

# Open Goal: How sport for development can help to save public money AND 'level up' disadvantaged communities

## What is sport for development?

Sport for development is the intentional use of targeted sport and physical activity-based interventions to achieve positive social outcomes ranging from sustained physical and mental health wellbeing to increasing employability and skills, from reducing crime and anti-social behaviour to increasing community cohesion... and much, much more..

## What is the Sport for Development Coalition?

The Coalition is a growing movement of 222 charities, VCSE (voluntary, community and social enterprise) groups and networks, sports bodies and foundations, and public and private sector organisations over-arching thousands of projects and programmes intentionally using sport and physical activity for good.

## Why is the Coalition well-placed to support levelling up?

An analysis of almost 35,000 beneficiaries across a series of leading Sport for Development Coalition organisations showed that 64% of participants were from the 30% most deprived areas of the country, demonstrating that the network is well-placed to support delivery of levelling up in disadvantaged communities.



## It's an #OpenGoal!

Through collective action, the Coalition is aiming to help save costs and alleviate pressure on the public purse. Sport for development offers multiple returns on investment in communities most in need of levelling up, so the Coalition is calling on Government to ring-fence funding which has already been committed through funds such as the Plan for Health and Social Care, Plan for Jobs and Lifetime Skills Guarantee, and Beating Crime Plan, for sport and physical activity-based programmes which have been proven to tackle key health and societal inequalities, and drive up living standards and wellbeing.

## What is levelling up?

Levelling up is a "moral, social and economic programme" for how the Government says it intends to "spread opportunity more equally across the UK" by the year 2030. It includes 12 'Missions' to tackle inequalities, especially across disadvantaged communities, by "improving economic dynamism and innovation to drive growth". The plan also promises to devolve decision-making to the regions, and capitalise on the nationwide fabric of 'civil society' networks and groups embedded in communities.

The Coalition welcomes this concept since its members have played a key role while communities have supported themselves throughout the pandemic and are well-placed to contribute effectively to levelling up. In the difficult financial climate following Covid-19, all societal assets which can help to fight inequality must be mobilised. Sport for development is among these, but we know that in many communities the potential of this asset has not been fully realised.



## Coalition supporting Levelling up Missions...

By 2030, the Government aims for...

- 1 Living standards:** Pay, employment and productivity to have risen in every area of the UK, with each containing a globally competitive city, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.
- 5 Education:** The number of primary school children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths will have significantly increased. In England, this will mean 90% of children will achieve the expected standard, and the percentage of children meeting the expected standard in the worst performing areas will have increased by over a third.
- 6 Skills:** The number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK. In England, this will lead to 200,000 more people successfully completing high-quality skills training annually, driven by 80,000 more people completing courses in the lowest skilled areas.
- 7 Health:** The gap in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) between local areas where it is highest and lowest will have narrowed, and by 2035 HLE will rise by five years.
- 8 Wellbeing:** Wellbeing will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.
- 9 Pride in place:** People's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.
- 11 Crime:** Homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime will have fallen, focused on the worst-affected areas.
- 12 Local leadership:** Every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal with powers at or approaching the highest level of devolution and a simplified, long-term funding settlement.

'More than sport...'

[sportfordevelopmentcoalition.org](https://sportfordevelopmentcoalition.org)

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