

Speech: Mims Davies speech at UK Sport's future funding strategy launch

It is fantastic to be here today to speak to you all and to set out my priorities as Minister for Sport.

Before I begin, I wanted to express my condolences to the friends and family of Gordon Banks. I am sure we're all very sad to hear about his passing today. His contribution towards the 1966 World Cup victory and THAT save against Brazil in the 1970 World Cup have already cemented his place in history and he will be remembered as one of football's greats.

But today is an exciting day as UK Sport unveils its future strategy beyond Tokyo.

The capacity for long-term planning has been instrumental in ParalympicsGB and Team GB's continued success, so it is right that UK Sport review how their funding is targeted and resources are deployed, as we move towards Paris for 2024.

Now, let's talk about Atlanta 96 saw us place 36 in the medal table. I remember watching some good stuff – including Steve Redgrave and Matthew Pinsent battle their way to what was to be our only gold medal of the games. A not so memorable moment was where we hit the headlines for athletes selling kit on the streets to raise money... and that's not a good thing, so I am glad that times have changed since then!

Fast forward twenty years and we finished second in the medal table at the Rio Olympics. That is absolutely because of the right investment, the right strategy and unparalleled commitment from talented athletes and coaches. But imagine what further investment and planning would achieve? We want to maintain our status as an Olympic and Paralympic powerhouse.

2015 saw us publish our Sporting Future strategy, which set out a bold new direction for sport.

It reassessed how we value and measure the impact of sport and physical activity on the nation's health and well-being. It prioritised tackling inactivity and engaging people from underrepresented groups.

Crucially, it placed five outcomes at the heart of everything we do – physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development, and economic development.

It is a good moment to pause and look back at the progress we have made. But, far more importantly, it is the time to look ahead, to raise the bar and to set ourselves new challenges and new ambitions.

Now, I had the privilege of addressing the House of Commons to speak on a debate on sport. I was struck again, as I have been many times over the last

three months, by the power of sport. It impacts lives in the most varied and positive of ways.

However, there are also some very serious issues in sport that we must tackle.

This is why I took the opportunity to announce that I will be holding a summit on racism in football with key partners. There is absolutely no place for discrimination in sport and I will address this head on. And we saw that today with Joe Root and I promise to tackle this.

Today I want to use my time with you to set out my three big priorities as minister for sport:

- Harnessing the power of our sporting excellence to maximise our international impact and inspire a nation
- Fostering a culture of sport based on the very highest levels of integrity and fairness
- And increasing engagement in sport and physical activity for absolutely everyone.

So, how are we going to do this? Well firstly, I want to thank you, for all the hard work you do to support our athletes to be the best they can be – we are right behind them as they seek again to inspire us all.

When John Major introduced the National Lottery almost 25 years ago, few would have believed that our Olympic and Paralympic heroes would have delivered over 860 inspirational medal moments for the nation and created the term 'super Saturday'; a day few of us will ever forget.

The breadth of success at the Rio Games demonstrates how the elite sport system has evolved. Team GB won more gold medals across more sports than any other nation – a sure sign that the system is working, that success breeds success and that the UK has truly cemented our place as a nation capable of succeeding on the global stage.

But we should not take the undoubted success of our elite system for granted. Long-term investment from the Government and the National Lottery are the foundations upon which the strength of British elite sport has been built.

And here we should acknowledge the valued contribution of National Lottery players, without whom none of this would be possible.

As we approach 25 years of the Lottery, we must take the opportunity to connect with players and to remind them what is possible. They should know that our athletes hopes and dreams rest on people continuing to play.

We currently offer levels of support to our athletes that are the envy of many competitors – I want this to continue.

UK Sport's future strategy will help our wonderful athletes to deliver further world-class performances beyond Tokyo and to inspire the country once more.

The new three million pound Aspiration Fund, is another extremely positive step in opening up opportunities to all. The Fund will support those sports who do not currently receive full UK Sport funding to help teams and athletes.

