



Caledonia House, 1 Redheughs Rigg, South Gyle, Edinburgh, EH12 9DQ

Tel: 0131 317 7343 Fax: 0131 317 7734

E-mail: info@scottishsquash.org

Website: www.scottishsquash.org

Consultation Paper
Scottish Government
Area 2 – F(S)
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

8 May 2008

Glasgow 2014 – Delivering a lasting legacy for Scotland Response by Scottish Squash

Scottish Squash

Scottish Squash is the National Governing Body for the sport of squash in Scotland and is responsible for all aspects of the development and promotion of the sport of squash. Established in 1936, Scottish Squash co-ordinates the development of squash at all levels including the development of squash playing opportunities for beginners to medal winners; the development of clubs, coaches, referees and volunteers and the governance and business requirements to support this. Scottish Squash is a membership based organisation with 53 member clubs and 3,685 individuals currently in membership of Scottish Squash.

Identified as the healthiest sport (Forbes, 2003)¹, squash is a sport which appeals to individuals and teams of all ages, providing opportunities for all. Squash is accessible in terms of availability, cost-efficiency, by only requiring two people for a game and is usually played indoors therefore is played all-year-round. Squash is also one of only ten sports to be a Core Sport in the Commonwealth Games in 2014 and beyond, as well as being selected for inclusion in the 2010 Commonwealth Games.

Some of Scottish Squash's recent successes include:

- Squash being awarded trailblazer status for the UK Coaching Framework;
- Exceeding our referee development target by 120% in 2007-08;
- 2 runners-up, 1 third place and 2 semi-finalists in 2007 World Masters Squash Championships;
- 2 Commonwealth Games 2006 quarter-finals; 7th in men's European Team Championships 2008 with a team averaging only 23 years of age; 5th in European Under 19 Team Championships 2008.

Ensuring the 2014 Legacy

Scottish Squash was a strong supporter of Glasgow's 2014 Bid and is delighted that Glasgow will host the Games. Medal success in 2014 should be a priority, as it is for all major Games, but true success for Glasgow 2014 will be a planned and funded legacy which ensures increased and sustained participation in sport in Scotland. Increasing participation in sport is important both for the many benefits and enjoyment sport provides, but also for the significant positive impact participation in sport has on the health of the nation.

Increasing participation in sport is a challenging but achievable and vital legacy. Achieving this legacy will require the key sporting agencies to work in partnership towards *Reaching Higher – The National Strategy for Sport in Scotland*, for there to be agreed roles and responsibilities for these key sporting agencies, for additional funding and resource to be invested to secure this legacy and for national and local government to demonstrate and action the political will to make this happen.

¹ www.forbes.com/lifestyle/2003/10/01/cx_ns_1001feat.html

Key Issues

Scottish Squash, along with many other agencies has a responsibility to secure and deliver this 2014 legacy for Scotland; a responsibility which we relish. The collective working which will be required to ensure this legacy needs to be agreed and promoted by national government to guarantee achievement of these key priorities. As a member of the Scottish Sports Association (SSA), Scottish Squash fully endorses the issues raised in the SSA consultation response:

- **Physical education and sport in schools**

Two hours of high quality PE in primary schools each week, supported by PE specialists and out of school sports activity linked to local sports clubs, must be a minimum to young people developing basic physical literacy skills and the confidence to allow them to take part in sport now and throughout later life.

- **Facility access and provision**

Community and club access to quality, fit-for-purpose and welcoming local sports facilities, including schools, which provide a diverse range of sporting opportunities is vital to ensuring opportunities are available to increase participation.

- **Volunteering, including coaching**

Volunteers and coaches are vital to increasing participation. Ensuring that funding and pathways are available for them to gain appropriate support, training and qualifications will provide a quality experience to increase and retain those participating in sport.

In addition to these issues identified by all of the members of SSA, Scottish Squash also recognises the following issues:

- **Harmonising parameters for monitoring statistics and diversity of participation**

While the monitoring of participation figures will be central to measuring the progress of the increasing participation legacy for 2014, it is vital that delivery agencies and facility providers are doing so in a manner which recognises and embraces diversity in participation in sport.

For squash, commonly only 2 or 4 people will participate on a squash court, which is usually a dedicated facility, in each session. This is the ethos of the game and should not be used by facility providers as a reason to destroy squash courts by merging them together and renovating to provide space for activities which will enhance their participation statistics for a given space.

- **Holistic support for National Governing Body affiliated clubs**

Sports delivery and funding agencies need to provide a co-ordinated and holistic support package to local sports clubs who are affiliated to the National Governing Body (NGB). Clubs that are affiliated to the NGB will be most proactive and access up to date, sports specific information from the NGB in relation to eg coaching, refereeing, volunteering, child protection, equity and inclusion, sports programmes/initiatives and the pathways for player development for their sport. Sports clubs are the principal mechanism for local sports delivery and they need to be proactive in relation to the examples provided and supported in a co-ordinated manner by delivery and funding agencies.

