

A person with glasses and a red t-shirt is seated in a wheelchair, holding a Molten basketball. The basketball is orange and yellow with the Molten logo and 'BRITISH BASKETBALL' text. The person is wearing a green lanyard with a badge. The background is blurred, showing other people in a sports setting. The entire image has a blue overlay.

ANNUAL SURVEY 2018/19

# DIVERSITY IN SPORT GOVERNANCE

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sport England, UK Sport and Inclusive Boards would like to express their sincere gratitude to the organisations and individuals who freely gave their time and resources to enable this research report to take place. In particular, we would like to thank the organisations and individuals who took part in the surveys and those who allowed us to interview them for the spotlight: diversity on sport board case studies.

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# FOREWORD

The findings of this report lay bare one of the most important challenges we face in the sport sector; that of diversifying our sports boards. The data in this report does not lie and we welcome its publication whilst recognising the role we must all play to change it.

Why should this matter? It matters because more diverse boards make better decisions. Reports by McKinsey (2015), Harvard Business School (2016) and Credit Suisse (2017) show that companies in the top quartile for ethnic and racial diversity are 35% more likely to have financial returns above their industry mean. Companies in the top quartile for gender diversity are 15% more profitable and those that have at least one woman on board yield higher returns on equity and higher net income growth than those who do not have any female board members. Working with people who are different provides more challenge for decision making, broadens opinions, improves performance and helps create empathy with a greater diversity of customers.



NICK BITEL  
CHAIR, SPORT ENGLAND

My determination to address sport's diversity problem is absolute. The Code for Sports Governance is one of the tools that we can use and has already started to make a difference but we will continue to review its effectiveness. It is a living, breathing document. If change doesn't happen at the speed or scale needed, we'll consider rolling out specific equality targets that are embedded in the way we fund partners in much the same way that we have for gender diversity. We also need to consider what other measures can be used to improve the situation such as our work in developing a list of board ready candidates from diverse backgrounds.

There is no shortage of goodwill. Every time I meet leaders from across the sector, awareness of the Code is high. But equality is only achieved when people in Boards and beyond understand, embrace and champion diversity.

Sport has the ability to engage everyone, whatever their background, ability, ethnicity and age, whether as participants, volunteers, coaches and officials. The time has now come for it to rise to the challenge of diversifying its sports boards and we look forward to working with our partners to ensure this happens.

In the two years since the publication of A Code for Sports Governance many publicly funded sport organisations have made significant improvements in how they are governed. Women now hold 40% of board positions across UK Sport and Sport England funded organisations and almost three quarters of boards have achieved the required 30% gender balance. Most of the remaining boards are close to hitting their 30% target.

Having said that, we shouldn't get carried away. There is still plenty of work to do. This is no more true than in the areas of disability and Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) representation. Just 5% of Olympic and Paralympic national governing body board positions are filled by people from minority ethnic backgrounds. And only 5% of board members declared themselves as having a disability, compared to around 22% in the wider UK population.



DAME KATHERINE GRAINGER  
CHAIR, UK SPORT

These figures are not where we want them to be. Diversity of thought and experience at board level is essential for the effective running of any organisation. To help drive the necessary change we continue to work closely with a range of partners and I would urge the national governing bodies and funded organisations to develop their own partnerships with key equality organisations to help put in place systems to allow them to recruit quality board members from all quarters of society.

Away from specific measures of diversity, we must all continue to embed good governance practices at the heart of our operations. Governance cannot simply be a tick box exercise, it needs to be part of the culture and fabric of every sporting organisation and our decision making.

My colleagues and I remain hugely committed to continuing to make this happen across the Olympic and Paralympic system.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), Sport England and UK Sport have launched ambitious strategies to increase participation in sport and to create a legacy of sporting achievement. There is now a requirement, as well as a business and moral imperative, for increasing diversity in sport governance. Part of this work has seen sports governing bodies and sporting organisations being tasked with increasing diversity. This includes requirements for Tier 3 Sport England and UK Sport-funded bodies to adopt a target for achieving a minimum of 30% of each gender on their boards, working towards gender parity and to demonstrate a commitment to progressing greater board diversity in terms of ethnic and disability characteristics.

Women now make up an average 40% of board members across Sport England and UK Sport-funded bodies. Almost three quarters of sports boards have already achieved the required gender benchmark of 30%. However, further efforts are needed to ensure gender parity.

Slower progress has been made in terms of BAME people on boards, with an average of 5% BAME board members identified across Sport England and UK Sport funded-bodies.

Inclusive Boards' findings also show that the sport sector is falling behind FTSE 100 firms (8% BAME board membership), third sector (6% BAME board membership) and UK population (13% BAME). Overall BAME board membership is increasing in the sports sector, but the pace of change remains slow.

Only 5% (29) of board members declared or consider themselves to have a disability, compared to around 22% in the wider UK population; 96% of board members reported having no disability.

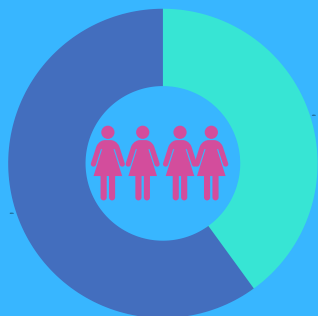
3% of board members identified as being openly LGBT+. This is slightly above the national average for the UK population; 2% of UK residents identify as LGBT+, although this rises to 4% among 16 to 24 year olds.

Sports boards are more likely than the wider population to have attended private schools and prestigious universities. Olympic and Paralympic sports boards also have a higher than average proportion of Oxbridge board members. There is a growing need to ensure that people from all educational backgrounds have a voice on sports boards at national and local levels and to increase opportunities for people from underprivileged backgrounds to participate within sport in general.

The hosting of the London Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012 set in motion a series of increased national investments in sport. Built on a legacy of "Inspiring a Generation", the London 2012 Games saw the introduction of a raft of proposals aimed at improving mass participation in sport and increasing activity levels amongst various groups. Since that time, the demography of the UK has continued to change; the BAME community now equates to more than 13% of the UK population and less than half of Generation Z (those born between 1995 and 2012) identify as exclusively heterosexual. With such changes, funded bodies will be increasingly required to understand the needs of a more diverse populace in order to effectively target the needs of the population as a whole. There are also wider economic imperatives to ensure that sports organisations engage with wider audiences.

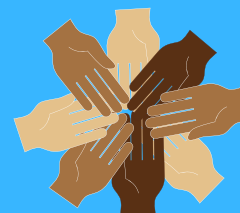


# KEY FINDINGS



## 40%

Women now make up an average 40% of board members across Sport England and UK Sport-funded bodies. Almost three quarters of sports boards have already achieved the required gender benchmark of 30%.



## 5%

5% BAME board members identified across Sport England and UK Sport-funded bodies. Inclusive Boards' findings also show that the sport sector is falling behind FTSE 100 firms (8% BAME board membership), third sector (6% BAME board membership) and UK population (13% BAME).

## 5%



Only 5% (29) of board members declared or consider themselves to have a disability, compared to around 22% in the wider UK population; 96% of board members reported having no disability.



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People on sports boards are more likely than the wider population to have attended private schools and prestigious universities. Olympic and Paralympic sports boards also have a higher than average proportion of Oxbridge board members.

# METHODOLOGY

This report presents the data on National Governing Bodies (NGBs), Active Partnerships and funded bodies, correct as of November 2018. It therefore may not reflect recent changes in board governance structures and recent board appointments. Sports organisations whose board information is not disclosed have not been included within this report.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Inclusive Boards conducted an extensive review of available literature relating to diversity and inclusion in sport governance, employment and wider sporting participation.

## SURVEY

Inclusive Boards distributed a board diversity monitoring survey to all sport NGBs and Active Partnerships. We received 66 responses from senior leaders at the organisations we contacted covering 649 Board members. Respondents answered all questions in the survey.

## BOARD DIVERSITY ANALYSIS

Inclusive Boards conducted a board diversity analysis of 63 NGBs, 44 Active Partnerships and 33 other UK Sport and Sport England-funded bodies. We corroborated the findings from the survey using information compiled from multiple sources, including official websites, annual reports and financial statements, professional profiles and biographies and digital profiling tools. Inclusive Boards profiled 649 board members. Our analysis included gender, ethnicity, age and secondary and higher education characteristics.

## RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

The sporting ecosystem is currently fragmented. Estimates on the size and scope of the sector may not capture the true economic value of the sporting industry. This would better support the business case for diversity in sport. A limited amount of data is available concerning sexual orientation and other characteristics such as gender reassignment. We have, however, provided the fullest possible dataset, based on a representative sample.



# DIVERSE PARTICIPATION IN SPORT

The following section discusses sporting participation broken down into different diversity characteristics. It is important to understand these characteristics within the wider context of organisational diversity. There is a case for developing strong, diverse role models in governance, as in Olympic and Paralympic sports, to lay the foundation for future inclusive growth across all sporting activities. Similarly, there is also a case for those in sport leadership to reflect the diversity of the beneficiaries, communities and nations they serve.

In December 2015, the government published its Sporting Future strategy for an Active Nation. The then Prime Minister, David Cameron, signalled the government's intention to increase participation in sports and to widen the social impact of sport funding. The government also committed to addressing accountability and transparency in sports bodies with the support of Sport England and UK Sport by overhauling sport governance.

This resulted in the introduction of the Code for Sports Governance in 2016 which sets out a series of required responsibilities and standards expected of organisations in receipt of Sport England and UK Sport funding.

Key provisions of the Code for Sports Governance include:

- Increased diversity in decision-making, with specific reference to increasing diversity on boards and a minimum of 30% make-up of both genders at board level, working towards gender parity, and progression of board members from BAME backgrounds and those with disabilities.
- Increased transparency regarding the publication of organisational structures, strategies and financial information.
- Constitutional arrangements, which empower boards to take a lead role in the decision-making process.

The Government's Sporting Future strategy aims to get people from every background to take part in regular sport and physical activity. Groups who are underrepresented in sport and physical activity, including women, people with disabilities, low-socioeconomic groups and people from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender (LGBT) people are often significantly underrepresented in certain sports.

With these historical inequalities, it is especially important that sports boards can represent and understand the needs of underrepresented groups. Historically, many have lacked workforce diversity, significantly reducing the pool of talent and skills available in the wider population. In order to fulfil the government's participation objectives the sports industry needs a workforce at all levels that is both reflective of our diverse society and the communities in which it serves, as well as developing a diverse talent pool of future leaders.

The London Olympic and Paralympic Games were heralded as a beacon of excellence of what can be achieved by embedding diversity and inclusion in grassroots volunteering right through to strategic organising committees. However, more work needs to be done to increase diverse participation in sport to ensure that the legacy of the London Olympic and Paralympic Games is carried forward for future generations. It is especially important to have good role models on sports boards that can attract and nurture the next generation of sports participants and leaders.





## ETHNIC MINORITY PARTICIPATION

Over the coming decades, it is estimated that by the year 2051, over a third (38%) of sports participants will be from BAME backgrounds, which includes those from mixed, Chinese, black, South Asian and other ethnic backgrounds. However, people from minority ethnic backgrounds are currently underrepresented on sports boards and are also less likely to volunteer in sport. This not only affects the pipeline of competitive athletes, but also reduces the talent pool for the diverse sports leaders of tomorrow.