Our athletes are representative of society, coming from all walks of life and backgrounds – disability is no bar to medal success. They are part of the fabric of our national identity – a true British success story.

As we look to fund a wider range of sports, over a longer period of time it is important that these sports inspire and represent our diverse society. Let's not be afraid to invest in the potential reach and success of currently unfunded sports too.

I am going to mention it... as we leave the European Union, we continue to work closely with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the Department for International Trade, to make the most of the incredible contribution sport gives to our international profile and our vision for Global Britain.

And we continue to deliver major, world class sporting events. Next week, it will be just 100 days until we host the Cricket World Cup, which will have an expected global audience of around one and a half billion. How exciting!

And it's not just cricket – over the next year there will be absolutely something for everyone – from the World Wheelchair Curling Championships in Stirling that is happening next month, to the Netball World Cup in Liverpool – a trip up there may be on the cards – and Yorkshire hosting the World Road Cycling in September.

Our Sport is Great. Our investment in major events delivers opportunities for everyone, everywhere, to see this first hand.

And of course we're looking forward to hosting the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham which, with an estimated TV audience of 1.5 billion – that number is just rolling off the tongue – will showcase the city, the whole of the West Midlands and the UK to the rest of the world. It will demonstrate our country as a destination for sport, business, leisure, tourism and education.

Having such a huge audience for this kind of event is amazing. It means that we have the opportunity again to inspire people across the world. This is also why it is so important that there is a wide range of sport on TV.

So, we've seen the popularity of women's sport on TV grow since 2012 – England's victory in the 2017 Women's Cricket World Cup Final was seen by over a million people, and more than the number of people that usually tune in for a Premier League match. So congratulations to them!

I recognise the progress that has been made – and a huge thank you to Channel 4's innovative and engaging coverage of para-sport broke new boundaries. But women's sport on television still remains too much of a novelty. Sometimes we are still surprised to see it appear on terrestrial channels and while I recognise that progress has been made – further change is needed.

Equality means visibility. Whoever we are, we have the right to be inspired by diversity in sport that shows the best in all of us. I urge sports bodies, broadcasters, and the wider print media to that bit better. It's 2019 and it's time we had more coverage of women's sport on television and in the wider media.

We all want our children to grow up appreciating great sporting success, regardless of who is playing it and where.

But what's important is not just that we win medal and succeed on a global stage – but that we do it the right way.

Events like the Commonwealth Games are fantastic occasions. 2022 will be an opportunity to showcase the values of our great nation, ten years on from London 2012 – just showing how much we have improved in terms of inclusivity and equality for all.

We must continue to have robust anti-doping and governance regimes, both domestically and internationally – we must continue to lead the way. This is not just a message from me. It's a message from the athletes I've spoken to since I took up this role.

I have had discussions with UK Anti-Doping, UK Sport and the World Anti-Doping Agency after hearing these messages strongly from athletes.

I am clear that we need to see long-term, strategic change to increase transparency in the anti-doping system, and that we all have confidence in WADA's future work and the integrity of sport.

It is so important that our top athletes are treated fairly, with respect. And it goes as well for tackling doping.

I'm delighted to see the steps UK Sport have taken around the mental health of those involved in elite sport for instance. It is absolutely right that they have strengthened and clarified standards and processes around behaviour and resolving disputes. It is important that we support our athletes not just when they are competing, but as they move into retirement and start thinking about the next stage of their lives.

This is vital work, and I give UK Sport my backing as they continue to make our elite sport system stronger.

Now, people also need to feel safe when they take part in sport. Ensuring children and those at risk are protected as much as possible is a top priority for me. I have been talking to my ministerial colleagues in the Ministry of Justice about the positions of sports coaches and "position of trust" to give additional protection to 16 and 17 year olds – this work continues.

We also want people to be safe when they play or watch live sport.

I know there is continued interest in our stadiums, stadium safety and the longstanding commitment to the all-seater policy in football. I am expecting

a report which reviews existing evidence on this topic very soon, and will, together with the Secretary of State, consider its findings extremely carefully.

