment of doing so. There is also growing evidence of wider benefits. Sport could play a more significant role in promoting neighbourhood renewal than many perhaps realise.

## The Benefits of Sport

2.13 There is increasing evidence that sport has a wide array of social, economic and environmental benefits for participants and communities<sup>3</sup>, although these benefits are often hard to measure, with the amount of evidence varying between them. Nevertheless, various studies have pointed to benefits in the form of personal satisfaction, a better social life, improved educational outcomes, crime reduction and social inclusion. A review of various studies undertaken in recent years highlights the variety of benefits for which at least some evidence has been put forward, as shown in Figure 2.2.

2.14 Most of the robust evidence currently available on the benefits of sport relates to health, education and crime benefits, as briefly described here.

**Figure 2.2: Benefits of sports participation**

Personal	Social	Economic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aiding a full/meaningful life</li> <li>• Ensuring health</li> <li>• Helping stress management</li> <li>• Enhancing self-esteem/image</li> <li>• Offering greater balance/achievement/life satisfaction</li> <li>• Play and human development</li> <li>• Better academic performance</li> <li>• Improved social and organisational skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening communities</li> <li>• Reducing alienation/loneliness/antisocial behaviour</li> <li>• Promoting ethnic/cultural harmony</li> <li>• Strengthening families</li> <li>• Community involvement/ownership/empowerment</li> <li>• Improving access for disabled/disadvantaged</li> <li>• Promoting community pride</li> <li>• Protection for latch-key children</li> <li>• Ethical behaviour models (cheating/ drugs/ violence)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost-effective health prevention</li> <li>• Greater fitness for more productive workforces</li> <li>• Small sums/large economic returns</li> <li>• Attracting new/growing businesses</li> <li>• Reducing cost of vandalism/crime</li> <li>• Catalyst for tourism</li> <li>• Funding environmental protection</li> <li>• Creation of jobs</li> </ul>
Environmental	National	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protecting/rehabilitating environments</li> <li>• Increasing property values</li> <li>• Ensuring a sustainable environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration/cultural cohesion</li> <li>• Pride</li> <li>• Trade balance/national marketing</li> <li>• International influence/representation</li> </ul>	

<sup>3</sup>For a good overview of what evidence is available see Sport England's 'Value of Sport' evidence database at [www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org). For general overviews, see also the Social Exclusion Unit's *Policy Action Team Report 10 on Arts, Sport and Leisure* (1999) and *Realising the potential of cultural services: the case for sport*, Coalter F, LGA, (2001).

2.15 There is considerable and well-accepted evidence that participation in sport and physical activity provides important health benefits. Indeed, a recent study has estimated that the potential cost of physical inactivity in England could run into billions of pounds per year, not least in terms of costs to the NHS<sup>4</sup>. The same study concluded that there was a strong case for promoting sport and physical activity as a means to achieving health policy objectives, and that “from a public health perspective...it is increased physical activity (potentially achieved through a range of activities), as much as participation in competitive team sports alone, which delivers health benefits to a wider range of individuals.” The study also concluded that the greatest public health benefit would be achieved “from sedentary people doing a little more, rather than moderately active people pushing to meet ever higher targets.” The clear implication is that broadening participation in sport and physical activity should be a key objective, and that this would require a wide variety of accessible opportunities to cater for differing needs and preferences.

2.16 Numerous studies have also suggested that participation in sport has educational benefits, although the emerging findings suggest that the positive impact arises not so much from the participation itself as the additional attention and support/mentoring that participants receive as a result of their participation. Studies also show that greater participation in sport whilst at school makes participation later in life more likely. The implications for policy are that promoting sport in schools should be a priority if participation rates are to rise, and that securing wider educational benefits requires close attention to be paid to the way that sporting activities are run, as it is likely to be the support and interaction with coaches, mentors and peers that is at least as important as the activity itself.

2.17 Much literature also exists regarding the links between sport and reducing crime, especially amongst young people. Whilst the evidence for a clear causal link is still being built up, many studies have suggested that sport, again as part of a package of measures, is likely to have value in reducing the offending rates of young people. A recent study on behalf of the Youth Justice Board<sup>5</sup> identified a range of factors that increase the risk of, or increase the protection against, young people committing crime. For example, it identifies after-school sports programmes as an effective method of recruiting young people, particularly boys, to take part in constructive activities that can promote positive attitudes and behaviour and reduce the risk of offending.

2.18 Also of relevance and importance to this present study is the report’s conclusion that interventions are only likely to work if they clearly target appropriate groups, are well designed and reflect available good practice.

### Implications

2.19 There are a number of implications from this consideration of the available evidence base:

- Sport can enhance neighbourhood renewal – there is plausible and growing evidence to suggest that sport can be a valuable tool in the pursuit of various neighbourhood renewal outcomes, including improved health and educational attainment, reduced youth crime and stronger social networks.
- Achieving wider benefits requires work – maximising the wider benefits of sport (and its potential for renewal) requires close attention to be paid to the way that sporting activities are run, and how they relate to other activities (education, crime prevention, etc). The evidence strongly suggests that many of the wider social benefits of sport do not arise spontaneously as an inevitable consequence of participation, but they have to be consciously worked for.

- Defining 'sport' broadly, it would also appear to be the case that the objective of improving the health of the 'sedentary' population could be achieved through a broad range of activities, not just 'traditional' sporting activities in formal venues such as leisure centres.
- Better use of evidence – the available evidence on the benefits of sport is currently both patchy and not easily accessible. There is a need to bring together this evidence, continue to 'fill gaps' (for example, through the evaluation of new projects and programmes) and make the findings readily accessible to practitioners and policy makers. The new Sport England 'Value of Sport'<sup>6</sup> evidence database will make an important contribution to meeting this need.
- There is a dramatic drop in participation when young people leave school (97% aged 12-16, but only 69% aged 20-24). Participation rates continue to fall as age increases;
- Participation in sporting activities is generally higher among men than women (except for keep fit and swimming);
- Participation is generally lower for socio economic groups D and E (i.e. semi-skilled, unskilled manual workers, unemployed, those on benefit);
- Overall, participation by ethnic minority groups is slightly lower than the average (40% cf. 46%, 1999-2000). Nevertheless it should be noted that there are significant differences between ethnic groups, amongst different types of sports and between men and women, with some ethnic groups having very low female participation (e.g. Pakistani women 21%).

### **(2.3) Defining the Challenge for Sport in Deprived Areas**

2.20 Here we consider what we know about sporting activities in deprived areas and the nature of the challenge facing us.

#### **Participation in Sport in England**

2.21 Overall, levels of participation in sport and physical activity in England are not high. This is now generally acknowledged to be a significant problem, particularly with respect to resultant health problems in a growing proportion of the population. Only 32% of adults report doing 30 minutes of "moderate exercise" five times a week<sup>7</sup>. This does not compare well with many other European countries, particularly Scandinavia, although it is by no means the lowest rate in Europe. Analysis from Sport England (2002) also shows that there are significant differences between different social groups:

2.22 These variations in participation can also be illustrated by reference to geographical patterns. For example the Yorkshire and Humber region has one of the lowest overall participation rates of all English regions (at 28% 'taking part in sport in previous 4 weeks'), and one of the lowest participation rates for women (14% 'taking part in sport in previous 4 weeks', compared to 38% national average), yet participation rates for those taking part in cricket and swimming are well above average.

<sup>6</sup>See [www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org).

<sup>7</sup>Department of Health, Joint Health Surveys Unit (1999).

2.23 How is participation changing? The recent trends in participation are not entirely clear. The 1996 General Household Survey suggested that participation by women in sport and physical activity had remained largely static between 1990-1996, but the 1998 Health Survey for England suggested that increasing numbers of men and women were becoming 'sedentary' (e.g. 1994-1998, from 30% to 35% of men). Given available evidence, however, it can be said that participation in sport during the last decade has certainly not been increasing significantly and has probably been static, at a low level.

2.24 Given the national objective of raising participation to 70%, there is clearly a major challenge in increasing participation rates for all social groups. The widely varying participation levels between different types of activity and different social groups also suggests that varying approaches may be needed for different groups. In terms of achieving health objectives, we also need to be aware that sport (in the limited sense) is only one of several activities that can contribute to people doing more 'moderate exercise'. Of the 32% of people who engage in 'moderate exercise' five times a week, sport presently only constitutes 8% of their total contributing physical activity, with 12% coming from walking, 16% from gardening and housework, and 64% from their occupation.

### Considering Deprived Areas

2.25 What do we know of sporting activities in deprived areas? Few comprehensive data sources exist, although there is a considerable array of more local data. The key questions are as follows:

- *How does participation in sport by residents of deprived areas differ from the average?* No comprehensive and comparable data on the behaviour of residents in deprived areas has been found, although there have been local surveys conducted for Sport Action Zones that confirm lower participation in their target deprived areas. More general data is also available. The General Household Survey 1996 suggested that socio-economic groups D and E participate less in sport than other groups. However, the (1998) Health Survey for England suggested that, on a broader measure of physical activity, groups D and E were actually more likely to be engaging in levels of "physical activity beneficial for health" (30 minutes, moderate activity, 5 days per week) by virtue of their manual occupations than other socio-economic groups – 34% compared to 27% for groups A and B. Assuming that deprived areas have a greater proportion of groups D and E it seems clear that residents in deprived areas do participate less in sport overall, although they may be getting more exercise 'beneficial to health' than residents of other areas, through work.

Nevertheless, recent work also shows a link between low household income and the risk of obesity. This provides further support for the promotion of greater participation in sport and physical activity in deprived areas<sup>8</sup>.

- *To what extent do residents (including school children) of deprived areas have less access to public sporting facilities?* Within the overall picture on participation, there is a more specific question about the ease with which residents of deprived areas can access public sporting facilities – mainly local authority pools/halls/etc. and school facilities. Are there fewer facilities in deprived areas? Are they harder to access?

We have not been able to find comprehensive data that would confirm or refute whether more or less local authority or school facilities are located in deprived areas. Anecdotal evidence, supported by evidence from our own case studies, suggests that the number of leisure/sport facilities in or near deprived areas may not vary significantly from other residential areas, but that access issues are indeed an important consideration. It is frequently the case that the demographic profile of those people using a leisure centre does not reflect the profile of the surrounding community. On this wider question of accessibility (not just a function of distance, but also management of facilities, price/affordability, opening times, quality of service and working cultures/social attitudes) a recent study by Sport England<sup>9</sup> on the use of sports halls and swimming pools in England showed that manual socio-economic groups were less likely to use the facilities than professional and intermediate groups. Unemployed people were also under-represented. This finding is supported by other studies. Interestingly, the study found that use of such facilities by ethnic minorities was in line with their proportion in the population, although they were under-represented in the use of swimming pools.