The Sport England 2017/18 Active Lives Adult Survey shows that people from mixed ethnic backgrounds are most likely to be physically active in sport and physical activities. Activity rates for those from 'other ethnic groups', 'black' and 'South Asian' backgrounds have below average rates of activity, as indicated below.

Ethnic minority volunteering in sport is below that of the wider population; 11% of volunteers are from BAME backgrounds, 85% are from white British and 4% are from white other ethnic groups. Females from South Asian backgrounds are underrepresented in sports volunteering, accounting for 6% of the female population but only 3% of female volunteers.

SPORT ENGLAND ACTIVE LIVES ADULT  
SURVEY 2017/18 ACTIVITY BY ETHNIC GROUP

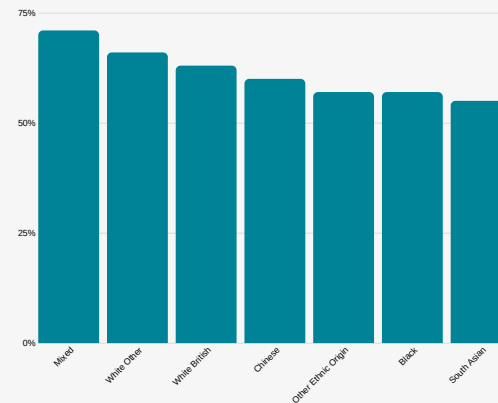


Figure 1 Sport England Active Lives Adult Survey 2017/18  
Activity by Ethnic Group.

Ethnic communities have traditionally faced several barriers to sports participation. Research by the Sport and Recreation Alliance found that people from BAME backgrounds are twice as likely to have a negative experience when taking part in physical activity at local sport and leisure clubs. Four in ten (40%) of BAME respondents said that their experience was negative, compared to 14% of white British participants. Lack of access to information can also present a barrier for people from minority ethnic backgrounds. Over half (55%) of people from BAME backgrounds said that they would be more likely to participate in sport and physical activity if they had access to online information about local opportunities.

People from BAME backgrounds are underrepresented in a number of sports, however, specific ethnic groups are more commonplace in certain sporting disciplines. Cycling is a predominantly 'white' sport, with white ethnic participation rates twice as high as those for black and Asian groups, and around one and a half times the size of Chinese participation rates. Many Olympic and Paralympic sports, including equestrian, sailing, cycling and rowing have been consistently dominated by people from white backgrounds.

In contrast, some sports have significantly higher levels of ethnic minority participation. South Asian participation in cricket is as high as 30%, whilst it is estimated that South Asian communities contribute 18% to the overall cricketing economy. However, just 3% of domestic ticket sales are from South Asian communities. The England and Wales Cricket Board has therefore launched a strategy to enhance its engagement with South Asian communities, particularly in urban areas.

## GENDER PARTICIPATION

Sport England has been working to close the participation gap between men and women in sport. Male participation was 5 percentage points higher than that of women; 65% of all men are physically active, compared to 60% of women. UK Sport has also delivered a number of gender-focused talent campaigns aimed at increasing female participation across elite Olympic and Paralympic Sports. For example, in 2014 UK Sport, the English Institute of Sport and GB Canoeing launched 'Girls4Gold', a joint campaign to increase the number of female athletes in sprint canoeing. The campaign attracted 500 female applicants, of which 12 were successfully selected to join the UK Sport world-class canoeing programme.

A number of traditionally male-dominated sports have been working to change perceptions through the creation of women's teams and dedicated female competitive leagues. In 2002, the Football Association announced that football had become the top participation sport for girls and women in England, three years ahead of the intended target.

In 2019, Barclays announced a multimillion pound sponsorship package for the Women's Super League as title sponsor, heralded by the FA as 'the biggest ever investment in UK women's sport by a brand

Women's cricket has also seen significant growth in the past decade. In 2018, the England Cricket Board identified that 543 clubs are now running a dedicated women's section, an increase by 30% from 2016. In 2017, the England Women's Cricket World Cup final match was watched by a global audience of 180 million.

British Cycling is supporting the development of women's cycling as an activity and competitive sport through the 'One in a Million Campaign'. In March 2013, British Cycling announced a target to increase the number of women cyclists by one million by the year 2020; 800,000 women have so far been encouraged to take up the sport.





## DISABILITY SPORT PARTICIPATION

The popularity of watching disability sport has increased significantly in recent years. The Rio 2016 Paralympic Games reached a global audience of 4.1 billion people across 159 countries, an increase of 7% since the London Paralympic Games in 2012. The London Paralympic Games opening ceremony attracted an estimated of 7.6 million viewers. The Invictus Games, launched in 2014 by HRH the Duke of Sussex to help the physical and mental recovery of servicemen and women through the power of sport, received an average UK audience of 3 million people in 2016.

Despite the increase in global audiences, the successes of the Paralympic Games and the growth of other disability sport events, national participation rates for those with disabilities are 22.4 percentage points lower than those without disabilities. Over two-fifths (42%) of those with a disability or health condition are inactive compared to 21% of those without disabilities; half (50%) of people with three or more disability impairments are inactive.

Organisations such as the Activity Alliance are working to increase activity rates for people with disabilities. The Activity Alliance is currently working in partnership with a number of organisations as part of its 'Achieving Inclusion Together' strategy.

The organisation is currently delivering over 30,000 activity sessions through the "Get out, Get Active" campaign. The programme has already engaged 7,500 individuals with a target of reaching 16,500 people.

## PARTICIPATION BY AGE

Activity rates by those from younger age groups are consistently higher than for those in older age groups; a trend that has remained largely unchanged for the past decade. In 2017/18, 85% of young people aged 16-24 were active. By comparison, inactivity levels are notably higher among over 75-year olds. Almost half (47%) of those aged 75 to 84 and 71% of those aged 85 and over are physically inactive.

**SPORT ENGLAND ACTIVE LIVES ADULT SURVEY 2017/18: INACTIVITY BY AGE GROUP**

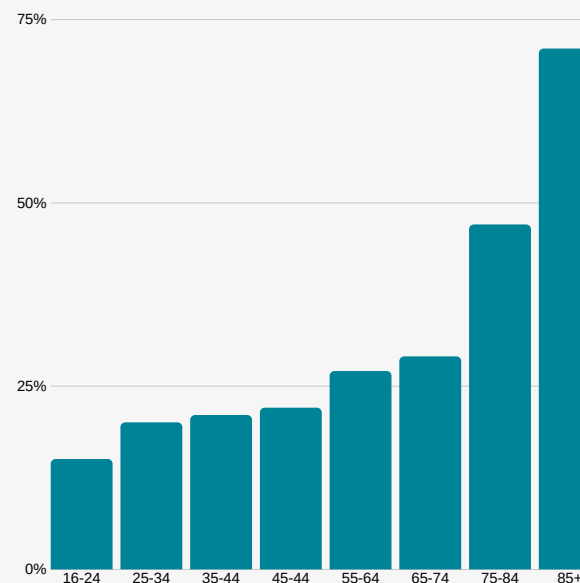
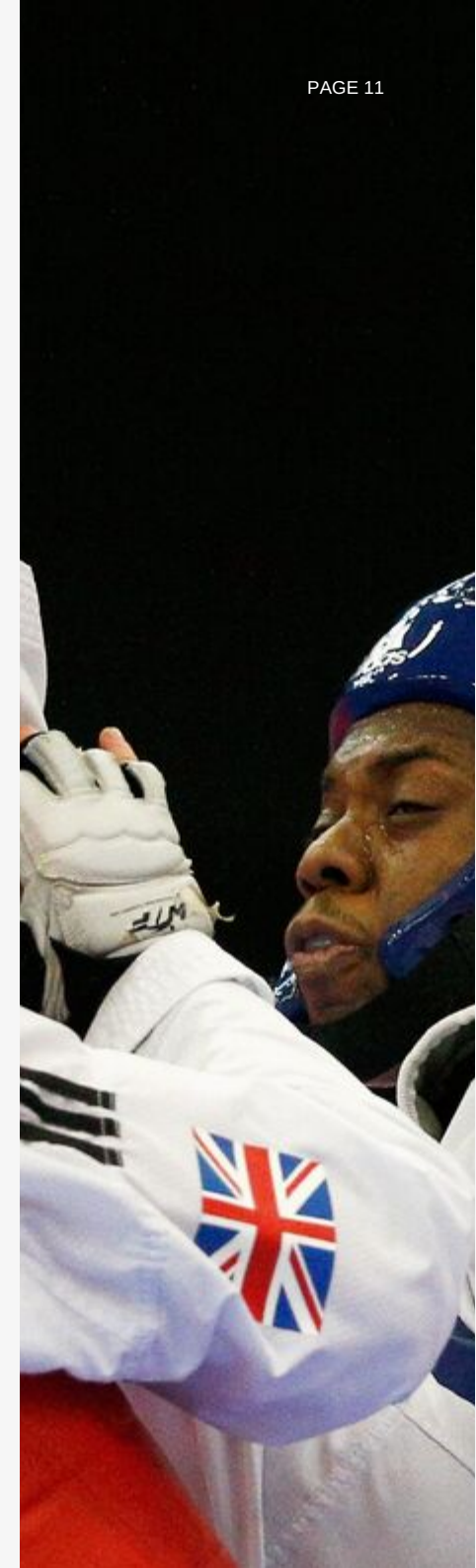


Figure 2 Sport England Active Lives Adult Survey 2017/18 Inactivity by Ethnic Group.



## BEYOND THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS: SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS

There is a growing divide between active participation rates of those from more affluent socio-economic classification groups (higher managerial and professional occupations) and those from low socio-economic backgrounds (routine and manual occupations). The gap has widened by an average of 30% between 2005 and 2016. In 2017/18, just over half (54%) of those in the lowest socio-economic groups, including semi-routine jobs and the long-term unemployed, were physically active, compared to 71% in the highest socio-economic classification group.

Evidence suggests that those living in less affluent areas also have poor access to sport and leisure facilities. For example, a recent study found that people living in Manchester, the seventh most deprived area in the country, had the worst access to sporting facilities in England outside of London with one sports facility for every 2,491 people. The analysis also showed that people living in the Eden district in North West England had access to 86 sports facilities, equivalent to one complex for every 614 residents. Eden is the 39th most affluent local authority area in England, placing it in the top 15% of local authorities in England in terms of income.

## REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

At local level there is a need to ensure that sports are reflective of the populations and communities in which they operate. However, geographic disparities in activity rates vary between English regions, with regional populations in the north of the country being less active than those in the south. The 2017/18 Sport England Active People Survey found that, on average, nearly two thirds (62%) of the population participated in at least 150 minutes of physical activity each week.

Participation rates for adults taking part in 150+ minutes of physical activity per week are highest in the South West (67%) and lowest in the West Midlands (58%). Physical activity rates are higher than average in the South and East of England (average 64%) compared to 59% in the Midlands and 61% in the North.