Watching live sport brings communities together and it encourages people to spend quality time with friends and families and unites strangers behind a common goal.

So it is really important that everyone has the chance to watch and to take part – and this takes me onto my final priority – to increase engagement in sport for all.

Any why is this important?

Because absolutely everyone should be able to enjoy the benefits that taking part in sport and physical activity can bring.

It should be fun, inclusive and there should be no barriers to taking part.

We want half a million people to be more regularly active across England by 2020 – yes that's only a year – with at least half of these being women. And we are making good progress.

Over 470,000 more people are already active compared to when we launched the strategy in 2015 – but delivering long term change in habits requires persistence. We must do more to encourage people to get – and above all stay active.

I want to help “harder to reach” groups get active:

- More women.
- More people from BAME backgrounds.
- More disabled people.
- More of the many people who have a hard time finding spare cash for exercise and wellbeing.
- More who struggle to find family activity time.

Let's make sport something everyone can do and something that brings people together. These are often the people who have the biggest hurdles to overcome to be active, and who need our support the most.

We know that physical activity has a massively positive impact on our nation's health and well-being.

Physical activity can reduce the risk of chronic diseases and health conditions, like diabetes and heart disease.

It can help with the ever increasing pressures on our health and social care systems.

Evidence shows that referrals to exercise classes, sports groups or even ballroom dancing can help with their physical and mental wellbeing.

I am keen that future spending decisions should take into account the huge benefits that sport and physical activity and all it can bring.

I will be working closely with my ministerial colleagues in the Department for Health and Social Care on this very important area.

In order for people to get – and stay active – they need to find the right sporting opportunity that appeals to them. It has to be enjoyable. It has to be affordable. It has to fit in with people's busy days.

It sounds simple, but I know many of us will have experienced the frustration of not being able to find and book a swimming lesson or badminton court in the right location, at the right time, can be simply off putting.

This is why we are working with Sport England and the Open Data Institute to make it as easy to book onto a sporting activity as it is to book a holiday or order a take-away.

However, this is not something that we can do alone. Today I am issuing a call to action for ALL organisations, big and small, across the sport and physical activity sector.

Work with us. Consider how you can open up your data to make it easier for people to find the right opportunity to be active. This work is incredibly important and an area I will be focussing on in the coming months.

I want to make sure that all children, and their families, can enjoy sport and physical activity and that they reap the benefits of an active lifestyle.

Late last year, Sport England published the first set of data from the Active Lives Children survey. These results MUST be a wake-up call for the sector. Our children are not active enough and we need to do something about it. Again, we need your help.

We need all physical activity providers, National Governing Bodies of sport, schools, community clubs, leisure operators and others to play their part. We need to make sure we are maximising use of facilities, including opening up more facilities owned by schools.

We need to build on the learning from the Sport England Families Fund which has committed up to £40 million pounds for families with children to be active together.

As the Secretary of State for Education said in his speech last week, sport is one of five key foundations in building character and resilience.

As a minimum schools must ensure children are physically literate. It is just as important that parents encourage kids to be active, as it is to read them books or do times tables. Children need to learn how to run, jump, throw, catch. All of these things are absolutely fundamental to building a sporting habit for life. And maybe come an elite!

To achieve this we need schools to deliver high quality sport and physical

activity before, during and after the school day. We must ensure that all children have a positive first experience of sport at school.

To get more kids active, both in and out of school we will be publishing a new cross-government plan. I particularly want to focus on building children's confidence and enjoyment of sport – and that's something the Department for Education Secretary of State discussed at our recent roundtable. They need to learn the fundamentals of movement but most importantly they need to have fun.

I also want to ensure the after-school period provides the opportunity for children to be active in safe, enjoyable environments after school.

And this means all children – but especially those from under-represented groups; girls, certain BAME groups and those with a disability, or indeed hidden disabilities.