- *To what extent do residents of deprived areas have less access to private/voluntary sports clubs and private gyms/health facilities?* On the question of how much private/voluntary sporting activity occurs in deprived areas, we have again been unable to find systematic national data. The partial evidence available from the case studies suggests that these residents use private facilities less, due to cost, and that participation in voluntary-run clubs is also less than in other areas.

2.26 The difficulty of accessing data on the extent of sporting participation in deprived areas is an issue that needs to be addressed, particularly if future interventions are to be properly targeted, and their impacts properly assessed. We suggest that improving the availability of data should not just cover participation in sport, but also physical activities more generally, to allow the health benefits to be better judged.

2.27 What is clear, however, from all of the data we have reviewed is that participation in sport in deprived areas is relatively low and should be raised. Participation also varies significantly between socio-economic groups, between men and women, between ethnic groups (and for different types of sports), each of which is likely to require a different response. The challenge in deprived areas is not necessarily about increasing the number of facilities available, but may be far more to do with improving the quality, accessibility and affordability of a broad range of sporting opportunities, whether in formal sporting/leisure facilities or not.

<sup>9</sup>Sport England, *Survey of Sports Halls and Swimming Pools in England*, (1999).

## **(2.4) The Need for ‘Joint Working with a Purpose’**

2.28 There is clearly a problem regarding sport in deprived areas; participation is low. There is also an opportunity; growing evidence that sport could play a useful part in contributing to wider neighbourhood renewal outcomes. So, what response is required, and from whom?

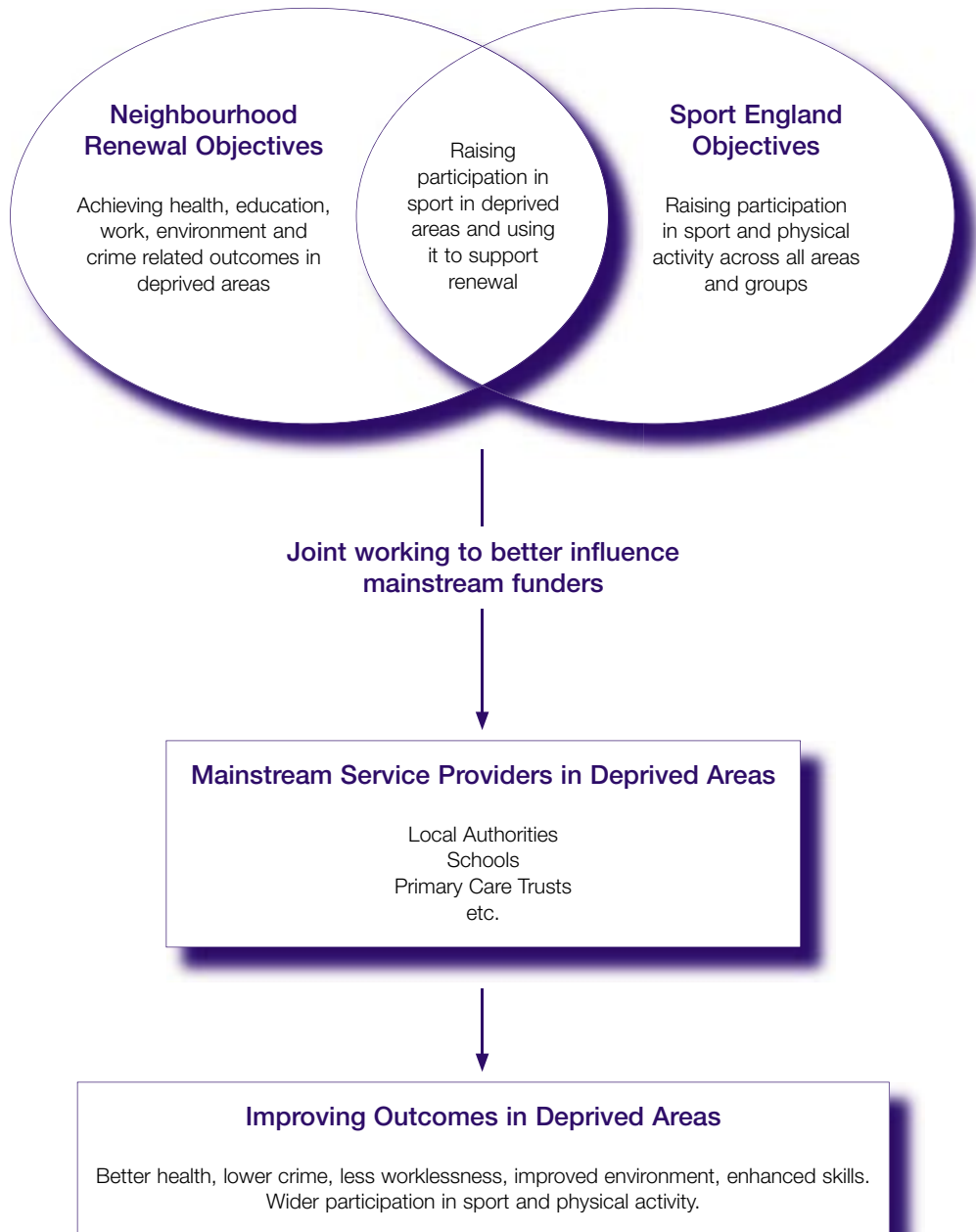
2.29 There is a strong case for sports organisations, and those promoting neighbourhood renewal, to work together and there are clear mutual benefits from doing so.

2.30 Sport England has the lead responsibility for promoting wider participation in sport across England – in all areas, whether deprived or not. The organisation also has specific objectives to raise participation amongst disadvantaged groups. The national challenge of raising participation is enormous, and will require progress to be made in all areas, including deprived areas. Sport England is seeking to achieve its objectives through working with the mainstream providers of sporting opportunities – particularly local authorities, schools and clubs. Neighbourhood renewal bodies are well placed to support Sport England in achieving these objectives in deprived areas, through their networks, connections with the community and, to some extent, funding. There is therefore an incentive for Sport England to seek support from neighbourhood renewal partners.

2.31 Similarly, as the wider value of grassroots sport becomes clearer, neighbourhood renewal organisations should recognise that sport can play a role in achieving renewal outcomes, including the key floor targets. The most obvious benefits are health-related, but as we showed earlier in this section, sport can also be used as part of a package of measures to reach out to different groups to help tackle problems of isolation, self-confidence, motivation, educational attainment and crime. There is therefore an incentive for neighbourhood renewal organisations to work with Sport England and its partners in the sport world.

2.32 Figure 2.3 illustrates the confluence of interests between the two sets of agendas. By working together, sports and neighbourhood renewal organisations should have more effect, especially when seeking to influence mainstream funders of sports/leisure services.

Figure 2.3 - The Case for Joint Working



2.33 It is important to be clear as to the respective roles of neighbourhood renewal and sports organisations. In particular, it would not be appropriate for neighbourhood renewal to duplicate or supplant the work of Sport England, which has the primary responsibility for raising participation in sport (including deprived areas), nor to simply fund sporting activities in a general way. We need to identify and promote joint working with a clear purpose. We believe that the rationale is as follows:

- Neighbourhood renewal teams should support the work of Sport England, and mainstream providers, in raising participation in deprived areas and particularly amongst disadvantaged groups. Regeneration funding should not be used to fund the general ongoing provision of sport, but to help mainstream providers (particularly local authorities) to develop more effective ways of reaching out to a broader cross-section of the community. This is a supporting and influencing role, to ensure that residents of deprived areas have as good access to sporting opportunities as anyone else, and can lead healthier and more active lives.
- Neighbourhood renewal teams should work with Sport England, and others, to develop and pilot new ways of realising the wider value of sport by reaching out to specific disadvantaged groups to achieve specific renewal outcomes – better health, higher aspirations, lower crime, etc. This is an area of work that neighbourhood renewal organisations could lead on, using their experience to bring local partners together. The intention should be to mainstream successful pilots, not fund them continuously. Work should be clearly tied to achieving renewal outcomes.

2.34 With regard to both of these objectives, it will also be important that any interventions are carefully targeted on specific social groups, such as particular ethnic minorities, or women, or those who are not working, etc., as the needs of different groups vary significantly.

2.35 Having established a clear rationale for joint working, what does it involve in practice? In Figure 2.4 we have set out some of the different ways that organisations can work together. These are the different types of practice that we have sought to explore and map through our case studies.

**Figure 2.4 – Joint Working in Practice**

<p><b>At a Strategic Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-ordination of research</li> <li>• Shared strategic objectives</li> <li>• Explicit targets relevant to deprived areas</li> </ul> <p><b>Networks and People</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal links</li> <li>• Informal links</li> </ul> <p><b>Activities &amp; Funding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lobbying mainstream providers of sporting opportunities</li> <li>• Design of programmes to achieve joint objectives</li> <li>• Formal monitoring of activities/spend against targets</li> </ul>	<p><b>Key objectives of shared interest:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase participation in sport and physical activity in deprived communities, particularly amongst specific disadvantaged groups.</li> <li>• To use sport to assist in wider objectives:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Crime</li> <li>- Education</li> <li>- Health</li> <li>- Personal motivation</li> <li>- Community engagement</li> <li>- Employment</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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## (2.5) Summary

2.36 This section has sought to identify how grassroots sport and regeneration are linked, and why there are good reasons to promote joint working. The key points highlighted are:

- **Mutual benefits** – the policy objectives of both sport and regeneration organisations overlap, with mutual interests identifiable. There is plausible, and growing, evidence to suggest that sport can be used as a significant tool to achieve wider objectives in deprived communities, including improving health, tackling youth crime and building social networks.
- **Better evidence** – the evidence base for the wider value of sport is growing, and Sport England are now making this more accessible. These efforts are important and should continue if practitioners are to be better informed. One important feature of the existing evidence base, is that it strongly suggests that the wider social benefits of sport do not arise spontaneously as an inevitable consequence of participation, but they have to be consciously worked for. This reinforces the need for joint working between sports and non-sports organisations.