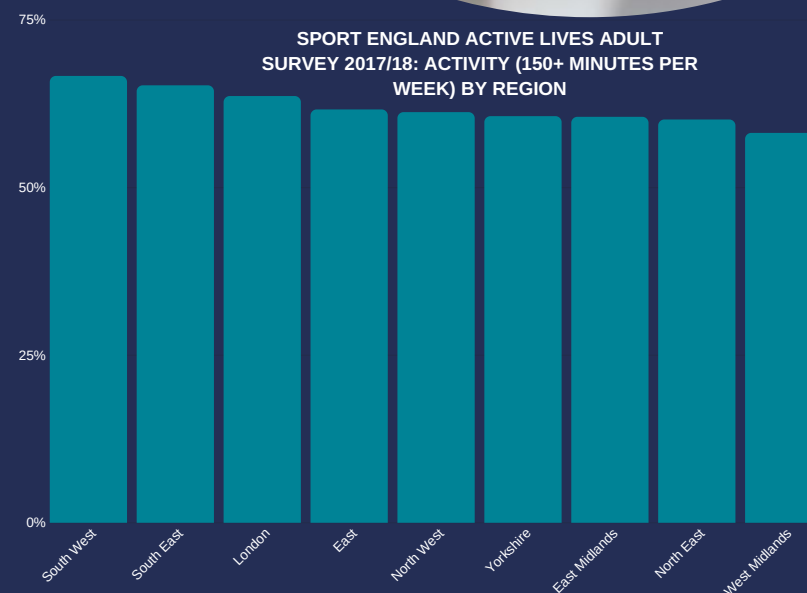


Figure 3 Sport and Physical Activity Levels (Adults aged 16+) 150+ Minutes per Week by Region.





Bristol and the West of England have the highest rates of activity levels across all Active Partnership areas. Four out of the five most active areas are all within the south, east and west of England, including Devon (69%), Oxfordshire (68%) and Dorset (67%). North Yorkshire is the fourth most active region with physical activity levels of 67% among adults. The Black Country (West Midlands) has the lowest activity rates among Active Partnership areas, with 55% of the adult population participating in at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week.

Oxfordshire has a minority ethnic population below the national average (5%), in Wiltshire 7% of the population are minority ethnic, and in East and West Sussex 3% and 4% of the population are BAME respectively. Birmingham has one of the largest minority ethnic populations in the United Kingdom; over two-fifths (42%) of residents are from non-white backgrounds

LEAST AND MOST ACTIVE REGIONS

Most Active Areas	%	Least Active Areas	%
Bristol and West of England	69.3	Northamptonshire	57.9
Devon	68.8	Tees Valley	57.6
Oxfordshire	68.2	Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent	57.3
North Yorkshire	67.2	Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire	56.8
Dorset	66.9	Black Country	54.6

Table 1: Least and most active regions in percentages



# SPORTING ECONOMICS

Diversity and inclusion are often looked at from two different perspectives; a moral case and a business case. The former looks at the ethical and responsible ways diversity in an organisation can be managed while the latter looks at how diversity contributes to organisational performance. In the case of sport, developing a wider pool of diverse talent may lead to increased sporting success at a national or international level. The business case is often referred to in terms of achieving and managing diversity and inclusion. There is also a clear economic imperative to ensure that diversity and inclusion is embedded throughout the sporting industry to maintain current rates of growth and to contribute to a sustainable future for the industry.

The United Nations (UN) identifies the sport industry as a key driver of increased opportunities for economic growth. Sport programmes can foster employability for underrepresented groups, including women, minority ethnic communities, and those with disabilities.

Sports and sporting events can also be used to showcase a greater understanding of diversity and inclusiveness, addressing discriminatory practices which exclude certain groups from economic activity.

Since 2010 the value of sport to the UK economy has increased by 29% at an equivalent growth rate of 5% each year. The combined gross value added (GVA) of Olympic and Paralympic Sports is worth an estimated £18.9 billion to the UK economy, equivalent to 1% of total UK economic output. Olympic and Paralympic sport generates a combined turnover of £36.64 billion and £19.77 billion in consumer spending.

The economic contribution of sport is growing at a remarkable rate. Post 2012, Olympic and Paralympic Games events alone have generated over £130 million in economic returns across the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and other venues throughout the United Kingdom.

SPORTS PARTICIPATION GVA (£ BILLION)

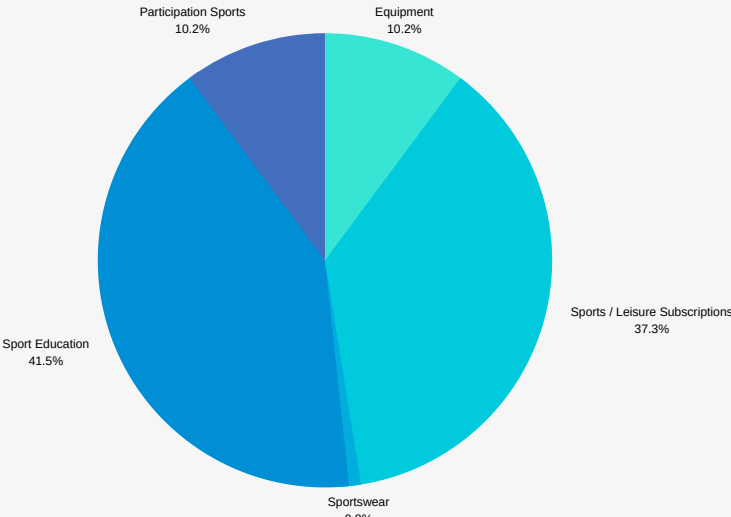


Figure 4 Sports Participation and Sports Consumption GVA (Ebillions)

SPORTS CONSUMPTION GVA (£ BILLION)

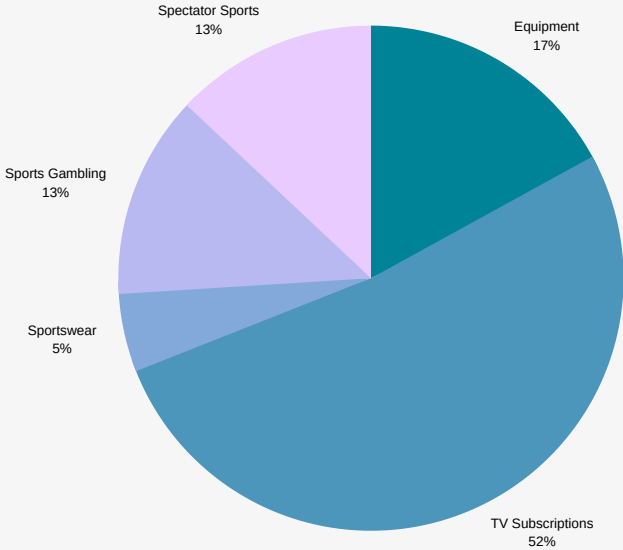


Figure 4 Sport England, Economic Value of Sport in England (Ebillions)



The London Olympic and Paralympic Games legacy has introduced a growing need to ensure that Olympic and Paralympic sports appeal to more diverse groups. These sports need to reflect the different needs of international athletes, coaches and other sporting beneficiaries at leadership level, moreover, to draw on talent from diverse groups to maintain their future competitiveness at an international level.

**“Sports that seek to draw on talent from different groups in society are more likely to be competitive in the long term as the UK population ages and diversifies.”**

**UK SPORT**

- Cycling produces £3 billion in GVA.
- Income generated from municipal swimming pools is worth £540.5 million to the public sector, whilst the sale of swimwear is worth almost £70 million per annum.
- Golf is worth over £3.3 billion to the English economy.
- The direct economic impact of the 2017 World Athletics Championships totalled £107million.

## EMPLOYMENT IN SPORTS RELATED ACTIVITIES

Developing a diverse workforce is vital for building a sustainable sport sector and wider economic activity. Over a quarter of a million (266,000) people are directly employed in sports occupations in England alone. Wider sporting related activity supports around 400,000 full-time equivalent jobs, representing 2% of all employment in England. Across the UK, Olympic and Paralympic sport supports over 1.2 million jobs. Sporting participation accounts for almost two-thirds (65%) of sports related employment.

Over a third (35%) of sports employment relates to sporting consumption, including spectating, sports equipment, sportswear, media and gambling services:

- The Government estimates that sports marketing and consultancy services are worth between £500 and £750 million. The market is expected to grow to over £1 billion by the year 2022, largely driven by the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Legacy.
- The UK Sportswear market has an estimated value of £2.5 billion. The sector has seen year-on-year growth of around 8% and is growing four times faster than the total UK clothing market, which saw growth of just 2%. The trend for health and wellbeing and fitness and popularity of athletic leisurewear has supported considerable sales growth in recent years.
- The manufacturing of sporting goods in the UK includes a range of goods and equipment. Examples include; Slazenger, Admiral sportswear, Gilbert and many others. The sector has grown by a rate of around 5% over the past five years, reaching £720 million in 2018/19. Over 6,000 people are employed in the industry, which supports over 800 businesses. The Sporting Goods Industry Association (SGIA) represents the manufacturers, wholesalers and distributors in the sector.

**EMPLOYMENT IN SPORTS BY OCCUPATION  
APRIL TO JUNE 2018 (000S)**

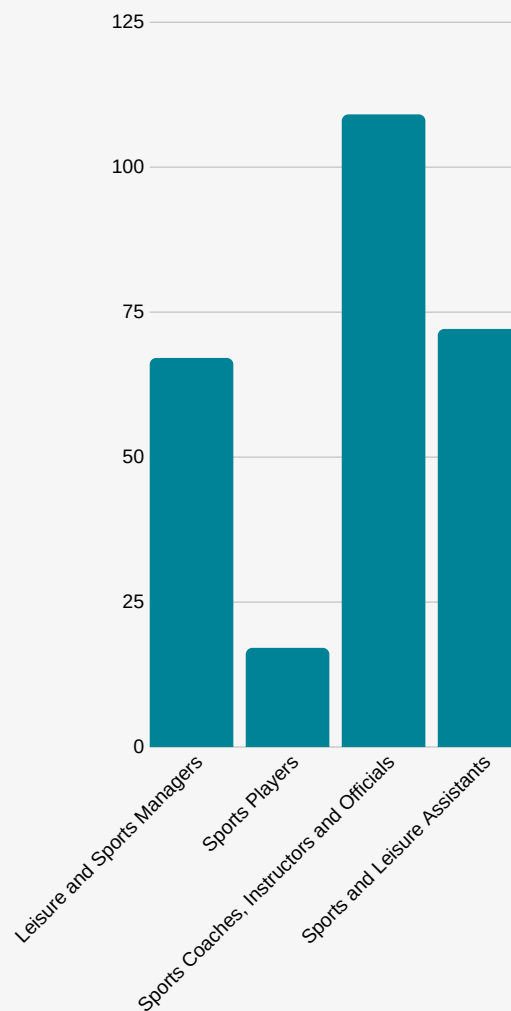


Figure 5 Employment in Sports by Occupation, April to June 2018, Office for National Statistics, September 2018





A photograph of four female athletes from Great Britain at the Rio 2016 Olympics. They are standing together, smiling, and holding the Union Jack flag behind their backs. They are wearing white athletic singlets with 'GREAT BRITAIN' and 'Rio 2016' printed on them. The athletes are diverse in ethnicity. The names 'DOYLE', 'DIAMOND', and 'ONUORA' are visible on their singlets.

## DIVERSITY ON SPORTS BOARDS

The Code for Sports Governance introduces a requirement for Tier 3 Sport England and UK Sport-funded bodies to have a minimum 30% inclusion of both genders on sports boards, although the aim of sports boards is to work towards achieving gender parity. The 30% threshold is an especially important milestone; it is known as the 'critical mass' level of gender representation, above which the benefits of female inclusion on boards have more significant benefits.

A 2016 study by Women in Sport found that, with the exception of chairs, women accounted for 32% across all leadership in Sport England and UK Sport Funded bodies. The code also sets out a requirement to consider the benefits of increasing diversity generally with a focus on the number of board members from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with disabilities.