It is time to put sport and physical activity on a par with reading and writing. It is essential in giving our kids the tools and the confidence they need to live healthy and physically active lives.

I want to thank you all for being here today and for the opportunity to set out my vision in my portfolio for sport. Thank you to the clubs, volunteers and mentors for what you're already doing week in and week out to inspire people to get active and enjoy sport.

I am ambitious – because we all should be – where I think the sector needs to be and about striving for excellence at both the grassroots and the elite level.

And I need your continued support to deliver this.

We need you to work with us on opening up data and facilities, on providing the right offers that will get people active, on supporting our athletes and upholding our sporting values.

I want our children to be inspired by sport. I want them to see as many sports as possible, and understand that sport is for everyone. I want them to discover new sporting heroes and be caught up in the excitement of top level sporting action. Together we can achieve all of this.

Thank you. And thank you UK Sport for leading the way – I look forward to working alongside you and everyone in this room.

[Press release: Commissioners appointed](#)

to new home design body

Four new commissioners have been appointed to the government's Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission, it has been confirmed today (13 February 2019).

Established at the start of this year, the Commission will advise the government by developing practical measures to ensure new housing developments meet the needs and expectations of communities, making them more likely to be welcomed rather than resisted.

The 4 new commissioners joining the Chair of the Commission Sir Roger Scruton are:

- Ms Gail Mayhew – a property consultant with experience in regeneration and place making; Ms Mayhew is currently advising Urban Catalyst in the regeneration of Purfleet in Thurrock; she is an advocate of community engagement in the planning process, assisting groups to change the design of major proposals to better reflect and fit in with their surroundings
- Ms Mary Parsons – currently the Chair and a trustee of the Town and Country Planning Association, Ms Parsons has over 25 years' experience working in the development and construction sector and is a Group Director of Places for People; developments she is presently responsible for include a 10,000 home new community at Gilston in Hertfordshire, 2 new neighbourhoods on the Olympic Park and a new urban neighbourhood in Birmingham
- Mr Nicholas Boys Smith – the founding director of Create Streets, which was set up to promote high density, beautiful, street-based developments that involve the community; Mr Boys Smith has also led urban design projects and studies into the built environment, publishing a number of influential books on the role of design and architecture
- Mr Kim Wilkie – a renowned landscape architect and environmental planner, Mr Wilkie has sat on several bodies advising on design and beauty – including the Mayor of London's Public Realm Advisory Group and the Royal Parks Advisory Board; he also holds an Honorary Fellowship at the Royal Institute of British Architects and is currently leading the redesign of the Natural History Museum's historic grounds

Experienced parliamentarian Sir John Hayes MP will also support the Commission, adding valuable insight from his decades of service as an MP and former government minister

An additional 9 specialist advisors will also assist during the work.

Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

This Commission will play a crucial role in ensuring the homes communities need are built, accepted and loved by those who live in and near them.

I'm delighted Sir Roger is being joined by such a talented team of highly-respected professionals, along with a list of distinguished advisors who will bring a wealth of expertise and a range of viewpoints.

Meeting once a month, the Commission will report back in due course once it has taken evidence and formulated its recommendations on how the government can improve the quality of new homes.

Sir Roger Scruton and Commissioners will be attending and contributing to the government's 'Better Design for Better Places' Conference, which is focused on promoting the building of better and more beautiful places for people to live. This conference, the second of its kind since the first was held last year, will take place this Thursday 14 February in Birmingham.

Find [more information on the programme for the conference](#).

The Commission was [announced in November 2018](#). It has 3 aims:

1. To promote better design and style of homes, villages, towns and high streets, to reflect what communities want, building on the knowledge and tradition of what they know works for their area.
2. To explore how new settlements can be developed with greater community consent.
3. To make the planning system work in support of better design and style, not against it.