- **Joint working with a purpose** – intervention in sport by regeneration bodies needs to be carefully thought through, and undertaken to achieve specific outcomes with specific groups. We believe there is a strong case for promoting the greater take up of sporting opportunities in deprived areas, and for developing new approaches that use sport to achieve a range of wider outcomes. Moreover, in order to improve the evidence base of ‘what works’, it is vital that this work is complemented by monitoring of take-up and the assessment of impact.

# 3. Who's Who?

3.1 This section briefly explains how the worlds of grassroots sport and regeneration are structured and funded, identifying the key funding sources and decision-makers who could be involved in joint working. We also highlight some features that may influence the prospects for joint working.

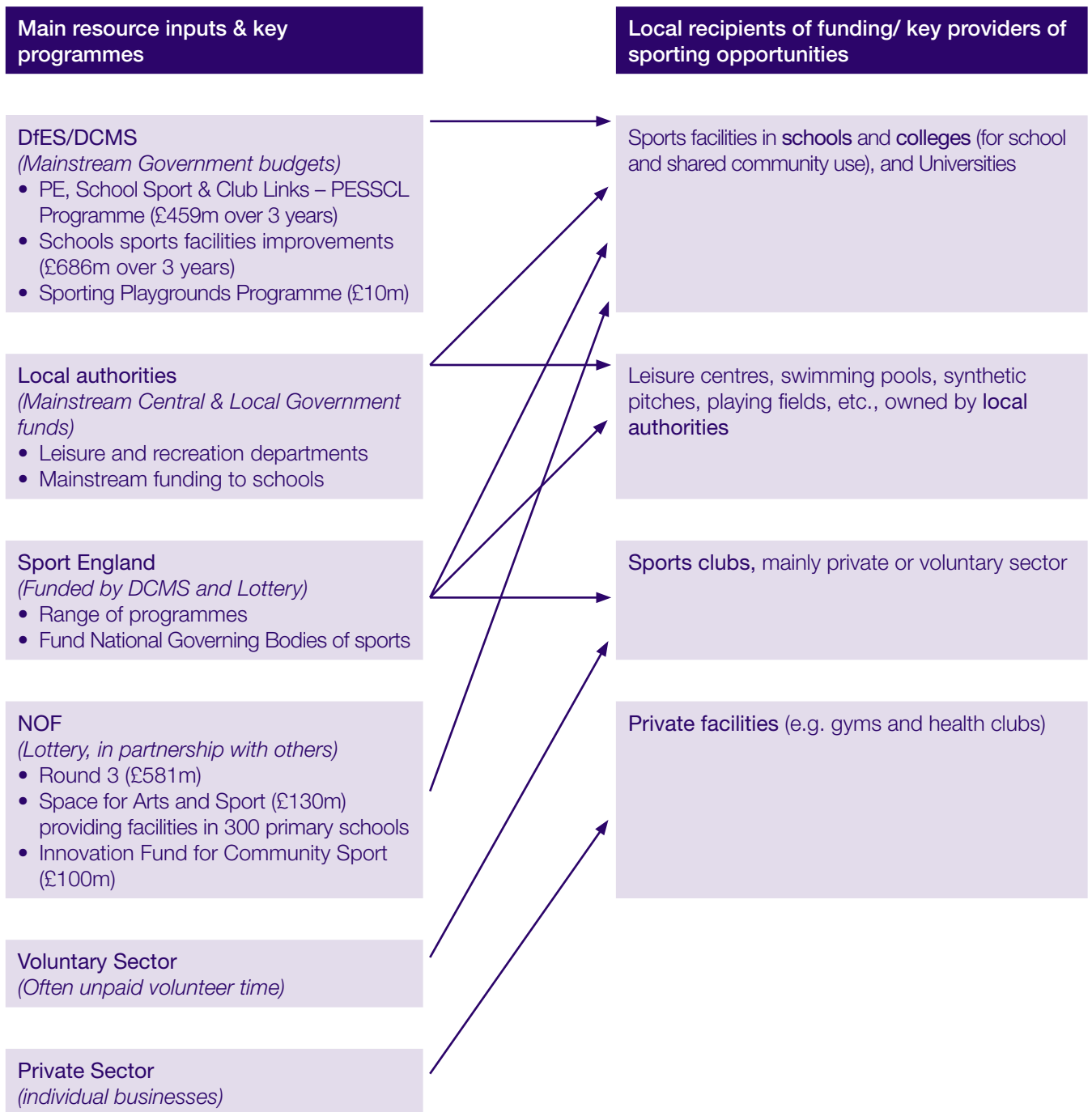
## **(3.1) Sport Structures**

3.2 The world of sport in England is somewhat complex. Sport England, as an agency of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, provides strategic leadership for sport, but it works with, and alongside, an array of national institutes, national Governing Bodies, regional and county partnerships and many other local organisations.

3.3 We have attempted to summarise the main funders, and deliverers, of grassroots sporting activity in Figure 3.1. For the purposes of this study, there are some key points to note:

- Local authorities are by far the main source of funding for sporting facilities and opportunities at a grassroots level.
- Schools are becoming increasingly important providers of sporting facilities both for their own use, and for wider community use.
- The advent of the Lottery in 1994 has seen a significant increase in the amount of capital investment in sport in the last decade, although Lottery funds are currently decreasing.
- Government funding of sport (and schools) has increased significantly since 2000.
- There are 112 recognised sports in the UK, with some 300 governing bodies. Much of the organised sporting activity covered by this is delivered by a network of approximately 110,000 amateur sports clubs in the UK, largely supported by volunteers and local fundraising, and mostly voluntary or private sector owned and run. This strand of sporting activity is large and complex, and is not controlled or funded (in the main) by the public sector.

**Figure 3.1: Main resource flows into grassroots sport**



- 3.4 To gauge the overall scale of expenditure, we have highlighted some estimates from Game Plan. It estimated that the total expenditure on sport (not just grassroots sport) by the public sector for 1999-2000 was £2.2 billion, consisting of:
- 87% for schools and leisure services, funded through Local Government, using Central Government block grants and local income and council tax;
  - 11% from the Lottery; and
  - 2% Central Government direct funding.
- 3.5 A study undertaken in 2003<sup>10</sup> estimated that public sector expenditure was complemented by approximately £14bn of voluntary sector time, invested in running sporting activities and clubs. This is the time equivalent of 720,000 full time workers, helping to support over 100,000 sports clubs in England.
- 3.6 Below, we unpack in a little more detail who the key players are at different levels.

### **National level**

- 3.7 The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has the lead responsibility for sport overall. Its Game Plan report, jointly published with the Strategy Unit in December 2002, provides the strategic direction for sport in England. It focused on the importance of increasing grassroots participation in sports for health benefits, and the importance of Government working closely with the bodies that provide sport. It suggested how the existing institutional and financial structures can be made less complex.

### **Regional level**

- 3.8 The new reformed Sport England provides strategic leadership to sport by providing partners with support, knowledge and expertise whilst establishing the performance criteria against which the impact of all future investment will be measured. Sport England's work is jointly funded by the Government and the National Lottery. Its grant-in-aid from the Exchequer goes primarily towards maintaining England's sports infrastructure, including many national Governing Bodies for different sports. Through the Sport England Lottery Fund, Sport England distributes National Lottery funds earmarked for the development of sport in England. Across Sport England there has been a radical modernisation programme. This involves moving from 15 grant management regimes down to just one, 75 programmes to two streams of investment, and reducing the organisation from 570 people to 280. This process of change was still ongoing at the time of writing this report.
- 3.9 A key part of the Sport England reorganisation is a shift from a delivery emphasis to a strategic emphasis, and the establishment of a regional structure, with a Regional Director and Regional Sports Board in every region. The new strategic role will see a revised focus on performance measurement, with grants to sports boards linked to Service level Agreements focussed on delivery of key outputs and outcomes (including participation by socio-economic group).

3.10 Regional Sports Boards were being established at the time of the fieldwork and there was considerable optimism around them. They typically comprise a range of stakeholders that can assist in influencing key agencies that can respond to the Game Plan challenges. Each Board will have a devolved budget and has to produce a Regional Plan for Sport, which is intended to support the creation of partnerships and investment to provide new opportunities to “start in sport, stay involved and succeed at all levels”. There will be regional targets for raising participation amongst socio-economic groups D and E. The New Opportunities Fund and Sport England have also recently announced the creation of a new Innovation Fund (Active England) to take these ideas forward. Over £100 million is being made available with funding decisions to be made by Regional Sports Boards.

#### **Local level**

3.11 Local authorities are crucial as they are the main providers of sports and leisure facilities, including school sports facilities, and sports development workers. They have considerable freedom over what they fund, with no statutory requirements to guide them about levels of expenditure or service, although some Best Value guidance is available. Levels of expenditure at a local level can be very large, for example the Sport and Leisure Division of Birmingham City Council has an annual budget of over £30m. Sport England’s new strategic focus means that there is now much better alignment between their objectives and those of local authorities, with both focussed on providing and encouraging wider sporting participation.

3.12 In addition to publicly funded provision, at a local level there is a network of sports clubs run by the private and voluntary sectors, many affiliated to national associations (e.g. Football Association) and bound by their rules, although some not. There is also a sub-regional level of sports organisation, through an array of county sports partnerships in many areas.

3.13 The twelve Sport England funded Sport Action Zones (SAZs) are also key players at the local level in their areas. Their role is to promote more equitable participation in sport, promote and pilot innovative new ways of working and develop the role of sport as a contributor to combating social exclusion. Early indications suggest that these Zones are improving inter-agency relationships and learning useful lessons with respect to new styles of working. We discuss further how this has been achieved, through SAZs and other routes in Section 4 which considers the extent and nature of joint working in our case study areas in particular.