This report provides updated figures, showing distance travelled over the last two years.

A 2003 study by Leeds Metropolitan University found that nearly two-thirds (60%) of England's National Governing Bodies (NGBs) could not identify any employees of BAME origin. A 2015 study by Sporting Equals reported that the proportion of BAME individuals had reached 7% across Chief Executive roles in National Governing Bodies (NGBs). Despite the increase in minority ethnic board members over the past decade, sports boards remain unrepresentative of the UK BAME population as a whole, which stood at 13% at the time of the last census in 2011.

There is a marked lack of information regarding the intersectionality between sports leadership and sexual orientation, socio-economic backgrounds, ethnicity and disability. Again, this report seeks to provide the most comprehensive baselines possible. Our findings include data from National Governing Bodies (NGBs), Active Partnerships and other bodies funded by Sport England and UK Sport.

# SPORT BOARD ANALYSIS - KEY FINDINGS

Inclusive Boards conducted a board diversity analysis of funded sports organisations using information compiled from official websites, corporate reports and professional profile and digital profiling tools. Inclusive Boards also distributed a diversity board monitoring survey to senior leaders within NGBs, Active Partnerships, and other funded bodies.

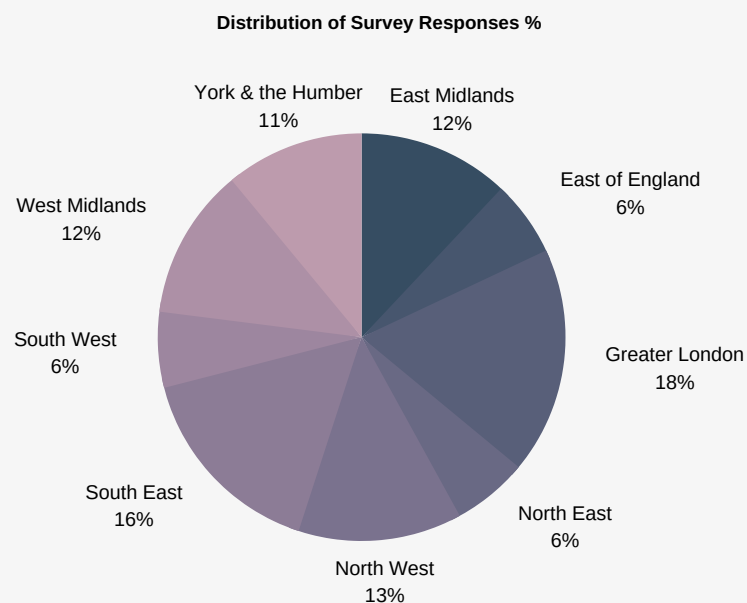


Figure 6 Distribution of survey responses by region

## BOARD COMPOSITION

- The average board size of organisations reviewed was between 9 and 10.
- One-third (33%) of board members reviewed were elected, whilst two-thirds (67%) were independent non-executive directors (INED).

## GENDER DIVERSITY

Our internal board analysis identified 40% female board members across all Sport England and UK Sport-funded bodies. In terms of gender equality the sports sector is falling behind the 500-largest charities in the third sector, which achieved a 43% female membership on governance boards in 2018. However female sport board membership was higher than FTSE 100 firms, which achieved close to a 29% female presence across board positions in 2018.

Almost three quarters (75%) of organisations reviewed have achieved the Code for Sports Governance requirement of a minimum of 30% from both genders on their boards. Active Partnership boards have achieved a gender target of 41%.

Four Active Partnerships have yet to achieve the required target of 30%, whilst 34% Active Partnerships have achieved gender parity or above. A number of funded bodies and Active Partnerships have an over-representation of women on their boards. It is important for organisations to ensure that 30% of each gender are reflected.

## A Comparison of Female Representation on Boards

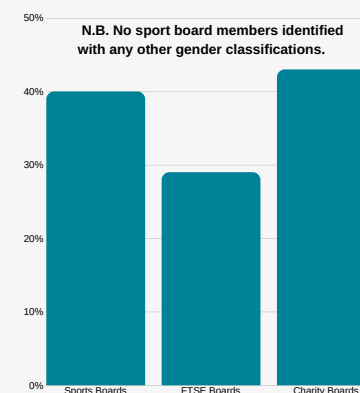


Figure 7 Comparison of female representation on Boards



## ETHNICITY

Our board analysis of Sport England and UK Sport-funded bodies identified 5% BAME board membership. Two-thirds (64%) had no BAME board members, moreover the proportion of BAME board members was slightly lower among Active Partnerships (4%). Our findings show an improvement in minority ethnic presence on sports boards since 2016: The Sporting Equals Leader Board survey identified that just 4% of board members were from BAME backgrounds. However, the current rate of progress is slow; sports boards have yet to achieve ethnic parity with the UK minority ethnic population, which at the time of the 2011 Census stood at 13%. This clear stagnation should be viewed seriously when compared with BAME participation within many elite sports and demographic changes.

The sport sector is falling behind other sectors in terms of minority ethnic board members. In the charity sector, 6% of charity governance board members are from BAME backgrounds, compared to 8% across FTSE 100 boards.

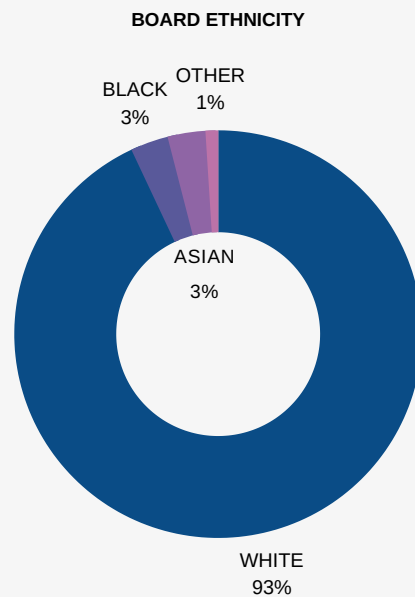


Figure 8: Board ethnicity in percentages

## AGE

The largest proportion (37%) of board members are aged between 50 and 59, whilst 35% are aged between 36 and 49 years. One in five (20%) of board members are aged 60 and over. Just 2.0% of board members are aged between 18 and 29.

The average age of sports board members is age 54. The oldest board member identified was aged 80+, whilst the youngest was aged under 25.

Female board members are slightly younger on average compared to male board members, with an average age of 51 and 56 respectively. Board members from minority ethnic backgrounds were younger still, with an average age of 48, compared to an average age of 54 for their white counterparts.

The data shows that those in sports board positions are comparatively younger compared to other sectors. The average age of FTSE 100 non-executive directors stands at 60.3 years old. In the charity sector, the average age of trustees is 57; however, two-thirds of charity trustees are aged 59 or over.

## SEXUALITY

From our survey results, we found 3% of board members identified as being openly LGBT+. This is slightly higher than the wider population. The Office for National Statistics estimates that around 2% of UK residents are openly LGBT+, although this rises to 4% among 16 to 24 year olds. Evidence suggests that certain segments of LGBT people may chose not to disclose this information, whilst others may misreport their sexual orientation. As a result, estimates may underestimate or overestimate the true scale of LGBT+ communities.



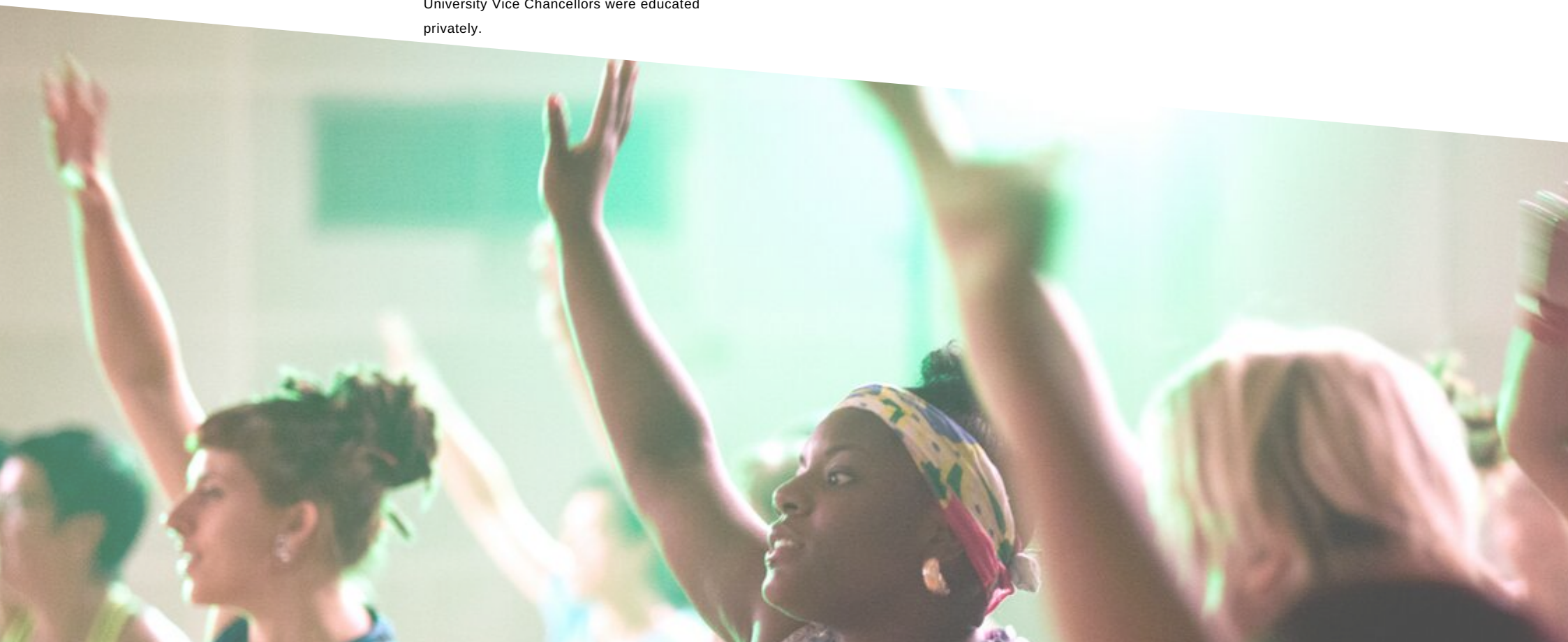
## DISABILITY

Only 5% of board members we surveyed had a disability or consider themselves to have a disability. This compared to around 22% in the wider UK population. A similar study conducted in 2016 identified just 3% of sports board members who were disabled. Whilst this suggests a slight improvement in the proportion of people with disabilities on boards, there is still work to do to ensure that sports organisations build on the success of the Paralympic legacy and beyond.

## EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Sports board members were far less likely to have attended comprehensive schools and more likely to have been educated privately. Just under half (43%) of board members we reviewed attended comprehensive schools, compared to 88% of the wider population. One-third (33%) attended grammar schools and around a quarter (24%) were educated privately, compared to just 7% of the wider population who attended fee-paying schools. In other sectors, an estimated 22% of FTSE 350 CEOs, 22% of Chief Constables and 20% of University Vice Chancellors were educated privately.

Around one in ten (11%) board members attended Oxbridge (Oxford or Cambridge) universities, compared to less than 1% of the wider population. This is comparable to around 6% of Police Chief Constables and 9% of Local Authority Chief Executives who were Oxbridge educated, but lower than the 31% of FTSE 100 CEOs. Our findings show that one-third (33%) of sport board members attended more prestigious Russell Group universities.





