



Glasgow 2014
Delivering a lasting legacy for Scotland – Consultation Paper
Scottish Government
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1. Introduction

Victim Support Scotland is the largest agency providing support and information services to victims of crime in Scotland. Established in 1985 the organisation currently employs around 180 staff and 900 volunteers. In 2006-2007 our community based victim services and court based witness services supported over 180,000 people affected by crime.

Victim Support Scotland is very proud of the fact that Glasgow has been selected to host the Commonwealth Games 2014. We hope that the event will bring job opportunities and the ability to market Scotland's culture, nature and products across the Commonwealth countries. We are pleased to have been provided with the chance to take part in this consultation event to discuss the approach of securing benefits from the Games, shape the priorities and define the actions prioritized by the Scottish Government in the run-up to the Games.

2. Community Sentences at the Commonwealth Games

Overall, we are pleased with the document and the suggested actions. However, with the interest of victims and witness at heart, certain aspects of the documents have raised some concerns. In particular, one of the national outcomes states: *We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibilities for their own actions and how they affect others.* This outcome entails several proposed benefits, such as reducing levels of antisocial behaviour

and improving opportunities for offenders or those at risk of offending to acquire skills or diversions away from crime. In order to improve opportunities for offenders or those at risk of offending, two actions are being proposed:

- Before, during and after the Games, work with employers/contractors to secure employment and training opportunities for offenders and those at risk of offending; and
- Those convicted of minor offences in or around Games facilities to serve community sentences in same areas.

The consultation states that the result would be that offenders acquire skills and experience that reduce the tendency to re-offend, and that offenders are expected to 'pay back' in the communities where they committed offences. Victim Support Scotland agrees to both of these aspirations, however we are not convinced that allowing offenders to take part in organizing and carrying out the Commonwealth Games will attain these set results. A community sentence is created as a means to, apart from reducing re-offending and assist in rehabilitating the offender to society, make the offender 'pay back' to the communities where he/she committed the offence. Victim Support Scotland accepts the principle of using community sentences *per se*, but the safety and security of the public, including the victim, must be the priority when choosing a suitable disposal. Victim Support Scotland would like to see more detailed information regarding how the community sentences will be composed to protect the safety of the victim, participants, spectators and community as a whole, while ensuring that the offender receives a meaningful community disposal.

3. Safety partnerships

Another national outcome is: *We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger*. Victim Support Scotland supports the efforts of creating a safer Glasgow and a safer Scotland. We would like to see the public agencies such as the police and fire service work together to ensure the security and safety of everyone involved in the Games as well as the community around the Games.

4. International victims

Being a major sporting event, many people will be traveling to Glasgow from all over the Commonwealth, either as an athlete or as an audience member. In the unfortunate event of anybody being victimized while at the Games, we consider that Victim Support Scotland may have a lead role in developing links with other Commonwealth countries in relation to their current and future aspirations in providing practical and emotional support to their citizens who travel to Scotland for this international sporting event.

I hope these comments will be of assistance to you. If you have any further questions or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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