## (3.2) Regeneration Structures

3.14 We briefly summarise here how the regeneration world as it affects deprived neighbourhoods is structured. There are three important components to the provision of funds for this work:

- Local Strategic Partnerships – aim to bring together at a local level the different parts of the public, private, and community and voluntary sectors. A key task for LSPs in the 88 most deprived areas is the preparation and implementation of a Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (LNRS) which provides the framework for tackling deprivation in the local area. LSPs in deprived areas are also charged with deciding how to spend their allocation of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF), a flexible pot of money. Decisions regarding NRF spend are made at a local level, sometimes with funds further delegated by the LSP to individual neighbourhoods to allocate and spend themselves.
- Area-based initiatives – a large number of area-based initiatives have developed over the years. These are funded on a national basis from Central Government departments and are targeted at specific areas. Many of these were in evidence in our case study areas, including Sport Action Zones, Health Action Zones, Sure Start, New Deal for Communities and Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders. In most cases, the programmes are designed at a national level, with some degree of guidance and support from Government Offices for the Regions (GORs). In our case study areas, the degree of direction provided by GORs varied, although generally the decisions on how the funds are to be used are made at a local or neighbourhood level, within the given guidelines.

- Regional Development Agencies – RDAs administer the remaining SRB funds, which still account for significant expenditure in deprived neighbourhoods, although this is reducing every year as schemes come to an end. Decision-making on SRB funds is made by the local SRB Partnership, although most have now committed large parts of their funds to agreed programmes. As SRB commitments reduce, RDAs have greater flexibility on how to spend their Single Programme funds. Generally, these new funds are being used to promote economic objectives, through brownfield land redevelopment, job and business creation and the promotion of skills and learning.

## (3.3) Key Implications

3.15 This brief description of the structure of sport and regeneration highlights a number of issues of relevance with regards to joint working:

- The number of sports organisations, and funders, makes for a complex picture. To add to this, as has been well documented in recent years, the array of regeneration funding available also makes for a complex and rather confusing ‘patchwork quilt’ at local level, increasing the challenge of ‘joining up’ different agendas.
- There is considerable variation between regions, and within regions, with regards to how sports and regeneration programmes (even those designed at a national level) are actually administered. Further variation is evident in the particular priorities assumed by different partnerships. This means that even within the same organisation, priorities and attitudes may differ between areas.

- The recent changes to Sport England have brought a growing focus on increasing grassroots participation, including a focus on specific disadvantaged socio-economic groups, (although not geographical areas) as well as a clearer focus on using more innovative methods to widen access to sport and physical activities.
- Much sporting activity through clubs is not directly funded or controlled by the public sector, being largely voluntary in nature, and therefore the 'levers' for change can seem limited.
- Local authorities are key players in both sport and regeneration. They also have significant freedoms in how they choose to deliver sport/leisure services, and through Local Strategic Partnerships, how NRF funding is spent.
- The amount of mainstream funding expended on sport and leisure, particularly through local authorities, dwarfs the amount of regeneration funding available.

# 4. Joint Working Today

## Introduction

4.1 This section draws on the evidence of the eight case studies and our consultations with key national players to outline the ways in which joint working is taking place today between sport and neighbourhood renewal. Using the broad typology set out in Figure 2.4, it provides examples of the types of linkage that exist and the extent of them. The next sections detail the linkages which exist:

- At a strategic and policy level;
- In terms of networks and structures of decision making; and
- In terms of activities at a programme and project level.

4.2 Throughout this analysis, consideration is also given to the spatial level being covered, either regional, local authority or the neighbourhood. A summary of key points is presented at the end of each sub-section. In setting out the detail of current joint working this chapter provides the basis for Section 5, which analyses and draws out the key issues and lessons that might be learnt from present experiences of joint working.

4.3 Although the focus for the case studies is joint working at regional and more local levels, the links at the national level provide an important context. Section 2 has already outlined the extent of national policy linkages between the sports and regeneration agendas, and shown the synergy between the two. Our research also suggested that operational links at national level between government departments, NOF and Sport England are in place and improving. Two sets of changes in particular seem to be reinforcing this.

4.4 Firstly, the drive to deliver the vision within Game Plan has led to the establishment of the Activity Co-ordination Team, a cross-departmental initiative led by DCMS and the Department of Health that strengthens the link between sport and health in particular but is also looking to bring greater coherence to sports-relevant government programme activities more generally. Secondly, the reform of Sport England is producing a clearer national strategic vision, with a clearer framework for action, which will benefit all involved in sport and sports-related regeneration activity.

4.5 These changes are helpful for joint working at regional and local levels. The relationship between national and regional/local must also be understood as a two-way process. The case studies have highlighted some implications for national policies and practices if joint working is to be improved, which are identified in Section 5.

#### **(4.1) Joint Working through Strategic Alignment**

4.6 As part of the case study work, the range of regional and local strategies in each area was reviewed.

##### **Regional level**

4.7 All Regional Development Agencies have produced a Regional Economic Strategy. Although several of these make mention of sport, the focus is primarily on competitive sport which can create jobs and profile for the region. Issues of sports participation or its role in renewal are not addressed, and no targets have been set.

4.8 The new Regional Sports Boards are, as described above, expected to each produce a strategy – a Regional Plan for Sport, (most of which were still in preparation at the time of writing). Given the emerging national framework, there was a strong expectation that these would make an explicit link to disadvantaged areas as a key element of achieving specific participation targets for social groups D and E. This would represent an important step forward.

4.9 Government Offices for the Regions do not, in themselves, prepare regional strategies for sport or regeneration but are involved in influencing those that do.

#### **Local Authority Strategies**

4.10 In each of the eight case study local authority areas it was possible to identify a range of renewal strategies and each also had a sports strategy, although the latter was on occasion incorporated into a more general cultural strategy. There were strong similarities running through most of these strategies, although there were a few notable differences.

4.11 Almost all of the neighbourhood renewal strategies make mention of sport. However, any reference is usually very brief and is given low priority. Generally, sport is viewed as a means to help achieve higher level targets (most often relating to health). There was usually no evidence of a specific, sports related target or even, in most cases, a conviction to use sport in preference to other possible interventions.

4.12 Of the eight case study authorities it appears that Newham gives most prominence to sport: sport and culture contribute to policy and debate in four of the six themes – health and well-being, prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour, culture and social regeneration and young people. We also understand, however, that the approach in Newham is out of line with other London LSPs. Similarly, both the Nottingham LSP and the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy for Manchester do not make mention of sport at all. This reflects the lack of perceived linkage between the two agendas. A similar view is said to have existed in the Wear Valley prior to the intervention of the SAZ, which has helped to put sport on the regeneration agenda. Overall, there seems no clear recognition of the value of sport by neighbourhood renewal teams at local level. This was complemented in some regions by a similar lack of interest by GOR neighbourhood renewal teams, some of whom have queried the inclusion of sport-related projects in some neighbourhood renewal strategies.

4.13 The situation in terms of sport related strategies is more encouraging. In almost all cases the sports (or broader cultural strategy) makes reference to a wider role for sport. The Bristol Sports Strategy is typical of most of the areas studied. It sets out the priorities and issues for partners developing sports in Bristol. The role of sport in achieving renewal goals is explicitly stated – in particular improving health and community cohesion outcomes, as well as personal well-being and development. This sits alongside a more general view of improved participation and quality of life.

4.14 A contrasting example of weak linkages can be found in Birmingham's strategies. While implicit links are made in some of the strategies between sport and renewal, there is little evidence of firm commitments or targets despite the fact that often the longer term outcomes or goals are the same. Consultees were very open about these gaps, but believed that they would be addressed with the development of new or updated strategies.

4.15 While, the broad overview of sports strategies suggests a degree of interest, the actual detail demonstrates that there is still some way to go. In particular, the targets and performance indicators set out are most often about level of participation and satisfaction with facilities. In some cases these go further and target participation rates amongst key groups of the population, usually defined by race, gender or social class. However, there is no area focus to any of these targets.

4.16 Moreover, although mention is made, as described above, of contributing to greater well being, there are no formal indicators set out to describe this linkage. Rather, there is a general expectation that increased participation is a good thing and that the wider benefits will simply follow automatically.

### **Links to local health and education strategies**

- 4.17 The review conducted of other strategic documents also highlighted a number of interesting linkages in terms of education and health:
- In Nottingham a joint strategy is being developed by the City Council's Sport and Leisure Services and the Primary Care Trust. The Health and Well-Being Action Plan is to focus on deprived areas, because health is worse in these areas.
  - In the Wear Valley, Leisure Services and the SAZ both work very closely on a strategic level with Durham Dales PCT. This includes work on the Local Exercise Action Pilot funded by the NHS, Sport England and the Countryside Agency, and the collection of Healthy Living Centre projects in the area. Local GPs also link up with leisure centres in the area to deliver a GP referral programme and Cardiac rehabilitation programme.
  - In Newham £1m of the £23m NRF has been allocated to delivery of the Council's Healthy Living and Sports Strategy.
  - There are a series of well-developed linkages between leisure services and education departments to help shape the local priorities for New Opportunities Fund<sup>11</sup> allocations. For example, in Bradford the Council's Education Client team has created a steering group for NOF and Sport England funded sport facility developments. This group oversees the spending of lottery monies on a portfolio of projects. It is brought together by the lead officer from the LEA client team, who oversees the various projects that receive funding.

### Neighbourhood level

4.18 It was much less common to find well-developed neighbourhood strategies. This largely reflects the fact that operations at a local level are shaped by the authority wide strategies set out above; at neighbourhood level the issue is how to operationalise these. Those we reviewed tended to come only from locally based regeneration initiatives, and covered regeneration issues, not generally sport. The messages from the strategies reviewed was very similar to those at a higher level, namely that:

- Sports strategies tended to emphasise the importance of facilities and participation and only alluded to wider gains in a general way; and
- Renewal strategies saw sport very much as a tool to achieve other outcomes, in those strategies where it was acknowledged.

### Key points

4.19 The key points arising from the review of joint working through strategies are as follows:

#### Key Points – Joint Working through Strategies

- Recognition of the importance and role of grassroots sport is currently only weakly acknowledged in regional strategies, if at all, particularly those of the RDAs. The new regional Sport England-led strategies should provide clear strategic direction at a regional level, but this will need to be actively communicated to other regional bodies.
- Although a number of neighbourhood renewal strategies include reference to sport, there is little evidence of them addressing its potential in any significant way or giving it much priority. There are certainly no specific objectives or targets covering such issues as promoting greater participation.
- Local sports strategies tend to make a link to wider neighbourhood renewal issues, but often in a fairly general, unfocussed way. There is usually an implicit assumption that raising participation alone will deliver these benefits, with little understanding of how. Sports strategies usually do not have area-based targets for participation, or even targets for specific social groups, making their commitment to equity in participation difficult to measure. Available data at local level tends to be about service users of specific leisure centres, not broader data on participation.
- There are some interesting examples of joint strategic working between health and education departments and sport, in ways which will impact on deprived communities.