Examples of such support could include affiliated clubs receiving priority and discounted access to Local Authority sports facilities, Awards For All only being available to clubs which are affiliated to their NGB (where such an NGB exists), Local Sports Council and Local Authority Sports Development and support only being available to clubs which are affiliated to their NGB, all Local Authorities making affiliation to the NGB a mandatory part of any Club Accreditation Programmes. Such steps would provide much needed additional support to, and recognition and incentive for, these clubs to progress and develop as well as providing additional mechanisms for NGBs to help to develop these clubs.

- **Roles and responsibilities of key sports delivery agencies**

To ensure the delivery of the 2014 legacy and the principal outcomes and priorities of *Reaching Higher* of increasing participation and improving performance the role and responsibility for sporting agencies throughout the player pathway must be identified, agreed and appropriately resourced for delivery. Primarily the roles and expectations of Local Authorities and National Governing Bodies of sport need to be clarified to ensure that resources are invested to sustain a continuous player development pathway and to prevent any duplication of effort.

An agreed partnership approach to a well resourced Long Term Player Development (LTPD) Pathway for squash in Scotland, with clearly defined responsibilities for Scottish Squash, Local Authorities and other

partners, would provide the most significant opportunity for increasing participation in squash in Scotland. The principal factor in making this happen is a recognition from national government that such partnership pathways are vital to increasing participation and improving performance and a willingness at local government level to engage in and support such partnerships.

Scottish Squash's Role

Scottish Squash has recently invested considerable resource, in partnership with **sportscotland**, in developing a Long Term Player Development (LTPD) Pathway for Squash in Scotland, a coach development pathway and supporting qualifications through the United Kingdom Coaching Certificate and a new junior development programme called Mini Squash which provides the resources for coaches, teachers and volunteers to introduce fundamental physical literacy skills to young people in a fun and structured way. The co-ordinated implementation of these pathways and programmes will be paramount to the increased participation and improved performance of squash in Scotland. Therefore, Scottish Squash will now focus resources on developing partnerships to support the training of coaches, teachers, volunteers and affiliated clubs in delivering these programmes and to co-ordinate their engagement and input into the Long Term Player Development Pathway.

In allocating the considerable resources required to devise and compile these programmes and pathways Scottish Squash has already been working to maximise efficiency and refocusing of resources as well as establishing partnerships. Working with existing and new partners to improve efficiency, identify economies of scale and to support the development of affiliated squash clubs will also be key areas of work for Scottish Squash.

Investment

Both achieving medals in the 2014 Commonwealth Games and delivering a true and lasting legacy from the Games will require increased and sustained investment in sport. The sooner and the greater such investment is available, the more that can be achieved.

As well as additional investment to deliver the legacy, genuine political will and a national focus on agreed priorities for existing resources would deliver a huge and sustainable legacy for the Games. National Governing Bodies and Local Authorities working together towards identified and agreed player development pathways; school sports facilities being opened to club and community use 7 days a week; funding and support being targeted towards clubs affiliated to their NGB; such examples would revolutionise the opportunities for, and retention of, individuals to participate in sport and the quality of their experience - resourced principally by the will to make them happen.

In addition to the planned legacy for 2014, Scottish Squash would propose that the 2014 Commonwealth Games themselves be used to recognise and reward the contributions of NGB affiliated clubs, qualified coaches and volunteers in their contributions towards Scottish sport and the 2014 legacy. This could be done in a great many ways which would also reinforce the consistent messages identified above and in *Reaching Higher*, for example that all clubs affiliated to a Scottish NGB and all currently qualified coaches could be entered into a ballot for free tickets to a sports session at the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

Summary

The 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow presents an unprecedented opportunity to motivate, encourage, facilitate, engage and retain an increased number of people in participation in sport in Scotland. For this to succeed in the immediate to long term additional resources, more focussed resources and genuine political will can bring about revolutionary changes to:

- the development of skills in school children to enable them to participate in sport;
- access to facilities to allow people of all ages to participate in sport;
- supported and trained volunteers and coaches to engage and support people in participating in sport;
- embracing the diversity in sport which will help to engage a wider participation base;
- support NGB affiliated clubs to provide quality local sporting opportunities; and
- for all of the agencies responsible for the delivery of sport in Scotland to subscribe to an agreed player development pathway.

To deliver a legacy of increased participation in sport for 2014, steps need to be taken now to rise to the challenges and capitalise on the opportunities presented. Scottish Squash is ready, willing and able to work with the agencies necessary to ensure a successful and sustained legacy from 2014 for sport in Scotland.

Scottish Squash, Caledonia House, 1 Redheughs Rigg, South Gyle, Edinburgh EH12 9DQ

Tel: 0131 317 7343 Fax: 0131 317 7734

E-mail: info@scottishsquash.org Website: www.scottishsquash.org