# BOARD RECRUITMENT: IMMEDIATE OPPORTUNITY

Almost half (49%) of boards will be looking to recruit new board members within 3 to 6 months. Around a quarter (24%) will be recruiting within 6 to 12 months. Just over a quarter (27%) of boards will not be recruiting new board members for over a year.

The average number of applications for each board position is between 16 and 17. The highest number of applications for a board position identified in the survey received over 200 applications. Four board vacancies received no applications.

'Open recruitment' was the most common method of recruiting new board members. The most common recruitment platforms and channels included sport websites and specialist recruitment sites such as 'Women on Boards'. There is therefore an immediate opportunity to begin to tackle the diversity challenges being highlighted within this report.

The majority (94%) of boards have completed a skills audit within the past 2 years; a further 3% of the audits were conducted over 2 years ago. However, 3% of boards have never had a skills audit. A specific requirement of the Code for Sports Governance is that sports organisations must now maintain an up-to-date skills matrix, detailing the experience, skills and knowledge required from its board members.





## DIFFICULTIES ATTRACTING DIVERSE TALENT

Over half (56%) of respondents said that they struggle to attract diverse talent for board positions, however 44% of respondents said that attracting diverse talent is not an issue for them. The question for the 44% would therefore be why receiving diverse applications has not resulted in significant improvement in the level of diverse individuals being recruited, particularly for BAME and disabled representation on boards. Over a quarter (29%) of respondents said that the overall diversity of their staff was 'poor'. Around half (44%) rated their staff diversity as average. Only 6% of respondents rated their staff diversity as 'very good'. Around one in five (21%) rated their staff diversity as 'good'. There is an argument that for many organisations they do not know what 'good' looks like, when it comes to diversity within staff teams. It is also likely that gender representation has resulted in the perception that they had 'ticked the diversity box'.

Less than one in five respondents rated the diversity of participants within their respective sport as 'very good'; 27% rated it as 'good'. Just under half (46%) of respondents rated the diversity of participants within their respective sport as 'average' and around one in ten (9%) rated participant diversity as 'poor'. There is a need to also establish what 'good' looks like in the context of participation, as data would suggest these perceptions to be overly positive.



"There are plenty of black [football] players, but that is no longer the problem. It's only on the pitch. Not in the backroom teams, in the hierarchy." The fire still burns strong; inside remains the small boy who would not accept a society where it was OK to throw bottles at people with different coloured skins."

**Lord Ouseley, Founder 'Kick it Out'**



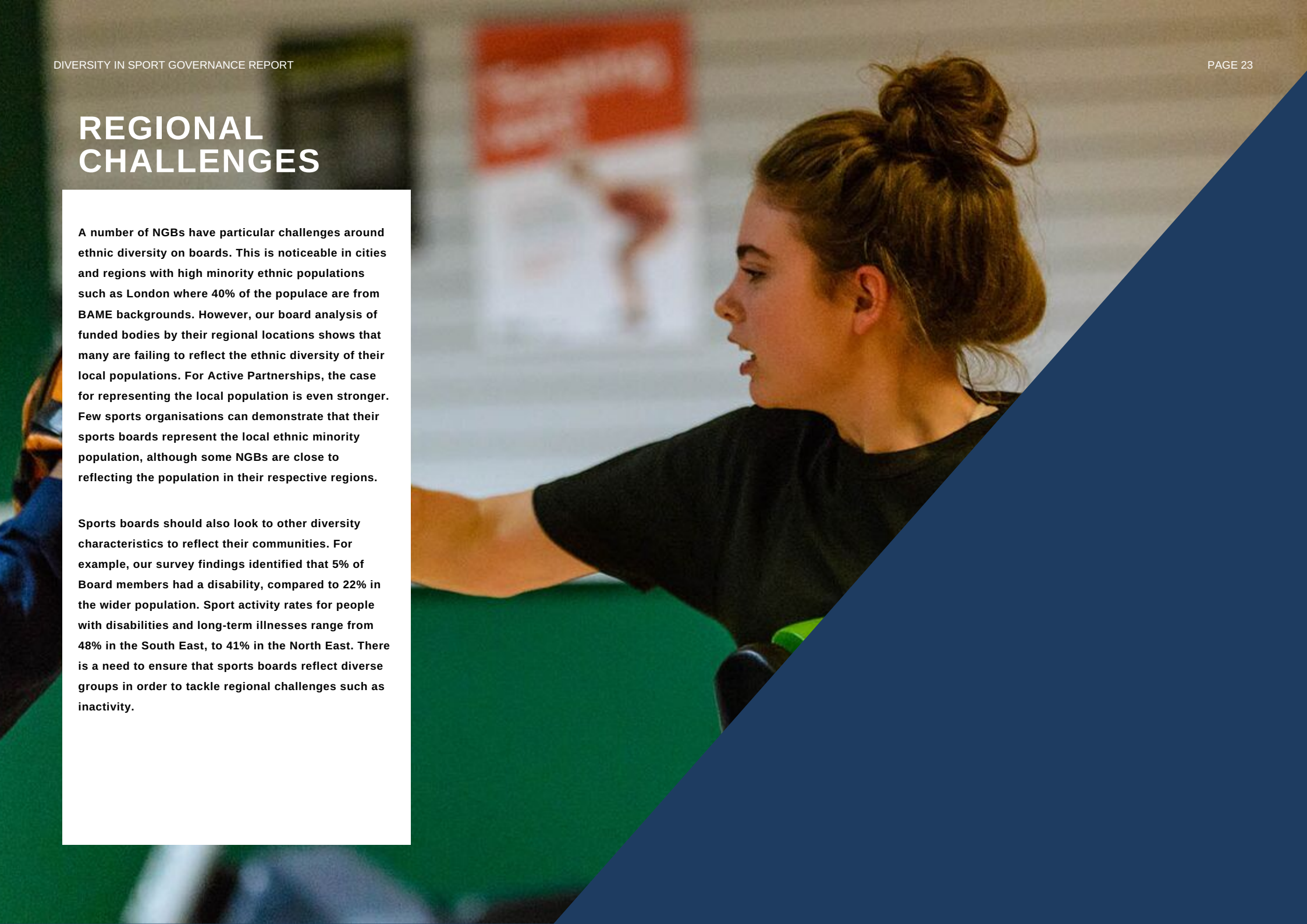
"Talking to other athletes and sportspeople, they are expressing concern that [sports boards are] a world not open for them. They won't be welcomed, won't be valued and it is very negative. They have gone as far as they can as athletes but they don't feel there is any more room for them to go."

**Christine Ohuruogu, former Olympic and world 400m champion**

# REGIONAL CHALLENGES

A number of NGBs have particular challenges around ethnic diversity on boards. This is noticeable in cities and regions with high minority ethnic populations such as London where 40% of the populace are from BAME backgrounds. However, our board analysis of funded bodies by their regional locations shows that many are failing to reflect the ethnic diversity of their local populations. For Active Partnerships, the case for representing the local population is even stronger. Few sports organisations can demonstrate that their sports boards represent the local ethnic minority population, although some NGBs are close to reflecting the population in their respective regions.

Sports boards should also look to other diversity characteristics to reflect their communities. For example, our survey findings identified that 5% of Board members had a disability, compared to 22% in the wider population. Sport activity rates for people with disabilities and long-term illnesses range from 48% in the South East, to 41% in the North East. There is a need to ensure that sports boards reflect diverse groups in order to tackle regional challenges such as inactivity.



# DIVERSITY IN OLYMPIC & PARALYMPIC SPORTS

The British and worldwide Olympic and Paralympic movements promote the very best in sporting talent. National Olympic and Paralympic Governing Body boards support athletes with medal-winning podium potential to excel in their respective sports. UK Sport is at the forefront of delivering and strengthening the UK's position as a world-class sporting nation, working with the National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and funded partners to develop the UK's elite sporting athletes.

Since its creation in 1997 UK Sport has been delivering a high-performance strategy that has enabled Great Britain to move from 36th position on the Olympic medal table in 1996 to second position in both the Olympic and Paralympic medal tables at the Rio 2016 games.

## UK OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC NATIONAL GOVERNING BODY BOARDS

The following section includes organisations in the United Kingdom involved in the delivery of World Class Performance programmes. These include Olympic and Paralympic organisations solely focused on elite sport programmes and those who run elite sports programmes as part of wider remit of activities including participation and engagement. In accordance with the governance code, such organisations are required to show a commitment to achieving 30% representation of both genders and to increase diversity generally, including but not limited to BAME and disability.

## GENDER DIVERSITY

The board analysis of Olympic and Paralympic funded NGBs showed that women account for 37% of board members. However, our analysis reveals that around one quarter of Olympic and Paralympic funded organisations are yet to achieve this benchmark. Over three quarters (77%) of the organisations have achieved the 30% benchmark of both genders on their boards, whilst 13% are close to achieving an equal representation of men and women.

## ETHNICITY

The ethnic makeup of Olympic and Paralympic NGB boards is less positive. Our board analysis of funded NGBs showed that 5% of board members are from minority ethnic backgrounds, which was equal to the average of all funded bodies. Over half (58%) of Olympic and Paralympic NGBs had no minority ethnic members on their boards; around a third (32%) had only one minority ethnic member.

## AGE

Board members across Olympic and Paralympic NGB Boards had an average age of 53.5 years old, slightly younger than the average for all funded bodies. Female board members were younger than average, with a mean average age of 49.8 years compared to 57.4 years old for men. Board members from minority ethnic backgrounds had an average age of 48.5 years, compared to 54.9 years for those from white backgrounds.

Over two thirds (67%) of board members on Olympic and Paralympic NGB Boards are aged 50 or over, less than one in ten (9%) of board members are aged under 40. The prevalence of older board members is also notable, with 18% of board members aged above the current state pension age of 65 years old.

## EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUNDS

Educational background is Inclusive Board's methodology to understanding where individuals have come from in terms of their socio-economic background. It removes the challenges associated with self-declaration which can be imperfect. Our analysis of educational backgrounds in Olympic sports boards shows a similar pattern compared to the average for all funded bodies. Over half (61%) of board members we reviewed attended grammar (33%), or private schools (29%), whilst 39% attended state funded comprehensives.

The proportion of Olympic and Paralympic NGB Boards members who graduated from Oxbridge institutions was higher than the average for all sports funded bodies; 16% of the board members reviewed attended either Oxford or Cambridge universities, compared to 11% in the wider sample.

An overall indication that the board members on Olympic and Paralympic organisations come from a higher socio-economic background.



## INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC SPORTS BOARDS

Previous research by Women on Boards conducted in 2016 showed that the proportion of women in governing bodies of the Olympic movement was below 30%; in International Sports Federations the figure was less than one in five (18%). The research also showed that the proportion of women on National Olympic Committees from around the world fell to 17% in 2016, down from 18% in 2014. At this time the picture of female membership varied significantly across the world. However, a number of countries are close to achieving gender parity, with Malawi, Australia, Bermuda, Norway, New Zealand, Kiribati, Samoa and Tuvalu all achieving an equal gender balance on their national Olympic Committees and boards.