## **(4.2) Joint Working through Structures and Networks**

### **Regional level**

4.20 The nature of personal interactions between people who work in sport and neighbourhood renewal are wide and varied. They are perhaps most limited at a regional level. The different lines of accountability back to central departments mean that linkages with Government Offices are often limited except through *ad-hoc* personal relations. On the other hand it is often the case that the GOR DCMS representative will be close to Sport England at a regional level. This cannot be said for the GOR neighbourhood renewal team, who often had no links with Sport England. Indeed, linkages between teams within GORs often did not seem very strong either. The strength of linkages into the Regional Development Agency also vary significantly between regions.

4.21 These issues and a desire for closer working have led Sport England to support the secondment of a number of their staff to both Government Offices and Regional Development Agencies in order to develop relationships and to build profile. Their role in the former is useful in bringing together the different people who cover the sports agenda (linked back to DCMS) and the renewal agenda (to ODPM). In most cases these officials often have such a broad workload that they focus on the mainstream parts of their departmental agendas and therefore linkages to other issues may be missed.

4.22 A full evaluation of the secondment approach is due to take place soon, but the early indications are of:

- An initial positive response – people are willing to engage and respond; but
- Possible concerns that the structures are not yet in place to maintain the impetus that has been created beyond the term of the secondment, as the secondee remains the focus of any linkage.

4.23 There are a number of other positive actions that have been taken. In most cases, these appear to have been led by people from a sports background. There was considerable enthusiasm from this group for the potential of the Regional Sports Boards which were being established at the time of our fieldwork. The membership of these boards was seen to be a crucial mechanism for engaging key individuals and organisations, including health and police representatives (for example in the North East). However, it would appear that, as currently planned, these Boards will have little direct link to regeneration professionals.

### **Local level**

4.24 A parallel set of issues are apparent at a local level and in the workings of Local Strategic Partnerships. Links between those promoting sport and those promoting regeneration are patchy across the country, even within local authorities. In a number of cases there is no direct link from sports organisations into the LSP or its main commissioning groups looking at renewal issues, nor are renewal teams looking out to approach sports organisations to influence them. This can be seen, for example, in Birmingham and Nottingham. In the latter, key decisions are taken on the allocation of funding between the regeneration team in the council and key mainstream agencies (such as Police, PCT, etc.).

- 4.25 This lack of engagement appears to have occurred because of mutually reinforcing factors:
- In some cases Sport England do not believe they have sufficient resources to attend all the meetings required (for example there are just nine Sport England staff based in the West Midlands); and
  - In some areas sport is not seen as a high level strategic renewal issue and so is not invited in.
- 4.26 Good examples of a different approach can be seen in the North East and in Newham. In the North East, Sport England have appointed a policy officer with the role of working across the LSPs. In Newham, a sports officer contributes to the debate and is involved in the design and development of four of the six NRF themes (health, crime and anti-social behaviour, culture and social regeneration, and young people). So, for example, at a meeting for the young people theme, a representative of culture and sport would be present alongside people from the Youth Service, Social Services and Education. This means that sport is involved strategically.
- 4.27 Local authority-wide sports fora have been formed in a few areas, for example in Manchester and Bradford. In the latter case the Sport and Leisure Department of the Council lead a partnership body named the District Sport Forum. Representatives from the LSP (Bradford Vision), the SAZ and departments across the Local Authority attend, including Regeneration, Education, Community Cohesion and also the PCT. The Forum discusses sport strategy development with a view to targeting more deprived areas. However, this does not appear to cross over to the LSP which, to date, has shown little commitment to using sport as a regeneration tool.
- 4.28 The development of Sport Action Zones has been a key strand in seeking to engage with others around a sports agenda. A full evaluation is on going, but the feedback from those involved was broadly positive. In particular, SAZ staff appear to have worked closely with those involved in community sports and leisure to encourage a review of provision and take up in deprived areas. This has led to an increased focus on delivery in these areas.
- 4.29 This has been achieved through, for example, SAZ staff being based in these departments (as in Birmingham). In Bradford there are plans to mainstream the work of the SAZ team. Six Sport Development Officers currently represent specific sports across the district. The work of the SAZ has caused the department to reconsider the way they work. They have received training from the SAZ team on engaging hard to reach groups and deprived communities, and will soon undergo a restructuring process to ensure that sport development officers target the most deprived areas of the district. The restructuring will mean the officers will be allocated areas rather than trying to promote a specific sport to the whole district. A new post has already been created in the department of sport and leisure as part of this process.

## Neighbourhood level

- 4.30 In the main, neighbourhood level partnerships are most usually focussed around a specific facility or project, with no particular pattern evident between areas.
- 4.31 An interesting example of a neighbourhood partnership is the Southmead Youth Centre in Bristol. It has successfully worked with local, City-wide, regional and national organisations (partners total some 44 organisations). The Centre has built strong links with a range of local organisations, many of whom are drawn in because of its success, high profile, and the scale and scope of projects and support available. In this way, local partners work together within, and often around, the Southmead Steering Group structure.
- 4.32 This provides the opportunity for a range of local partners, working with the Centre's manager, to develop strategy, projects and discuss operational issues. For example, organisations such as the local police, Community Safety Partnership and Youth Offending Team work closely with the Centre, while the Youth Centre Manager sits on the Southmead Youth Issues Group that has been established to supplement the five floor-target theme groups of the Southmead Steering Group.

## Key points

- 4.33 The key issues highlighted by this review of networking linkages are:

### Key Points – Joint Working through Structures and Networks

- Linkages between GOR DCMS officers, GOR Neighbourhood Renewal teams, RDAs and Sport England at a regional level are not generally strong or well developed, meaning that sport and renewal issues are often not being linked, but discussed in separate 'silos'. There are some exceptions to this, where good working relationships exist, and Sport England's reorganisation is beginning to improve the situation, but the challenge remains.
- The series of secondments from Sport England at a regional level and SAZs at a local level appear to have stimulated activity, although it is not yet clear how far these changes are sustainable beyond the duration of the secondments.
- Many LSPs do not address sports issues seriously or make the links between sport and neighbourhood renewal, with the result that NRF funded activities rarely contribute to those issues, and opportunities to influence mainstream sports providers are lost. There are, however, some good examples of LSPs where links have been made. SAZs have been generally effective in making links at a local level between the different interests.
- At a local level, it is more likely that sports departments/organisations will influence how regeneration funds are spent, than regeneration teams will influence how sports departments deliver services.
- There is some evidence to suggest that neighbourhood renewal teams, to date, have generally been more resistant to joint working than sports organisations, which have at least often recognised that links could be made.
- In many areas at a local level, neighbourhood renewal partnerships and sports partnerships appear to operate in parallel, with few links, even though they share a number of common members and interests.

### (4.3) Joint Working through Funding

4.34 Although the case studies identified significant variation in the extent of strategic engagement and networking between sports and regeneration bodies, with links often weak, there is still a surprising amount of sports-related activity funded through or linked in some way to neighbourhood renewal. However, there are three important observations to make about this at the outset:

- We can see that the most common form of joint working by far is the joint funding of individual projects, often with a cocktail of funding.
- Much of this activity is delivered and driven on a project by project basis, not as part of a clear strategic or systematic approach (perhaps unsurprising given the relative weakness of strategic links between regeneration and sports organisations).
- Overall, the amount of regeneration funding being used for sports-related activities is modest. No national figures are available, and expenditure related to sport is often not clearly identified as such. Moreover, evidence from the case studies suggests that although there are a fair number of sports-related projects overall, the total amount of expenditure on them is relatively limited. For example, an analysis of NRF expenditure in London for 2001-2002 shows that 'leisure and culture' accounted for only 0.5% expenditure (ALG, 2003). Although other themes (e.g. health) also included some sports-related expenditure, the total figure for sports-related expenditure is likely to be modest.

4.35 In this section, we look at the nature of this project-level working. This is described below in two broad groupings:

- Use of regeneration funds for sports related activity; and
- Funding from other agencies for sports related activity, which affects neighbourhood renewal.

#### Use of Regeneration Funds for Sports-Related Activity

4.36 We observed a number of examples, some linked to SAZs, where renewal monies have been used to support sports development workers. For example, there are five Community Sports Development Workers/Projects operating through the sports division of Bristol City Council. These are all funded through external funding streams (SRB, Sport England, New Deal for Communities and Positive Futures). This funding is usually agreed with local regeneration partnerships.

4.37 Similarly, in the Wear Valley there are four Community Physical Activity Coordinators (CPACs) working within the Community Services department of Wear Valley District Council. They operate as part of the physical activities team and three of them are funded by the SAZ. The fourth post is funded by a mixture of SAZ and NRF monies. Three of the CPACs have assistants to help them deliver activities in their area. These are all funded by NRF money allocated by the LSP.

4.38 A significant proportion of available funding has been invested in facilities and activities. In some cases there is a very clear dividing line between mainstream funding and regeneration funding. For example, in Birmingham the Sport and Leisure Division is one of five divisions within the Leisure and Culture Department of Birmingham City Council, comprising c.1400 staff, an annual expenditure of £32 million, 60 facilities and 10 million user visits annually. Funding for the division comes direct from the council budget and is channelled to fund sports facilities across the City such as community leisure centres, sports development programmes and sports events. No sport and leisure funding is spent on grant aid to sports clubs or community projects. This type of activity is supported under the City's NRF programme and other regeneration funding streams. Thus, there is no formal link to neighbourhood renewal through the mainstream Sports and Leisure budget. The NRF is seen as a fund to drive new activity in these areas, almost separate from the mainstream.

4.39 There is a similar situation in Newcastle. At a local level no mainstream sport or physical activity work delivered by the Leisure Services Directorate is funded by NRF money or by the Council regeneration budget. However, over £30m of external funding over eight years has been drawn down for sports development work. This includes monies from:

- Sport England
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- SRB projects
- NDC
- NOF
- Private sponsorship

4.40 NRF money does however fund sport and physical activity schemes on a neighbourhood level in Newcastle. The East End Regeneration Partnership provided Benfield Sports Centre with £25,000 of funding to upgrade facilities in 2003, with the improvements aimed at increasing general participation.