A series of specialist advisers will also join the commission, supporting specific aspects of work. They are:

- Stephen Stone, Executive Chairman of Crest Nicholson
- Sunand Prasad, Senior Partner and co-founder of Penoyre & Prasad and past President of the RIBA
- Ben Bolgar, Senior Director of Prince's Foundation
- Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE, Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge
- Adrian Penfold OBE, Advisor in Planning and Public Affairs
- Peter Studdert, Chair of Quality Review Panels for the LLDC and LB of Haringey
- Patrick James, Founding Director of The Landscape Agency
- Paul Monaghan, Director of AHMM and Design Council Trustee
- Yolande Barnes, Professor of Real Estate at UCL

Speech: Repeated violations of Ukraine's territorial integrity by Russia

Thank you Mr President and may I also thank all of our briefers. Mr President, the Russian Ambassador spoke at length and in colourful and imaginative language about many other actors as he introduced this topic but he said nothing about Russia's role. The German Ambassador – an eyewitness to Minsk -showed us why with his accounts of the events of the time and Russia's actions.

Mr President, the United Kingdom welcomes this opportunity to discuss the repeated violations of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity at the hands of Russia. Russia's aggression towards Ukraine is not limited to the Donbas and Crimea – Russia seeks to undermine Ukraine at every opportunity; undermining the ceasefire; supplying the Russian-backed separatists with weapons and calling illegitimate elections- all in breach of the Minsk agreement. These actions have a tragic impact on the lives of Ukrainian civilians. As the French Ambassador said: in the five years since this conflict began, over 12,800 people have lost their lives. Almost 25,000 have been injured. And 3.5 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. Russia bears a heavy responsibility for the ongoing loss of life.

Despite the parties recommitment the ceasefire on 29 December, violations are increasing and that continues to be military activity in the disengagement zones. However, our understanding of the situation within non-government controlled territory is limited because the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission is unable to carry out its mandate. It is unable to do so because of Russia's repeated refusal to support the Special Monitoring Mission. This threatens the ceasefire and ultimately the security of Ukraine and the wider region. A raft of incidents that Russia is yet to provide an explanation for, only reinforces this conclusion. For example, the downing of an SMM long range UAV near the Ukraine-Russia border, outside Ukraine government control last year. And just last week, SMM twice observed the Russian electronic jamming system 'ZHITEL' in the Donbas. I would ask the Russian Ambassador to ensure his country's support for the Special Monitoring Mission and to allow them to observe. I ask what people have to hide?

Mr President, a further example of Russian attempts to destabilise Ukraine is the illegitimate elections in the non-government controlled territories of the so-called Luhansk People's Republic and Donetsk People's Republic in the Donbas last November. This represents a clear breach of the Minsk agreements and unnecessarily increases tensions. Russia could use its considerable influence on the Russian backed separatists to encourage them to comply with their commitments. Instead Russia fuels the conflict by supplying weapons

and personnel to the armed formations.

Mr President, next month marks the fifth anniversary of the illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia. And it's worth reminding ourselves of the facts. In response to Russia's plans for an illegal and illegitimate referendum in Crimea. The Security Council on the 15th March 2014 voted on a draft resolution that reaffirmed the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine and noted that Ukraine had not authorised the referendum and that it had no validity. Russia vetoed that resolution. Following the illegal and illegitimate referendum in Crimea on 16th March, on 27th March 2014, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 68262 supported by one hundred member states which affirmed the General Assembly's commitment to the territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders and underscored the invalidity of the referendum.

Mr President, we not only object to the illegal annexation of Crimea because it is illegal. We also object to it due to the Russian government's appalling treatment of many of those who live there. Human rights violations are prevalent. Ethnic and religious groups such as the Crimean Tatars are persecuted. Mr President, despite calls in General Assembly resolutions for the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to visit Crimea, Russia continues to refuse. We, the international community must stand united and call for Russia to release all political prisoners and allow urgent, unrestricted access for human rights monitoring organisations immediately. Again, what does the Russian Federation not want the world to see?