Figures published by the Council of Europe reveal that as few as 11 out of 206 (5%) presidents of National Olympic Committees are women, whilst females account for just 14% of those in decision making roles. The European Commission has set out proposals for achieving a minimum of 40% females on executive boards and committees of national sport governing bodies and 30% on international sports organisation boards in Europe.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) have set a target of 50% female participation at the Olympic Games. At the London Olympic and Paralympic Games, 44% of games participants were female, increasing to 45% of total participants at Rio de Janeiro in 2016. The IOC has also implemented a strategy to increase the pipeline of female candidates for governance and executive roles, with a recommendation for Olympic partners to review their electoral processes with a view to achieving a gender-balance, but they are to implement specific targets for achieving gender balance.



“The IOC recognises the need for more women leaders within sport, and continues to lead by example by promoting strong female leadership across the governing and administrative bodies of the Olympic Movement.”

**Lydia Nsekera IOC Women in Sport  
Commission Chair**

# SPOTLIGHT: DIVERSITY ON SPORT BOARDS

**RACHEL TRANTER**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF  
WOMEN ON BOARDS UK

## Can you tell us about yourself?

I am one of the founders and Executive Directors of Women on Boards UK Limited. Women On Boards UK exists to help women make the right connections and career choices to get to board level within their own company or to take on a non-executive board role. I am responsible for the non-executive vacancies, provide interview support and I am an active member of the network.

## What is your background?

Prior to setting up Women On Boards UK with Fiona Hathorn and Rowena Ironside, I spent 18 years as an international corporate tax consultant working with PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PWC). During this time I also project managed the first corporate tax portal offering, worked in business development and partner promotions. In 2008 I left to pursue other areas of interest, which led me to Cardio Direct Ltd, a medical provider of cardiac services. I studied at the University of Birmingham and I am a Bachelor of Commerce. I am also a member of the Chartered Institute of Taxation, ATII qualified.

## How did you get involved in sport Boards?

In 2017, I joined the board of the Amateur FA as an Independent Non-Executive Director. I was the first female to be appointed to the Board and the first independent director. In January 2019, I became chair of the Amateur FA Governance and Nomination Committee and joined the Audit and Risk Committee. I am also an Independent Panel Member for the Ministry of Justice.

## Why did you become a Board member for a sport organisation?

I have always been passionate about sport and understand on a personal level the benefits that come from being involved in physical activity at any level and in any kind of sport. The joy of sport and the benefits of participation should be offered to the whole nation.

I am a passionate follower of football and I have seen the direct benefits participation brings through my family. I decided I wanted to join a sports board as I knew that this passion coupled with my strategic experience and business acumen could make a difference. Governance underpins the every day business of sport and my involvement with Women on Boards UK sparked my passion to get involved in sports governance. I was very specific and chose football. I waited until the right opportunity came along - and I joined a football board that promotes grassroots participation. I have been on the board of the Amateur FA for 20 months and rarely stop and think about being the only female on the board. I am aware however of the difference being the first and currently the only fully independent board member. I consider my contribution as an independent ie not involved in grassroots football valuable and I believe I am making a positive difference. It is all about balance, diversity of thought around the table and always remembering why we are there.

## Do you have any sport-related hobbies?

Away from work, I am a passionate long-distance runner, club tennis player and I enjoy long walks with my two Hungarian Vizslas.



# SPOTLIGHT: DIVERSITY ON SPORT BOARDS

## STEVE NELSON

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE WEST  
OF ENGLAND SPORT TRUST  
(WESPORT)

### Can you tell us about yourself?

I am the Chief Executive of the West of England Sport Trust (Wesport), I led the development of this Active Partnership as one of the first to become an independent company and Charitable Trust in 2006. I also led the creation of the vision, values and strategy for Wesport, overseeing governance and finance. I have led changes at Wesport, ensuring it is fit to meet the complexities of its role, understanding the impact of changes to local government, communities and health, and national policies for sport, physical activity and physical inactivity.

### What is your background?

I played professional basketball for a number of clubs across England from age 18. The last 3 years of my career (1996-99), I combined playing with a full-time role as Youth Sport Development Officer for Worthing Borough Council. I led the creation of 6 sports specific development plans, including tennis, hockey and basketball. I took on county (Sussex) wide responsibilities for basketball. I also combined professional basketball with full time studies in West London for 3 years whilst playing in the British Basketball League.

Playing successes in my basketball career includes 18 senior England caps; captaining the GB World Student Games Team; playing in European club competitions and being a key part of many domestic championship winning teams.

### How did you get involved in sport Boards?

I chaired the National Board of the Community Games, which delivered Community Games across England in partnership with YMCA England. It was funded by the Cabinet Office (£2.9m) and Legacy Trust UK. It has achieved excellent results and significant profile, engaging 2.6 million people and 80,000 volunteers in community games over 2 years (2012, 2013). I was also one of the founding trustees of the County Sports Partnership Network (CSPN), now called Active Partnerships (APs), from 2009-2016.

I have a great passion for sport, physical activity and communities. I believe that people within organisations can make a difference

In brief, a few other key roles / experience include:

- Non-Executive (Co-opted) Director – Gloucestershire County Cricket Club (March 2019 onwards)
- Basketball Foundation – Trustee (July 2011 – April 2017)
- Sports coach UK advisory board, Coaching Systems Support – board member (July 2009 – Dec 2011)
- Sport England South West Regional Sports Board member (Sept 2005 – January 2009)

### Are you still involved in sports outside of Wesport?

Outside of work, I am a volunteer basketball coach at junior national league level. My team was crowned under 18 men's national champions in 2011. I have developed and supported more than a dozen players that have gone on to represent England or GB, including my daughter Kyla and son Luke – both have captained their age group national teams and have earned scholarships to division 1 colleges in the USA. Luke is now playing professionally in the top league in Spain.





# SPOTLIGHT: DIVERSITY ON SPORT BOARDS

## MEL CHEUNG-TURNER

FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR - MY CREATIVE THOUGHTS

### How did you get your first Board position?

My son plays table tennis and he is currently No.2 in the country for U11 Boys. I got into the sports world primarily because of my son. Prior to that, I didn't have a huge interest in table tennis up until he took up the sport. The Chairman of our table tennis club is also the Chairman of British Para Table Tennis and at the time, I applied for a Non-Executive Director (NED) role with Table Tennis England. I had a really good interview with the Chairman, CEO and several members of the Board and received positive feedback from the interview. Unfortunately, I was advised they appointed a candidate who had more of a sporting background than myself. However, they recommended the NED role with British Para Table Tennis which had a vacancy at the same time. I applied and I was shortlisted for an interview. The interview panel was made up of the Chairman, Company Secretary and two other NEDs. The board were looking for someone who specifically had marketing and/or commercial experience. I have over 20 years' marketing and commercial experience and I was successful following the interview and appointed to the Board in June 2017.

### Did you feel you had to have an understanding of the sports sector when you got on the Board?

Not immediately but over the period of time, I had NED training specifically relating to British Para Table Tennis and areas around the Code of sport Governance, strategy and funding, etc. The last 18 months have been a good learning curve; spending time understanding the sport and the sector. Recently I have been appointed as the Chair of the Communications Committee, which involves overall responsibility for their communications channels, digital and offline communications.

### Do you feel your skill set on the Board has been fully utilised?

I think so, but we do have a limited amount of time and the Board members and myself do quite a bit to make sure we offer the required support to Para Table Tennis.

The role is only meant to be 5 days a year but we spend considerably more time supporting the Board and its' Committees. We have increased the voluntary resources available, they provide additional support and compliment the skills and experience of the board members. Overall it has been a positive board experience.

### Can you tell me your personal experience on the Board coming from a non-sport background?

I think it has been a great journey. It has been interesting to understand governance and more recently in the training, we have learnt about the different tiers and I wasn't familiar with that prior. I now understand more about the requirements of being on a sport board, the value and importance of voluntary support to Para Table Tennis and adhering to the code. We have excellent governance in place and the volunteers have been invaluable. It has been an educational and enjoyable learning curve.

### Any interesting diversity and inclusion initiatives at British Para?

We have a series of Recruitment and Talent ID days in various clubs throughout the year and the aim is to attract new playing members and encourage potential athletes to be part of the Para Table Tennis Futures programme. It is important to continue to see if there are any great talents out there, young or old.

The World Class Programme (WCP) squad, development, pathway and futures squads are fully diverse with wheelchair users, standing athletes, etc.

We will also in the future be proactive in trying to find a representative from the para community to join the Board. We have been active in advertising in the appropriate areas to attract applicants and this will be a priority in the next round of advertisements when the appropriate vacancies arise.



# SPOTLIGHT: DIVERSITY ON SPORT BOARDS

## DR CHRIS WHITAKER

ENGAGEMENT ADVISOR (EAST AND SOUTH EAST ENGLAND) AT ACTIVITY ALLIANCE

### Can you tell us about yourself?

I was born and grew up in Cheshire, arriving in the world with cerebral palsy after a complex childbirth. Apparently, I am lucky to be here at all and I have tried to make the most of life ever since! I have worked in the third sector for a few years now and I have experience serving on a number of trustee boards. Making a positive difference every day is what drives me.

### How did you get your first sport board position?

It sort of happened by accident. I got the position because an opportunity came up that someone else couldn't do and they knew I was interested. It was through word-of-mouth really. It's sort of a chicken and egg situation, you need experience to become a Trustee, but once you have the experience, you often get asked to join other boards. I am currently on the board of three organisations.

### What made you decide you wanted to be on a sport board?

I have always been interested in sport and my professional roles I've mostly been in the sport sector. For me, it was the most logical place to start. With sport activity, it has one of the most transformative products and forces out there that can be used to galvanise people. Trustee roles tend to be voluntary and my passion for the sector makes it an obvious choice.

### What was the recruitment process like?

In terms of general advice, I would prepare for any Trustee recruitment as I would any other job interview. It also depends on the degree of formality involved. In some cases, it was an informal conversation and in other cases it was a formal interview process. Regardless, I would always prepare and make sure I do my homework. For the informal interview – I would meet with the CEO and chair to see if I am a suitable fit for the organisation. In the cases where it was formal – a formal application process takes place.

I submitted a CV and Cover Letter. There was an interview with a panel usually consisting of existing board members, the chair and CEO of the organisation.

### Do you feel your skill set on the Board has been fully utilised?

I would hope so and I would also challenge myself on that if I feel that is not the case. I would try to understand why and what I can do to change it. That's why having a good working relationship with the Chair is important and meeting with them periodically to check how it's going. Having those mechanisms and catch-ups in place at least once a quarter or a couple of times a year helps.

### How can board attract more disabled candidates?

Working with the organisations who are used to working with others in the disabled communities. Put together a list of trusted partners and work with them to better understand how to engage with those communities. On an individual level, take the time to respond to the individual and what their needs are and that's for any board looking to become more diverse.

In this way you can provide the best for the Trustee and understand what adjustments needs to be made.

### How has your experience on the boards been?

It has been a positive one, I have enjoyed the opportunity to hopefully and constructively contribute to the organisation and to play a part in its overall development. You do it because you believe in the organisation and you want to play a part in what they do.

### Any final key messages?

My key message would be to maximise the opportunities that are available to recruit more inclusively and more widely. For disabled people themselves, I have found being a Trustee a very rewarding experience and to not be afraid to put yourself out there.





# SPOTLIGHT: DIVERSITY ON SPORT BOARDS

**YASHMIN HARUN**

NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
BRITISH FENCING

## How did you get your first position on a sport board?

My first board position was with Muslim Women's Sports Foundation. Having volunteered with them from 2008-14 and then establishing Muslimah Sports Association (MSA), I was invited to apply for the board position by the Chair at the time. Following this position, the FA sponsored me for the 'On the Board' program with them. This gave me much needed insight and the governance and compliance skills required. After the course, it gave me the confidence to start applying for other sport board positions. I applied for two positions, one was the British Fencing position as Non-Executive Director, which I was successful.