4.41 In some places revenue support has also come through NRF: Birmingham have invested c.£450,000 from NRF into a free swimming initiative designed to raise participation and also to improve health indicators across the deprived parts of the City. A similar initiative was launched in Newham over the Easter holidays.

4.42 Regeneration funding has been spent on improving sports facilities in the Nottingham area. In addition, the Sport and Leisure Services Division have levered funding from elsewhere to improve facilities. Examples of investment are:

- SRB monies have been spent on sports facilities such as sports halls for schools and sports clubs (£540,000 of SRB funding had been used to develop facilities).
- Sport and Leisure Services have helped to secure funding from 'Community Sports Facilities for Education Sites' (NOF Lottery funding for development of facilities up to 2005), Playing Fields and Community Green Spaces (£80,000 of NOF funding to improve two cricket grounds), for redevelopment of Harvey Hadden Athletics Stadium (£147,000 of UK Athletics Funding) and for Carrington Cricket Ground Pavilion (£148,000 from English Cricket Board).

## Other Agencies' Funding of Sports Activities in Renewal Areas

4.43 It is also apparent that in addition to sports development being supported by neighbourhood renewal funding, a number of agencies have sought to invest directly in sport in deprived areas. This is sometimes, but not always, linked to renewal funding, including both NRF and SRB. The most frequent examples relate to health and crime. Some of the health examples identified in our case studies include:

- Wear Valley District Council contribute funding and services in kind to the GP referral and Cardiac referral programmes run and part funded by Durham Dales PCT. The sessions are joint staffed by those from the PCT and the regular staff at the different Leisure centres. Some SRB funding also supports this scheme. The main purpose of getting people involved in physical activity is to give a positive impact on their health, a key renewal indicator. The PCT has led on some initiatives through the Health Promotions Unit. The Local Exercise Action Plan (LEAP – funded through NRF, DoH, Sport England, and the Countryside Agency) aims to increase physical activity (including sport) for health benefits. This is a district-wide programme, but there is a targeting of the most deprived areas, and of over 50s. The PCT is leading the project, with other partners being Sport and Leisure Services and Age Concern. The PCT is also working in conjunction with the local education authority. There are several School Sports Coordinators working across the district so that the PCT can determine what activity is going on and can input expertise in terms of achieving health outcomes. This initiative is targeting those young people who are the least active.

- Newcastle PCT provided £200k of funding to the Leisure Services Directorate of the City Council in 2003 to go towards the work of the sports development officers. This makes up a fifth of the yearly budget for the sports development unit of £1m. The PCT recognises the benefits of investing in work which can increase participation in sport. It sees physical activity as a long term priority in public health and managing disease 20 years into the future.
- Other partners in East Manchester fund sports-related projects. The North Manchester PCT funds, and runs, a physical activities scheme, which works in partnership with local GP practices, the Sport Action Zone and other providers of physical activity. The aim of this scheme is to identify those with health risks and to develop and route them onto relevant opportunities for physical activities programmes.

4.44 There were also some significant crime/ community safety initiatives, including:

- In the Wear Valley the Positive Futures Coordinator works as part of the sports development team. This individual is a secondee from the Police and his post is joint funded by the Police and NRF money. The coordinator's work mainly involves teaching and organising basketball sessions for young people who have been involved in crime. The aim of this work is to prevent them offending again, to build their sense of self esteem, responsibility and discipline, and to teach team skills that could be used in the workplace.
- In Newham the Coach Education Programme now has 20 different courses (previously it had 10) increasing the opportunities for residents to gain a qualification that can directly lead into paid employment as a qualified sports coach. There has been a concerted effort to attract Newham residents who have no existing qualifications to become qualified. In order to increase the coaching skills of those working with youth offenders or those at risk of offending, all Youth Offending Team staff have been offered free places on these courses. In addition to this, Sport Workshops have offered practical support and advice on a range of topics in the area of sports club management and development, and Employment Pathways identifies career pathways for Newham residents to gain employment in sport.
- In East Manchester, there are a range of projects funded by the Beacons Project and other local partners which seek to use sport as a delivery tool. Funding from the local NDC, SRB, SAZ and The National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders is used to deliver a sports project. This project aims to provide youth diversionary activity and crime prevention, through accessible sports facilities and opportunities as well as coaching qualifications. DISCUS is a project, match funded through Beacons SRB, which provides practical support and opportunities for youths identified as most at risk. Sports programmes feature prominently as a means by which these young people can be engaged.

## Key points

4.45 The main issues that can be highlighted from this section on joint working through funding are:

### Key Points – Joint Working through Funding

- The joint funding of individual projects, on a project by project basis, is the most common form of joint working between sports and regeneration organisations, although the depth of partnership varies significantly between projects.
- Although there are many examples of jointly funded projects, they are often small-scale, and the total amount of regeneration funding devoted to such activities is modest.
- Project activity is generally taking place in an uncoordinated and opportunistic way, rather than as part of a strategic approach.
- The projects and activities being supported are not always clearly focused on achieving well-defined outcomes, and are often not tied to 'bending' mainstream sport and leisure services. These mainstream services are not, as a result, well focused on the needs of deprived areas.
- There are good examples of where Primary Care Trusts and local education authorities have recognised the value of sport and are devoting mainstream resources to supporting greater participation among certain groups, although there are not always explicit links to delivering outcomes in deprived areas in particular.

# 5. Identifying Key Barriers

## Introduction

5.1 In this section we build on our review of joint working from the previous section and seek to explore where the key barriers and opportunities lie for promoting more effective 'joint working with a purpose', to achieve the objectives defined in Section 2:

- raising participation in sport and physical activity in deprived areas and particularly amongst disadvantaged groups;
- developing, piloting and mainstreaming new ways of realising the wider value of sport in reaching out to specific disadvantaged groups to achieve specific renewal outcomes such as better health, higher aspirations and lower crime; and
- doing so in a way which ensures that any interventions are carefully targeted at specific social groups, such as particular ethnic minorities, or women, or those who are not working, etc., recognising the varying needs of different groups.

## (5.1) The Key Barriers

- 5.2 The national policy frameworks for sport and regeneration are actually quite encouraging with respect to making links between the two. However, our review of current working does point to the need for more coherent and consistent joint working at both regional and local levels.
- 5.3 From our review of the nature of present working in the case study areas in Section 4, we believe it is possible to identify a number of key barriers and issues that are currently obstructing progress. These are highlighted in Figure 5.1.

## Figure 5.1 - Seven Key Barriers to Joint Working

### (1) Lack of interest in sport by regeneration bodies

RDAs and regeneration organisations tend not to recognise the value of sport as a regeneration tool or prioritise it at regional or local levels. Even where the cultural agenda is supported, sport appears to be the poor relation and is often only weakly acknowledged. A lack of joint working therefore arises partly through lack of interest or awareness from these organisations, although there are some notable exceptions to this.

### (2) Unfocused regeneration interventions

Local regeneration teams are not always clearly focusing their funding and activities on influencing the way that mainstream services (such as local authority leisure services) are provided. There is a tendency to support short-term projects that are not designed to secure mainstream changes, and that are also not always well focused on achieving specific outcomes. The effectiveness and impact of regeneration funding is therefore often quite limited, with few prospects of changing the priorities or nature of mainstream services in deprived areas.

### (3) Links from sport to regeneration outcomes are not clearly expressed or understood

Organisations delivering sporting activities, particularly local authorities, have not always been able to clearly identify or express the process by which sport leads to other outcomes or to identify appropriate actions in their strategies to unlock the potential wider benefits. They need help and support in doing so. The frequent failure to evaluate or monitor outcomes from sporting activities or even pilot projects has not helped make the case for wider involvement in, or support of, sports activities.

### (4) Lack of information and incentives to drive changes in mainstream services

Data on sporting participation for different social groups (or neighbourhoods) is incomplete and there are few explicit targets for raising participation amongst disadvantaged groups. This has led to a lack of knowledge and incentives to drive improvements/changes in mainstream sports provision, and a lack of information on the nature of local needs and how well providers are doing (or not) in meeting them.

### (5) Lack of a clear strategic framework

A clear strategic framework for sport (or sport-related activities) has often been absent at regional and local levels, leading to a lack of coherence in the use of both mainstream and short-term funding streams. There are too many small unrelated initiatives. This has been reinforced by the often complex array of both regeneration and sports organisations involved.

### (6) Inconsistent involvement of mainstream funding agencies

Mainstream providers such as Primary Care Trusts are not always involved in discussions about, strategies for, or funding of, sport and physical activities in deprived areas. This has led to missed opportunities.

### (7) Affiliated voluntary clubs difficult to engage

Formal voluntary sports clubs, especially affiliated ones, have been generally absent from the debate on widening participation and making links to regeneration, although many community-based organisations provide sporting opportunities.

- 5.4 Here we explain in more detail the nature of the barriers and the issues arising. Many of the issues are interrelated. We also point towards how these might be overcome.
- (1) Lack of interest in sport by regeneration bodies**
- 5.5 Our case studies highlighted some neighbourhood renewal teams that had recognised the value of sport and were intent on using it to promote renewal outcomes. However, although sport merits a mention in many Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies, it does not play a significant role in many and is prioritised by few. In LSPs, few seem to have a clear focus on sport, and where there is a commitment to promoting a cultural agenda, sport often appears to get lost down the list of priorities within this. There are several reasons for this lack of interest, including the lack of any explicit floor targets (or similar) to motivate involvement, the lack of any strong history of working with sports organisations, and a more general lack of awareness of the ways in which sport can bring a range of benefits.
- 5.6 Joint working requires a basic willingness from the regeneration community to engage, not just in a few places but across all deprived areas. There is a need to bring sport into mainstream thinking about neighbourhood renewal, so that its benefits can be more widely realised. It should be recognised as a valid component within the renewal toolkit, particularly for its potential as a preventative measure – e.g. keeping people healthy, keeping young people constructively engaged. Improving access to local sporting opportunities in deprived areas should also be recognised as a legitimate objective within the ‘mainstreaming’ agenda in its own right.
- 5.7 One paradox emerging from our case studies was the apparent difference in attitude between district-level policy makers and neighbourhood-level regeneration practitioners. Although the former have often not proved very receptive to sport-related activities, at grassroots level there seems to be more interest in sporting activities and many small-scale sports-related projects are in evidence in deprived communities, driven by local partnerships and often drawing on complex cocktails of funding from numerous sources. Although we comment below on the difficulties posed for mainstreaming by the delegation of regeneration funds to neighbourhood level, and the need for a clearer strategic framework, this delegation also allows local energy, innovation and commitment to be used to address local priorities, often including sport. The greater priority placed on sport by neighbourhood partnerships also tends to support the view that local policymakers may be underrating the importance of sport for their communities.
- 5.8 RDAs have also shown, to date, little strategic interest in sport or its wider role, (with the exception of large-scale events, such as the bid for the London Olympics, and their potential economic impact). Given that the RDAs are presently pursuing an explicitly economic agenda, their role in helping to unlock the potential of sport in deprived neighbourhoods is likely to differ from that of neighbourhood renewal teams, possibly with a greater emphasis on supporting infrastructure projects. Nevertheless, their involvement in promoting the agenda is important and something to be sought.

