

**Best Value through sport**

# delivering Best Value through sport

Sport England's work on Best Value underpins our Active Communities programme. Our aim is to help continually improve the provision of sporting opportunities and local services for all the community.



A key component of the modernising agenda is the introduction of the new duty of Best Value with its aim of continually improving the quality and cost of local services delivered to local people. Local authorities, and those that represent them, have generally welcomed the new duty, seeing it as an opportunity but also a challenge.

# challenge, consult, compare, compete



The Government's agenda for modernising local government is set out in the White Paper Modernising Local Government, in Touch with Local People published in 1998. It focuses on the need to make fundamental changes to the ways local authorities communicate with local people, structure and organise themselves, and procure and deliver services. This is an agenda for cultural change that seeks to ensure that local authorities will provide the leadership and vision to improve people's quality of life. Sport England shares this view. Local authorities constitute one of our most important partnerships

and are essential to the delivery of many of our aims, objectives and programmes. The duty of Best Value will impact upon Sport England's work and the means by which local authorities deliver sport to their local communities. Sport England's response to Best Value has been to embark upon the development of information, guidance and services to assist local authorities to demonstrate that Best Value can be delivered through sport. We have taken a 'Tool Kit' approach, offering a range of practical advice and services to support individual local authorities in meeting the requirements of the new duty. The Tool Kit concept has

been developed in consultation with the Local Government Association, professional bodies and individual local authorities, and has been structured around the now familiar 'four Cs': Challenge, Consult, Compare, Compete. The Tool Kit is summarised in the table below, which shows how its various components relate to the four Cs. An update then follows on the different stages of development of the various components. The Tool Kit will continue to be developed in full consultation with local authorities, other agencies and those that represent them, and updates will be provided as the guidance and various services come on stream.

Challenge	Consult	Compare	Compete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Value of Sport</li> <li>● Planning Across Boundaries</li> <li>● Case studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Planning Across Boundaries</li> <li>● Model Survey Package</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Case studies</li> <li>● Performance indicators for sports halls and swimming pools</li> <li>● Quest accreditation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Quest accreditation</li> </ul>

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## **The Value of Sport**

This document is now available (published June 1999) and will be the major advocacy tool in Sport England's Best Value work. *The Value of Sport* responds to the challenge of 'Why invest in sport?'. It highlights the key role of the public sector in enabling and providing sport at the local level. It actively champions the benefits and contribution that sport can make to the broader local authority policy agenda, including health, education, social inclusion, community safety, community regeneration, the economy and the environment. The document will be a key tool in the Best Value Challenge process. It draws on the best scientific evidence available, combined with local examples of good practice, to demonstrate that sport can make a difference to people's lives and to the communities in which they live. It is aimed at a wide range of organisations including local authorities, government departments, health authorities, regional development agencies and regional cultural consortia. Summary documents targeted at these key audiences are also available and these and the full document are available as publications and will also be published on the Sport England website: [www.english.sports.gov.uk](http://www.english.sports.gov.uk)

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## **Best Value case studies**

Building upon *The Value of Sport*, this compilation will highlight how sport has been effectively used to address corporate-wide objectives. Through a series of case studies giving examples of best and progressive practice, the document will promote the different approaches that local authorities are taking to the demonstration of Best Value through the four Cs: Challenge, Consult, Compare, Compete. A document promoting the case studies will be published in late autumn 1999.



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## **Planning Across Boundaries**

This guidance document on preparing sport and recreation strategies will complement the recent Department of Culture, Media and Sport guidance on *Local Cultural Strategies* and other local authority guidance. Sport England supports the concept of cultural strategies and will continue to advocate the need for sport and recreation strategies. These should be developed to provide the overall strategic framework for the development of sport in a local area and so support the broader cultural remit of local authorities. Linked to this guidance will be the use of the Facilities Planning Model which is available as a tool to assist local authorities in defining and meeting facility requirements for their area. *Planning Across Boundaries* is due to be published in late autumn 1999.

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## **Performance indicators for sport**

The use of performance indicators will be a key tool in the demonstration of Best Value and in comparing service performance across local authorities. Using the data collected by the *National Survey of Sports Halls and Swimming Pools*, work has begun on developing an inter-centre comparison framework on key performance indicators. The outcome will be a practical service for local authorities to use. The precise proposals for this service are currently being drawn up and will be the

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subject of consultation with the Local Government Association, professional bodies and local authority partners. In tandem with this work, Sport England is also investigating the development of performance indicators for sports development, and once again this will be undertaken in conjunction with key partners.

### **Model Survey Package**

The *Model Survey Package* is a guidance manual produced by Sport England which assists local authorities in carrying out market research in their localities. Initially published in 1995, the manual gives practical guidance on how to carry out statistically sound surveys of sports facility customers and people using parks and other outdoor recreation sites, and household surveys. The 1995 guidance will be updated to ensure that it is tailored to the consultation requirements associated with Best Value in the year 2000 and onwards. It is anticipated that an updated *Best Value Model Survey Package*, providing practical market research advice, will be available as part of the Best Value Tool Kit by early 2000.

The package offered will have direct links to the Tool Kit service on *Performance Indicators for Sport* by providing local authorities with the standard data collection methods required to 'plug into' a national inter-centre comparison service.

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### **Quest: Facilities**

Sport England is continuing to work alongside other industry organisations on the delivery of this national quality accreditation scheme for sports and leisure facilities. Quest has now been operational for three years and is an excellent example of what can be achieved through national organisations working in partnership. To date (June 1999) 576 *Quest Manager's Guidance Packs* have been sold and 78 sites have achieved accreditation with a further 30 more awaiting their assessment result or assessment visit. The recent increase in the number of facilities applying for registration is an indication of the commitment of local authorities and facility managers to Quest, and its relevance to Best Value. Further information on Quest can be obtained from the Quest Scheme Managers, Tel: 01222 7559740.

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### **Quest: Sports development**

The extension of the Quest quality accreditation and self-assessment concepts to sports development was the subject of a feasibility study commissioned by Sport England. This identified that the development of a set of quality standards for service delivery in sports development was crucial to continuous improvement and self-assessment.

The work has now reached its piloting stage and this will take into account the demands of Best Value. The draft standards for the scheme are the basis of the piloting process. The work will be progressed alongside key partners and it is expected that the scheme will be by early 2000.

### **Working together**

The Tool Kit will continue to be developed in full consultation with key national organisations and individual local authorities. Sport England has set up its own Best Value Sounding Board Group as one means by which it will consult, receive feedback and inform its work. In particular, Sport England has sought advice and leadership from the Local Government Association and is represented on its Cultural Services Best Value Network.

Sport England has established a national Best Value service team and has also identified a Best Value lead officer in each of its regional offices. For further information on Sport England's work on Best Value you can contact your regional office or Sport England headquarters.

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Sport England aims to lead the development of sport in England by influencing and serving the public, private and voluntary sectors. Our aims are:

- more people involved in sport
- more places to play sport
- more medals through higher standards of performance in sport.

Sport England's work on Best Value through sport underpins and is in support of its Active Communities programme.

Sport England is the brand name of the English Sports Council which is the distributor of Lottery funds to sport.

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