## What got you interested in sport boards?

I run Muslimah Sports Association (MSA), a grassroots sports association to get ethnic minority women into sports. I didn't realise at the time how many barriers there were for ethnic minority women and the lack of representation we had at leadership levels. I started MSA out of interest and a passion for sports to bring together like-minded women similar to me.

However when I looked across the sports boards and saw that we were not that represented, I have a lot of ideas and opinions and felt the best way to make a change was to get on a board and make a change from there rather than voicing my opinions from the sidelines.

## What was their recruitment process like?

MWSF was very straight forward as I was approached by the Chair to apply. I made an application, attended an interview and was successful. For British Fencing, the process was equally straightforward. I submitted a CV and cover letter. The Chair met me before hand to make sure I was a good fit for the board and organisation. He also wanted to understand what I could bring to the board and what new challenges I could offer. After our initial conversation, the Chair put forward my application to the rest of the board. I was interviewed by a panel of five people which included existing board members and the CEO. The week prior, I had applied for another board position which had a similar application process and I didn't get that one unfortunately. However, that role helped me to self-evaluate before attending the British Fencing interview.

## How did you prepare for the interview?

I looked into who was on the board, which direction they were going, what fundamental change they needed to make in order to make the sports more inclusive. British Fencing (BF) for many is seen as a sport for the elites. I have worked with BF before, this was with MSA where I created a tailored Level 1 British Fencing coaching course for BAME females, as I found it really difficult to find a female coach for our sessions. We worked with BF to train nine ethnic minority women to become a L1 coaches. That was something I thought could be improved from an inclusive aspect and reaching out to communities that may want to try the sport but do not have the opportunity to do so. I spoke a lot about that during the interview. I also reviewed their website and how it is driven towards competition and not the social aspect of the fencing. These were taken on board.

## Are you looking to get on other boards?

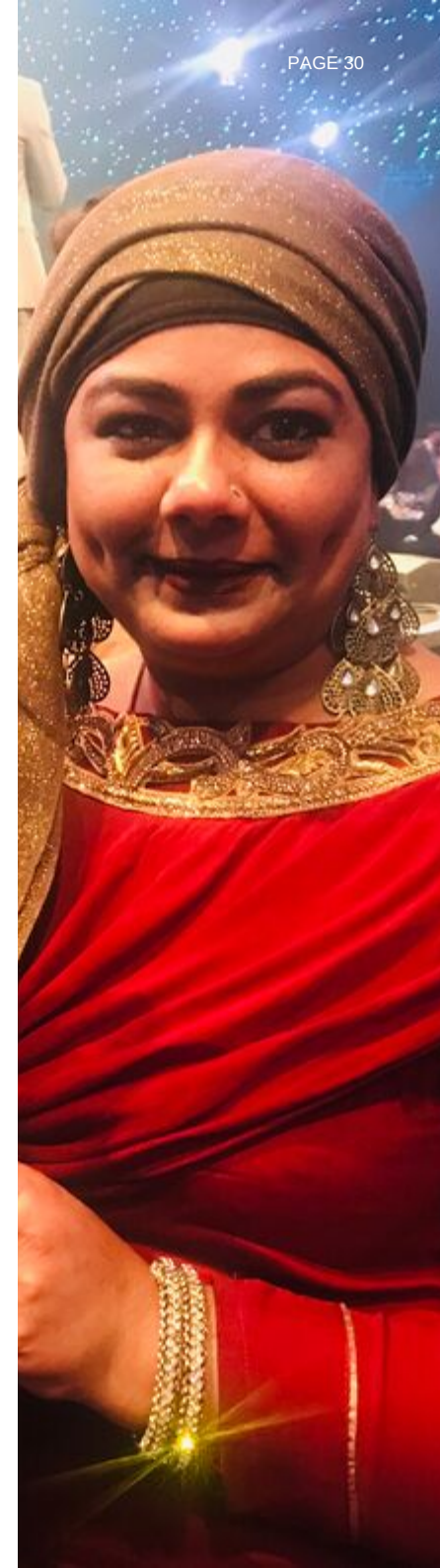
I am trying to get on the board of the FA. I applied and stood for it but was unfortunately not elected. I am hoping I will be able to make it on the board the next time I apply.

## Is your skill been fully utilised on the board?

There is still a lot for me to learn and it has been a big learning curve. I still need to understand more about the sport, how it works, the competition levels, and entry levels. In terms of being listened to, the board values my opinion and I really appreciate that. The board is very friendly but as an individual it is important to know when to engage and get a feel for the culture of the room.

## Are there any Innovative D&I initiatives at British Fencing?

We have a diversity policy for the board and in a similar way to ensuring we have gender parity on the board, we have added that there should be ethnicity parity also. We are also trying to engage with more local communities and showing BF as a social sport by training local youth workers. We have partnered with Muslim Girls Fence which started in Doncaster, it is now in Tower Hamlets, London. This was a successful project where we ran two hour programme each week for 10 weeks. We wanted to showcase the social aspect of fencing and to engage with local communities so they can try it out.





# DIVERSITY INITIATIVES

A number of sporting organisations have been set up to tackle historic inequalities in sport, both in terms of participation and leadership among diverse backgrounds.

Together, these organisations form a collective voice for underrepresented groups. A selection of specialist organisations working to increase representation in sports are profiled below:

## ETHNICITY AND RACE

**Kick It Out** is primarily a campaigning organisation that enables, facilitates, and works with the football authorities, professional clubs, players, fans and communities to tackle all forms of discrimination. The campaign has been pivotal in persuading and supporting the game's stakeholders to take their equality responsibilities seriously. A small independent charity, the '**Let's Kick Racism Out of Football**' campaign was established in 1993 in response to widespread calls from clubs, players and fans to tackle racist attitudes existing within the game. Kick It Out was then established as a body in 1997 as it widened out its objectives to cover all aspects of inequality and exclusion.

Working throughout the football, educational and community sectors to challenge discrimination, encourage inclusive practices and campaign for positive change, the organisation is funded jointly by The Football Association (FA), the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA), the Premier League and The English Football League (EFL). In 2018 the charity marked its 25th anniversary, but despite measurable progress institutional racism remains a persistent problem within the game, preventing qualified and talented BAME individuals from being considered for non-playing roles.

Also in football, the Black List is a celebration of African and Caribbean achievements in the national game. The **Black List** has featured and celebrated the likes of Rio Ferdinand, Lord Ousley, and Dame Heather Rabbatts. The campaign also raises awareness of the underrepresentation of people from Black African and Caribbean backgrounds in decision-making roles.

**Sporting Equals** is a charity that exists to promote involvement in sport and physical activity by disadvantaged communities, specifically those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds.

The organisation works closely with national and local authorities, sports organisations, community organisations, faith groups and local sports clubs. The charity benefits from Sport England funding, and has established funded partnerships with Age UK, the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), Football Association (FA), and the England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB).

**Muslim Women in Sport Foundation** is a volunteer-led charity established in 2001.

The charity exists to increase the involvement of Muslim women and girls in sport without prejudicing individual religious and cultural values. The organisation also works with organisations to promote diversity and inclusion through awareness raising of their specific needs.

## GENDER

**Women in Sport** was created with the purpose of achieving gender parity in sport. It aims to create equal opportunities for women and girls in sport and society as a whole.

Funded through multiple funded bodies, including Sport England, UK Sport, Erasmus and Comic Relief, Women in Sport also seeks to facilitate the development of diverse leadership structures at the highest levels of governance through the Women in Sport Network.

**This Girl Can** is a campaign created by Sport England with the aim of engaging 3 million women in recreational sport activity. The promotional campaign displays real-life stories of active women participating in sport and physical activity in an aim to tackle misconceptions and stereotypes about women's involvement in physical activity.

**Women's Sport Trust** founded in 2012, has a goal to increase the visibility of women's sports. They achieve their objectives by: identifying and promoting role models, increasing the media coverage of women's sporting activities and achievements and finally improving funding and sponsorship to highlight where inequalities may exist.

## DISABILITY

**The Activity Alliance** (formerly the English Federation of Disability Sport) is a national charity funded by Sport England working to challenge perceptions and increase the representation and inclusivity of disability within sport. Disabled people's membership on sports boards has remained low for some time. The organisation aims to better understand the professional aspirations of disabled people and their types of support that could increase their representation through leadership on sports boards.

**The Invictus Games** is the only international sporting event for wounded, injured and sick Servicemen and women. The inaugural Invictus Games was held in London from 10-14 September 2014 and was attended by over 400 competitors from 13 nations. On a trip to the Warrior Games in the USA in 2013, HRH The Duke of Sussex saw first-hand how the power of sport can help physically, psychologically and socially those suffering from injuries and illness. The Duke was inspired by his visit and the Invictus Games was born.

The word 'Invictus' means 'unconquered'. It embodies the fighting spirit of wounded, injured and sick Service personnel and personifies what these tenacious men and women can achieve post injury. The Games harness the power of sport to inspire recovery, support rehabilitation and generate a wider understanding and respect for those who serve their country.

## AGE

**Age UK** is the UK's leading charity helping older people to live better lives. Although not set up to deal directly with sports issues Age UK supports local groups around the country to set-up walking football clubs which help older people, especially older men, to remain active for longer and to maintain stronger social connections.

## SEXUALITY

**Pride Sports** is an organisation which exists to challenge homophobia in sport and to improve access and inclusion for LGBT+ communities. This is achieved through campaigning work, education, promoting and sharing best practice, and increasing participation rates among these groups.

**Out for Sport** is a volunteer-led grassroots organisation. Run by London's sports clubs and LGBT+ sports teams, the organisation aims to increase local participation in LGBT sports in and around London through raising awareness of LGBT sports activities, promoting sport and physical activity among LGBT communities, and promoting the 'Gay Games' sporting competitions.

**Stonewall** is a campaigning charity that champions the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in schools, workplaces and communities across the United Kingdom. Through the campaign 'Rainbow Laces' the organisation aims to unite sport, ensuring that no lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual communities feel excluded from participating in or spectating in sport.



## SOCIO-ECONOMIC

### DISADVANTAGE

**Street Games** is an organisation and network that provides neighborhood sports projects for disadvantaged young people and communities. Street Games supports a network of nearly 1,000 community groups, local authorities, sports clubs and other organisations to improve the well-being of disadvantaged young people. Funded through Sport England and other sources, the charity also works with national governing bodies to improve participation rates among people from less affluent communities. Street Games also provides training and volunteering programmes to increase leadership skills among disadvantaged young people.

**SportEd** is one of the leading sport development charities in the United Kingdom, helping community sport and youth groups to transform the lives of disadvantaged young people in order to strengthen and build safer communities. Funded jointly through Sport England, Big Lottery, Comic Relief and other funded bodies, the charity also provides governance and leadership support for community sports organisations by providing mentoring partnerships with the business community, workshops, and leadership support services.

**Street League** is a leading sport for employment charity with a mission to bring an end to youth employment through its regional sport for employment programmes. Funded through Sport England and other grants, the organisation uses sport to enable young people to learn key employability skills and gain the necessary qualifications for employment.