5.9 From this discussion, we can highlight the following points for action:

### 1 - Priorities for Action

- Persuade local and GOR neighbourhood renewal teams, and RDAs, of the potential value of sport for regeneration through awareness raising and education. There is a role for local sports/leisure departments in helping to achieve this. The role of RDAs in supporting this agenda is important but may need further discussion and development with Sport England.
- Ensure that the energy, innovation and drive often apparent in the delivery of neighbourhood-level community sports projects can continue, but within a clearer strategic framework.

### (2) Unfocused regeneration interventions

5.10 We have seen that many different regeneration funding streams are used to fund a variety of interventions aimed at boosting participation in sport and using it to reach out to different groups of people. However, our case studies illustrate quite clearly that although many of these projects in themselves deliver local benefits, they often do not seem to add up to a significant impact. As we discuss below, in some areas this is at least partly a reflection of the lack of a clear local strategy to guide actions, but it can also be a reflection of the lack of focus or clear rationale behind the intervention itself.

5.11 In particular, too many regeneration-funded projects appear to be simply funding provision of sports activities with no clear intention to influence mainstream sport and leisure services. This is often compounded by the tendency to use funding to support many small projects pepper-potted around deprived areas, diluting any possible impact. Given the inherent short-term nature of regeneration funding and its modest scale when set against the large amount of funding supporting mainstream provision, the way it is being used is highly unlikely to have the long-term impact of re-shaping the way sporting activities are delivered in deprived areas. There needs to be a much clearer focus on using regeneration funds to change the way that mainstream funds (from local authorities, schools, PCTs, etc.) are spent.

5.12 Related to this, our case studies highlighted a particular issue with the way that NRF is used in some areas. Some Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) have chosen to delegate much of their allocation to individual neighbourhoods. There is evidence in some of the case study areas that this has impeded the prospects for mainstreaming, including for sport. The number of different neighbourhoods makes co-operation between them impractical, and makes it harder for the mainstream sport/leisure department to engage (or be engaged by) those promoting regeneration locally.

5.13 This is illustrated in Bristol where 87% of the £18.5m NRF allocation in 2002/2003 was delegated to 10 different neighbourhood partnerships, and also in Birmingham, where over 70% of £22m NRF was allocated to some 39 ward partnerships. Such delegations have caused some frustration amongst the sports/leisure departments, who have asked the question 'who do we talk to about regeneration?'. There is an interesting contrast in Birmingham, where the smaller top-sliced city-wide element of the NRF has been used to influence mainstream services, including the provision of free swimming in deprived areas to boost participation. This more strategic intervention appears to have had a significant impact (see Appendix 1).

5.14 It is also important to ensure that sport interventions, especially those intended to achieve wider renewal outcomes (health, tackling crime, etc.), are designed to reflect available evidence of 'what works' and are clearly targeted on specific groups. As shown earlier in Section 2, the wider benefits of sport usually do not accrue to participants simply through participation but through the surrounding package of measures and activities (the support, mentoring, coaching, etc.) that accompanies the sporting activity. Too many projects seem to have somewhat 'fuzzy' rationales, with no clear understanding of how the desired benefits are likely to arise. It is also important that such interventions, particularly if new or innovative, should be evaluated, so that the benefits can be understood and shared with others. This is especially important if the intention is to change the behaviour of mainstream services.

5.15 From this discussion, we may highlight the following points for action:

## 2 - Priorities for Action

- A case can be made for a larger proportion of regeneration funding overall to be spent on sport-related activity, particularly in those areas where little or nothing is invested in it. It is also equally important to make more effective use of the regeneration funding already going into such activities, and to persuade those who do not engage with sport at all, to do so. If activities are seen to work and deliver appropriate outcomes, local decision-makers will be well placed to decide for themselves how much funding to devote to such activities.
- Regeneration interventions need to be better designed to reflect evidence of 'what works' where available and be clearly focused on achieving specific outcomes with specific groups. Interventions intended to influence mainstream services should be properly evaluated to help make the case for change.
- A greater proportion of the regeneration funding spent on sport-related activities should be spent on influencing and seeking the reshaping of mainstream services, particularly local council-funded activities. This is likely to require a more co-ordinated district-wide approach to improve the prospects for success. There is still an important role for neighbourhood partnerships to play in delivering activities, but within a clearer strategic context.

### (3) Clearer links from sport to regeneration outcomes

- 5.16 The case studies showed that on the whole sports organisations (particularly council leisure/sports departments) were more positive and informed about the role that sport could play in regeneration than their regeneration counterparts, and it is frequently a feature of many local sports strategies. (There are particular issues relating to some voluntary sports clubs, that we deal with separately below.) However, it is also clear that the inclusion of such concerns in strategies is not in itself sufficient. The links from sport to its wider possible impacts are often not well understood or expressed, and local sports departments have often not been able to influence their regeneration colleagues. The failure to collate and provide clear data on levels of local participation in sport (especially the difference between social groups) or to evaluate projects has also hindered attempts to engage the regeneration community.
- 5.17 The local sports community needs assistance in communicating the message about the value of sport, needs to improve its own understanding of the links between sport and the community, and needs to be smarter in the use of data to make its case.
- 5.18 From this discussion, we may highlight the following points for action:

#### 3 - Priorities for Action

- Generally, local sports departments do not need to be persuaded of the links between sport and regeneration, although they do need support in improving their understanding of how those links work, and what activities can best exploit them.
- Better data and evaluation on sporting interventions is required at local level, to support the case for the greater use of sport for wider outcomes, and to show how effective pilot projects might be.

### (4) Lack of information and incentives to drive changes in mainstream services

- 5.19 One of the most important barriers to be identified in this study is that few obvious 'levers' are presently available to change the way that mainstream sporting opportunities are delivered in deprived areas – especially those by local councils, but also, increasingly, schools. There is well-documented evidence from numerous sources, including our own case studies, that mainstream services are generally not serving the needs of deprived areas well. The reasons for this are partly to do with underlying problems in community-level sport nationally and partly to do with particular issues in deprived areas. Some of the key challenges include:
- The need for ongoing capital investment in ageing sports facilities, especially leisure centres, to bring them up to modern standards and meet consumer expectations.
  - The need to improve the management, accessibility and affordability of local sports facilities, in order to open up the opportunities for greater use by a wider range of local people in deprived areas. This could also include greater innovation in making facilities multi-sports in nature and providing a wider range of services from such facilities.
  - The need to invest in improving and opening up the opportunities for using parks and green open spaces for sporting activities.
  - The need to improve and make better use of existing school sports facilities, both in and out of school hours.
  - Increasing the revenue funding for sports development workers and sports coaches to allow a rise in the amount of sporting activities that can be made available.
  - Providing clearer career progression routes for those working in sport and leisure to retain key staff and providing appropriate training and skills to meet the challenges of both sport and social inclusion.

5.20 Many of these challenges require a national response and represent part of long-standing and wider problems; Sport England, with others, is seeking to tackle them. Improving joint working alone will not solve these problems, although it does have an important role to play in helping shape services in deprived areas. We have identified a number of particular factors that need to be addressed in the decision-making processes that affect deprived areas:

- Part of the problem, as discussed already, is that so far relatively little effort has been made (with the exception of Sport Action Zones) to ‘bend’ mainstream sports/leisure services to better fit the needs of deprived areas. Neighbourhood renewal teams have often not seen this as an important objective.
- Although data on the number of users is often collected for specific leisure centres, the data on sporting participation in many areas is weak. Councils do not know the degree of local participation in sport or physical activity, or which social groups have particular needs, or the extent to which they use different facilities. The lack of such data makes it difficult to drive improvements, target them where the need is greatest and persuade other funders to support the work.
- Few local sports strategies have clear targets on levels of participation overall, or for specific disadvantaged areas or groups, or other wider outcome measures. This, together with the lack of data on present performance, makes it difficult if not impossible to hold councils accountable for their performance in deprived areas. The problem is compounded by the fact that there are no specific Best Value Performance Indicators relating to sport, or other statutory or nationally driven incentives for councils to improve spending or performance on sport, despite increased participation amongst adults being a PSA target for DCMS.
- A number of the case studies highlighted the value of networking between sports and regeneration organisations, to help create confidence to work together and identify opportunities to do so. The lack of such networking in some areas means that sports departments can operate in isolated ‘silos’, distant from pressures for change. Sport Action Zones have much experience to offer of different ways of promoting good networking.

5.21 The prize for joint working must surely be changing the way that mainstream council sports and leisure services operate with respect to deprived areas, helping to increase and open up services in creative ways to those from disadvantaged groups. Finding effective ‘levers’ to prompt and monitor change is important. Sport England’s role in leading such changes will be crucial.

5.22 Similar issues apply to the funding of schools by DfES, including the new PE, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy. The improvement of school facilities and the PESSCL strategy is being supported by over £1 billion of DfES funding across the country. This is a significant and welcome investment, but no clear targets have been established to ensure that schools in deprived areas will receive a fair share of the funding. Without such incentives built into the strategy (or monitored) it is more difficult to ensure that these schools will benefit as they ought to.