Mr President, less than three months ago, Russian authorities admitted to using force in the Black Sea to seize three Ukrainian naval vessels injuring three Ukrainian servicemen. These actions are not in conformity with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and they are a blatant attempt to destabilise Ukraine by harming economic activities of other ports of the Berdyansk and Mariupol - hampering Ukraine's ability to manage its economy. Let me be clear, Mr President, Russia's actions in Ukraine have no basis in international law. We cannot and will not ignore such actions. They represent a serious challenge to the international rules-based order. This is an order which benefits us all and keeps us safe. To protect it, the international community must continue to stand united and remain focused on Russia's behaviour and its attempts to integrate Crimea into Russia - including through the construction of a bridge across the Kerch straits.

I would like to end by reiterating the United Kingdom's full support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity - including within its internationally recognised borders and territorial waters. We look forward to discussing the situation in Ukraine further at the forthcoming General Assembly debate on 20th February. And I take note of the Russian Ambassador's enthusiasm for Security Council meetings on Ukraine and look forward next time to hearing about what Russia is doing to meet its obligations and bring an end to the suffering of the people of Ukraine. Thank you, Mr President.

[News story: Ethics group to oversee use of large data sets by the Home Office](#)



The Biometrics and Forensics Ethics Group (BFEG), a non-departmental public body, will now be asked to consider ethical issues relating to large and complex data sets. The BFEG will provide independent oversight of the Data Ethics Governance Framework, which was established to ensure balanced consideration of the use of data within the Home Office.

The move is aimed at strengthening the public's assurance on the use of data within the department.

Chris Hughes OBE, Chair of the BFEG, said:

With ever increasing volumes of data and the implementation of new data protection legislation it's more appropriate than ever to expand the BFEG remit to consider large and complex data sets.

The expansion will build on the committee's existing work and will work to ensure that the use of an individual's personal data is legitimate and proportionate, contributing to justified trust in the Home Office.

The BFEG will continue to consider the ethical aspects of:

- the application and operation of technologies which produce biometric and forensic data and identifiers;
- ethical issues relating to scientific services provided to the police service and other public bodies within the criminal justice system;
- applications for research involving access to biometric or forensic data; and
- matters relating to the management, operation and use of biometric or forensic data.

[News story: LLWR donation will help save lives in country areas](#)

LLWR has funded a new £1,500 medical kit that will help save lives in rural parts of west Cumbria.

The company answered a call from Community First Responder Karen Eddy, a Building Manager on the LLWR Site, who asked for help to supply a new kit for the Bootle & District Group, including defibrillator, oxygen and pulse oximeter.

Typically, First Responders will be called out in cases of an immediate threat to life, such as a suspected heart attack, stroke or respiratory arrest, where they can be expected to arrive ahead of an ambulance, so they provide an invaluable lifeline, particularly in country areas.

Karen is also a member of the Gosforth & District Group, and her patch includes Drigg, Calderbridge, Ravenglass, Gosforth, Eskdale and Wasdale.

“We are absolutely over the moon with this donation,” she said. “Without it we would not have been able to get the kit. Although we work on a voluntary basis for North West Ambulance Service, we fund all our own equipment, through donations and fundraising.”

Karen can be called out a couple of times a week and is permitted by LLWR to leave work in the event of an emergency in the local community. She is permanently on call and was a little late into work one morning recently after being called out TWICE on the same night. But she loves the unpaid role.

“If you can help save a life, what more can you do?” she added. “It’s the ultimate.

“The Bootle & District Group will be at the Black Combe Country Fair in August to promote our case and give people a chance to try CPR and other life saving techniques.

“We rely on donations from our local community to keep our equipment up to date and our bleeps functioning so are always looking for opportunities to raise awareness.”

Karen is one of many at LLWR who volunteer to give their time in community roles, and the company supports their efforts with special leave when required.

Cath Giel, Head of Public Affairs, said: "It's only fair that when those such as Karen show such incredible community spirit, we get behind them. Karen and her colleagues in the First Responders are doing a remarkable job."

For further information on the role of Community First Responder go to www.nwas-responders.info