# CONCLUSION

There is a clear case for increasing diversity in sport, across governance, participation and competition levels. There have been ambitious strategies put in place to increase participation in sport, including at board level. Women now average around 40% of board members across Sport England and UK Sport-funded bodies. Almost three quarters of Sport England and UK Sport funded bodies have already achieved the required minimum 30% of both genders on boards. Clearly further work is needed in this area, however, many of the remaining organisations are close to meeting the required benchmark.

Slower progress is being made in terms of board members from BAME backgrounds, with an average of 5% across all Sport England and UK Sport-funded bodies. This is lower when compared to the private and third sectors. Board members from ethnic minority backgrounds were more concentrated within some organisations, particularly those with larger boards. In contrast, Active Partnerships have a lower proportion of BAME board members compared to the average for all funded bodies. This suggests that at a regional level more work is needed to draw on regional talent from the local areas, particularly in areas where BAME populations are higher than the national average.

The analysis of educational backgrounds shows that sports boards are more likely than the wider population to have attended private schools and prestigious universities, a fact more pronounced within the elite sports organisations. People from low socioeconomic backgrounds are also underrepresented in sport participation and physical activity. There is a growing need to ensure that people from 'working class' backgrounds have a voice on sports boards at national and local levels, but also to increase opportunities for people from deprived backgrounds to participate.

Notable inequalities exist in participation rates between men and women, those with and without limiting disabilities and those of different socio-economic backgrounds. The categorisation of all those who are not 'white British' also hides wide heterogeneity in sports participation between ethnic groups, with black and Asian communities tending to be less likely to engage in sport than all other groups. With these historical inequalities, it is especially important that boards of funded partner organisations can represent and understand the needs of underrepresented groups in order to achieve the government's goal of having 'more people from every background regularly and meaningfully taking part in sport.'

We acknowledge that whilst progress is being made to tackle diversity and inclusion challenges in the sector, future population changes, including an older and more ethnically diverse population, will increase the imperative to increase diversity across all levels of sport. Currently many NGBs, Active Partnerships and funded bodies are failing to reflect the makeup of their communities across the different diversity strands. There is a growing need to ensure that people from different socio-economic backgrounds have a voice on sports boards at all levels to provide diverse and relevant input into decision making



# Appendix I: Sport Organisations in the Desk Research\*

## NATIONAL GOVERNING BODIES (NGBS) AND NATIONAL FUNDED BODIES

Angling Trust*
Badminton England*
Baseball Softball UK*
Boccia England*
Boccia UK
Bowls Development Alliance*
British Canoeing*
British Curling
British Cycling
British Equestrian Federation (BEF)*
British Fencing*
British Gymnastics
British Judo*
British Mountaineering Council (BMC)
British Orienteering
British Para Table Tennis (BPTT)*
British Rowing
British Shooting
British Taekwondo Council
British Triathlon (British Triathlon Federation)*
British Water Ski & Wakeboard (BWSW)
British Weight Lifting*
British Wrestling
EMD (Exercise, Move, Dance) UK*
England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB)
England Athletics
England Basketball
England Boxing
England Golf
England Handball*
England Hockey*
England Lacrosse*
England Netball*
England Squash*
GB Archery - The Grand National Archery Society t/a Archery GB
GB Badminton
GB Basketball

GB Boxing*
GB Hockey
GB Snowsport (formerly British Ski & Snowboard)
GB Taekwondo
Goalball UK
Great Britain Wheelchair Basketball Association (GWBA)
Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby (GBWR)*
Lawn Tennis Association (LTA)
Pentathlon GB
Rounders England*
Royal Yachting Association (RYA)
Rugby Football League*
Rugby Football Union
Snowsport England
Swim England*
Table Tennis England
Taekwondo Organisation Ltd
The Football Association (FA)
UKA - UK Athletics Ltd*
Volleyball England

### ACTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Active Black Country
Active Cheshire*
Active Cumbria*
Active Devon
Active Dorset
Active Essex
Active Gloucestershire*
Active Humber*
Active Lancashire
Active Lincolnshire*
Active Norfolk
Active Oxfordshire
Active Partners Trust*
Active Partnerships (formerly the CSP Network)

Active Surrey*
Active Sussex*
County Durham Sport*
CSW Sport
Energise Me
Energize STW*
Get Active Cornwall
Get Berkshire Active*
Greater Sport*
Herefordshire & Worcestershire Sports Partnership*
Herts Sports Partnership*
Kent Sport
Leap
Leicestershire & Rutland Sport*
Living Sport*
London Sport*
Merseyside Sport*
North Yorkshire Sport*
Northamptonshire Sport
Northumberland Sport*
Somerset Activity & Sports Partnership*
Sport Across Staffordshire*
Sport Birmingham
Suffolk Sport*
Team Beds and Luton
Tees Valley Sport
Tyne Wear Sport*
Wesport
Wiltshire & Swindon Sport (Wasp)
Yorkshire Sport Foundation*

### OTHER FUNDED ORGANISATIONS

Access Sport
Activity Alliance (formerly England Federation of Disability Sport)*
Association of College (AOC) Sport*
British Athletes Commission (BAC)
British Blind Sport
British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS)
Cerebral Palsy Sport (CP)
Chance to Shine*
Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMPSA)

Commonwealth Games England*
Dame Kelly Holmes Trust
Dwarf Sports Association UK
English Institute of Sport (EIS)
Limb Power
London Youth Rowing
Special Olympics GB
Sport + Recreation Alliance*
Sport Resolutions UK - Sports Disputes Resolutions Panel Ltd T/A Sport Resolutions UK
Sporting Equals
Sports Aid Trust*
Street Games*
The British Paralympic Association (BPA)*
The Good Gym
UK Coaching - The National Coaching Foundation T/A UK Coaching*
UK Deaf Sport
UK Sport
Wheelpower
Women in Sport
Youth Sport Trust

\* Organisation participated in the online survey.

# Appendix II – Olympic and Paralympic NGBs†

**SOLE PARALYMPIC NGBS**

British Para Table Tennis*
Goalball UK
Great Britain Wheelchair Basketball Association (GBWBA)
Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby (GBWR)*
Boccia UK

**OLYMPIC & PARALYMPIC SPORT NGBS**

British Canoeing*
British Curling
British Cycling*
British Equestrian Federation*
British Fencing*
British Gymnastics
British Judo*
British Rowing
British Shooting
British Swimming
British Triathlon*
British Weightlifting*
British Wrestling
England Golf
Football Association
GB Archery
GB Badminton
GB Basketball
GB Boxing*
GB Hockey
GB Snowsport*
GB Taekwondo
Lawn Tennis Association
Pentathlon GB
Royal Yachting Association
Rugby Football Union
UK Athletics*

\*Organisation participated in the online survey.

† Olympic and Paralympic funded bodies. We recognise there may be other sports competing at the Olympics and Paralympics that were not included as part of the research.





# GLOSSARY

**BAME** (black, Asian and minority ethnic): A term used to define minority or mixed ethnic groups, excluding those from white ethnic backgrounds (English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British; Irish Gypsy or Irish Traveller; any other white background).

**Code for Sports Governance**: A code that sets out the levels of transparency, accountability and financial integrity as a requirement for sports organisations in receipt of public funding.

**Active Partnership** (formerly known as County Sports Partnerships): A local sports organisation that coordinates the effective delivery of community sports and physical activity programmes in funded partnerships with other stakeholders across England.

**Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)**: A UK Government ministerial department that supports the development of the UK's cultural and artistic heritage, including sport.

**International Olympic Committee (IOC)**: Is a not-for-profit international organisation that is responsible for organising the Summer and Winter Olympic Games.

**LGBT+**: A term for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transsexual and other related communities.

**National Governing Body (NGB)**: An independent, self-appointed organisation that exists to govern a specific sport at UK, GB, or country level.

**Oxbridge**: A portmanteau term derived from the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge.

**Partner**: Any funded sports organisation in receipt of public funding from UK Sport or Sport England.

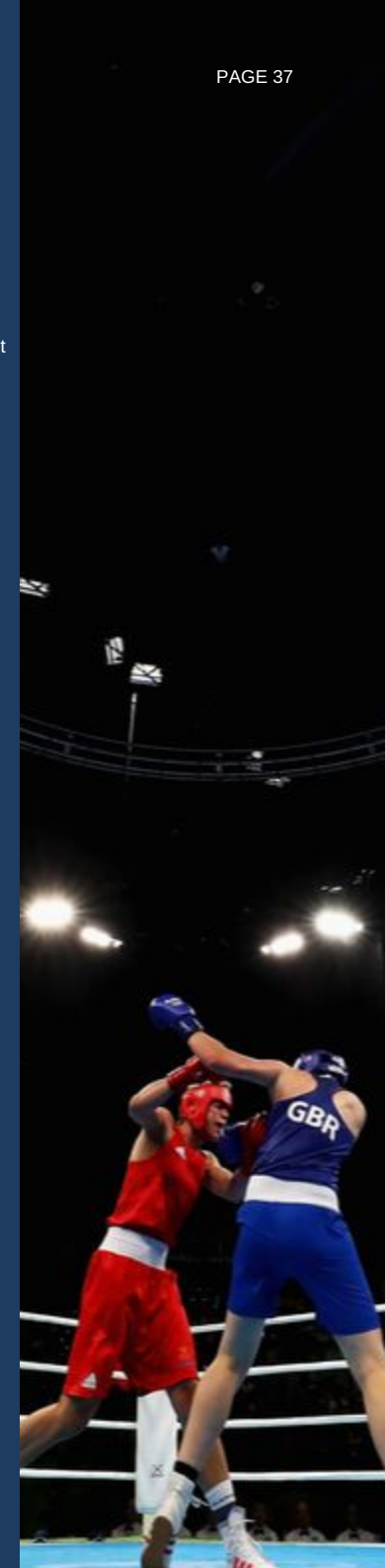
**Sport England**: Is an executive non-departmental public body of the Department for Digital Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). It is responsible for developing 'grass roots' sport across England by providing funding to national and local funded bodies.

**Sport England**: Is an executive non-departmental public body of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). It is responsible for developing 'grass roots' sport across England by providing funding to national and local funded bodies.

**Tier 2**: Tier 2 Sport England / UK Sport funded-organisations typically receive funding in the region of £250,000 to £1 million. They are expected to meet the minimum requirements of the Code for Sports Governance and to fulfil some additional mandatory requirements of Tier 3 (see below).

**Tier 3**: Tier 3 represents the highest level of mandatory governance requirements in accordance with the Code for Sports Governance. The Tier 3 classification applies to organisations that whose funding typically exceeds £1 million, where funding is granted over a period of years, and is commensurate to the size and scale of the organisation's operations.

**UK Sport** Is an executive non-departmental public body of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). It provides strategic investment to enable Great Britain's Olympic and Paralympic sports and athletes to achieve their full medal winning potential.



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Sport England is responsible for developing grassroots sport across England. The organisation works with national and local funded bodies to ensure that everyone in England can benefit from participating in sport and physical activity.



UK Sport provides strategic investment to enable Great Britain's elite Olympic and Paralympic Sports and athletes to reach their full medal winning in Olympic & Paralympic Games.



Inclusive Boards (IB) is a boutique executive search firm based in London and the Midlands set-up in 2017. We were set up to support organisations and sectors in their efforts to develop more diverse boards, senior leadership teams and stronger governance structures. Our services include Executive Search, Advisory, and Conferences. We also deliver Executive Training and have a flagship tech campaign - The Inclusive Tech Alliance.