5.23 From this discussion, we may highlight the following points for action:

#### 4 - Priorities for Action

- Neighbourhood renewal organisations need to focus attention on mainstream sport/leisure services, and schools, as part of their mainstreaming work, to ensure that deprived areas are being well served by them.
- Better data on participation in sport in deprived areas, including data for different social groups, is required, not just basic data on the numbers of leisure centre users. This will be important in making the case for change in mainstream services.
- Clear local targets are required on both the desired level of participation in sport and physical activity, and the sorts of wider outcomes that sport might contribute to. The likelihood and effectiveness of such targets galvanising action would be greatly enhanced if supported and promoted by a national framework such as Best Value. Sport England also has a key role to play in promoting change in local government, and should lead by establishing clear regional targets for sporting participation.
- National sports funding programmes, whether those by DfES, Lottery funders or others, should include specific targets for the proportion of funding to be delivered to deprived areas. Without such targets, and the monitoring of activity, it is difficult to know if deprived areas ever receive their fair share. The challenge for funders also extends to finding ways to manage facilities in more inclusive ways.
- Better networking between sports and regeneration organisations will improve relations and build confidence for joint working.

#### (5) Lack of a clear strategic framework

5.24 Closely related to previous discussions regarding incentives, and the need to improve links between regeneration and sports organisations, is the specific requirement for clearer strategic frameworks to guide the actions and expenditure of those involved in sport. The present experience shows many different funding streams supporting a wide array of activities, but with limited strategic impact. Greater focus is required to guide the work of councils, lottery funders, regeneration partnerships and other grant regimes to ensure that synergy is secured in both raising participation and exploring the wider impact of sport.

5.25 The new Regional Plans for Sport should provide a clear regional framework of priorities and targets, within which others can work. The greatest challenge, however, is perhaps at the local authority level where many spending decisions are made, and where organisations often develop their own strategies in parallel. A clear common framework is required in each area to ensure that Council sports and leisure departments, schools and LEAs, Lottery funders (particularly NOF), PCTs, regeneration partnerships and others (including the Police) are able to reinforce each others work. Presently, too much investment is fragmented. The new regional sports strategies are not likely (or designed) to provide sufficient detail to ensure clear joined up working at a local level. Some areas have devised 'Sport and Physical Activity' strategies that cover mainstream services as well as special pilots/interventions and cut across organisational boundaries; these seem well suited to provide the local clarity required.

## 5 - Priorities for Action

- The new Regional Plans for Sport must provide a clear framework to guide expenditure and activities in each region, including identification of priorities and targets.
- Clearer local strategic frameworks to guide work on 'sport and physical activities' are required in each LSP, owned and supported by all the key funders of sporting activities in that area.

### (6) Inconsistent involvement of mainstream funding agencies

5.26 Sport and physical activity can make an important contribution to improving the health of the population and reducing the risks of ill-health. Sport and physical activity more generally should therefore be important concerns for Primary Care Trusts, particularly in deprived areas, where health issues tend to be more prevalent. PCTs are potentially significant funders of physical activity programmes in deprived areas, yet our case studies showed a highly uneven level of involvement in this agenda by PCTs. Not all PCTs currently even have physical activity strategies. One example of positive working is in Nottingham, where the PCT and the City Council's Sport and Leisure Services have developed a 'health and well being action plan' to promote the use of sport for health benefits. There is an important opportunity to be grasped here, by seeking to engage PCTs in supporting the greater participation of the community in deprived areas in physical activity for health benefits.

5.27 A similar issue applies to some local education authorities (LEAs) and some individual schools. Many school sports facilities are under-used and not in community use, yet LEAs and schools are not always closely involved in discussions about improving the availability of sporting opportunities in deprived areas.

5.28 From this discussion, we may highlight the following points for action:

## 6 - Priorities for Action

- Work is required to engage PCTs and LEAs in particular to understand the role of sport and physical activity in deprived areas, and bring them into strategic discussions about how they can support it more actively.

### (7) Affiliated voluntary clubs difficult to engage

5.29 The voluntary sector within sport includes a large and complex array of affiliated and non-affiliated groups of all shapes and sizes, from small-scale youth centres running basketball sessions to semi-professional tennis clubs with high-class facilities. It is difficult to generalise about this activity. However, a couple of broad issues within the sector seem apparent. Within our case studies, the activities of the more formal (affiliated) sports clubs did not feature very strongly in discussions with sports development officers at regional or local level. There is a view that these clubs, and their governing bodies, have some distance to travel in becoming attuned to the idea of 'sport for all'. Certainly in the deprived areas we visited, the cost of participating in such clubs alone is a barrier to wider involvement.

5.30 However, many non-affiliated groups and organisations also run sporting activities, and in our case study areas we found many vigorous and innovative groups operating at grassroots level. They are often required to spend much time competing for short-term funds and this is a key frustration, but they are also capable of delivering popular and successful sporting programmes. For example, in Bristol, the Southmead Youth Centre employs two youth sports workers. The centre is able to provide transport for local people to get to sporting events and is seeking to improve its own sports facilities, including the development of a motorcross club. It has so far worked with, or secured funding from, some 44 different organisations over the last few years.

5.31 From this discussion, we may highlight the following points for action:

#### 7 - Priorities for Action

- Sport England in particular must seek to influence the working cultures and objectives of the formal sports clubs and their governing bodies to promote greater engagement with the local community. More use of measures of equity could be employed in assessing their performance and contribution.
- There is a case to be made for more permanent mainstream revenue funding to support neighbourhood level community-based organisations in delivering sporting activities.

## (5.2) Conclusions

5.32 Both sport and regeneration encompass complex issues, and each is supported by an array of organisations and funding streams. Understanding how these two worlds work together has been difficult, and the emerging picture has proved to be highly varied.

5.33 Nevertheless, we have been able to identify a range of key barriers that need to be addressed by both sports and regeneration organisations. If these barriers can be overcome, we do believe that sport can become an important and valuable tool for the promotion of neighbourhood renewal outcomes in deprived areas. The incentive for sports and regeneration organisations to work together is quite simple: both have something to gain – it's a win-win arrangement.

# Appendix 1:

# Good Practice Examples

## Good Practice 1

### Joined Up Strategies in Newham: Working with the Mainstream

The London Borough of Newham is one of England's most deprived areas. It has developed both its mainstream 'Healthy Living and Sport Strategy' and its Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy so that they reinforce each other, each recognising the value of sport in promoting neighbourhood renewal. The Council's main sports strategy now includes specific objectives to:

- Promote the health benefits of active lifestyles, particularly to those at risk of ill-health due to physical inactivity;
- Address social exclusion, crime and anti-social behaviour, particularly amongst young people through a range of sport and physical activities;
- Promote community development through supporting sports clubs; and
- Improve the ability of educational establishments to deliver sport and physical activities to both students and the wider community.

The Action Plan for the strategy also identifies specific activities to address the particular needs of young people, the low waged, ethnic minorities, women and girls, and disabled people.

The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy identifies how sport can contribute to achieving floor targets in four of its six themes:

- Health and well-being;
- Prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour;
- Culture and social regeneration; and
- Young people.

Outcomes that are sought through sporting activities include a decrease in youth crime and anti-social behaviour, a decrease in youth social exclusion, reduced school truancy and less street crime. For the financial year 2003/04, NRF funding of £1million has been allocated to support this strand of work, with a particular focus on young people.

Newham's population is both young and ethnically diverse. The Council have taken the view, at Cabinet level, that culture, including sport, has an important role in engaging local people and promoting community cohesion. This leadership has been an important factor in bringing the mainstream sports and neighbourhood renewal agendas together in the borough.

## Good Practice 2

### Raising Participation in Deprived Areas

#### Free Swimming in Birmingham

The free swimming project was one of a number of initiatives supported in 2002/03 through Birmingham's Neighbourhood Renewal Fund Programme. £190,000 was invested from the City-wide NRF Health theme, jointly planned by the Council's Sport and Leisure Department and the NRF Health Theme Group. The funding has been used to support a programme of activities over the holidays, including the provision of free swimming in deprived areas of the City, which proved very popular. The aim was to increase participation, and early evidence on participation levels post-initiative seems very encouraging.

#### Children 'go free' in Newham

NRF funding was used in 2003 to give free membership of the Borough's leisure centres to all young people in Newham aged 5 – 16. Membership of the scheme grew from just over 1,000 in February 2003, to over 35,000 young people in September 2003, representing nearly 80% of the Borough's young people of that age.

## Good Practice 3

### Using Sport to Achieve Renewal Outcomes

#### Coaching Skills

Newham's NRF Programme has funded the expansion of an existing Coach Education Programme, aimed at increasing the number of qualified coaches in the area. The extra NRF funding is being used to unlock the wider potential of sport. Local Youth Offending Team staff have been trained in sports coaching skills to help them use sport more effectively to address the needs of young offenders. The coaching programme has also been used to help unemployed (and unqualified) people gain a coaching qualification and help them find paid employment in sport.

## Good Practice 4

### Changing Mainstream Sports and Leisure Services

#### Local PSAs

Bristol City Council has agreed a package of 12 Local Public Service Agreement targets with Central Government, to stretch the performance of certain local services. One of these targets relates to 'culture' and includes a specific target to increase the numbers of school pupils at Key Stage 2 who attain certain standards in swimming. The target has provided a clear focus and motivating force to increase participation and attainment in swimming and builds on the existing Bristol Swimming Strategy.

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# Appendix 3: Acronyms Explained

**DCMS**

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

**DfES**

Department for Education and Skills

**DoH**

Department of Health

**GOR**

Government Office for the Regions

**LNRS**

Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy

**LSP**

Local Strategic Partnership

**NDC**

New Deal for Communities Partnership

**NOF**

New Opportunities Fund (Lottery Distributor)

**NRF**

Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (supports regeneration activities in the 88 most deprived local authorities in England)

**NRU**

Neighbourhood Renewal Unit

**PCT**

Primary Care Trust

**PESSCL**

Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links Strategy (Government strategy for sport in schools)

**RDA**

Regional Development Agency

**SAZ**

Sport Action Zone (funded by Sport England)

**SRB**

Single Regeneration Budget (source of regeneration funding, via RDAs)

**NRU hotline: 08450 82 83 83**  
**Website: [www.neighbourhood.gov.uk](http://www.neighbourhood.gov.uk)**  
**Email: [neighbourhoodrenewal@odpm.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodrenewal@odpm.gsi.gov.uk)**

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Office of the Deputy Prime Minister  
PO Box 236, Wetherby,  
West Yorkshire, LS23 7NB  
Telephone: 0870 1226 236  
Fax: 0870 1226 237  
Textphone: 0870 1207 405  
E-mail: [odpm@twoten.press.net](mailto:odpm@twoten.press.net)  
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