



23 November 2015

Dear Prime Minister and Chancellor,

Grassroots sport is at the heart of almost every community in the UK; it is integral to the economic and social fabric of Britain. It defines our national identity and as we have seen so clearly in very recent days it has the power to bring communities and countries together.

As a former Minister with responsibility for sport, I understand the vital importance of sport being adequately funded and recognised by central government as without this, the sector will simply be unable to fulfill its considerable potential.

That is why I am urging you to ensure that this Government continues to provide the basis for life-changing opportunities for individuals and communities across the country. Each day, in thousands of locations, an army of players, coaches and other volunteers of every age come together to get physically active.

This grassroots activity is the start of the journey for every elite athlete. Without it there would be none of the great sporting triumphs which this country has enjoyed and celebrated together.

But sport is about more than just elite success. Because for every single medal or tournament win on the world stage, there are tens of thousands of people who are active in community sport.

In the process of enjoying themselves, they are knitting together our communities, improving their health, generating economic benefit, learning new skills, that include those that help personal development and employability, and helping others to do the same.

We also know that the public strongly support ongoing investment, and recent national polling conducted by the Sport and Recreation Alliance has shown that:

- 79% of the population agree that the Government should do more to support grassroots sports;
- 75% of the population agree that grassroots sport should receive more funding from the

Government;

- 86% agree that Sport plays a vital part in the education of children.

The upcoming sport strategy provides the Government with the opportunity to show in a fully joined up way, that it values the contribution sport makes. By prioritising public funding for sport the Government will leave a great legacy for the nation.

I write in support of this virtuous circle because I understand more than most just how important grassroots sport is. Investment in community sport is highly prized by participants up and down the sporting pyramid and we ask that you use the upcoming Spending Review to confirm your support for this into the future.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gerry Sutcliffe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gerry Sutcliffe
Minister for Sport and Tourism, 2007-10